

## CHARITY, SELF-HELP, AND HELPING OTHERS HELP THEMSELVES

Some people recommend charity as the best way of mitigating social injustice, whereas others recommend self-help through hard work. Neither of the two views is fully adequate. Charity may save lives during famines, but it is worse, it masks unemployment and may kill local agriculture and craftsmanship. is no lasting solution to social injustice; and the work ethic is applicable only in times and places of full employment. An alternative to the two doctrines, and one that combines the valid elements in them, is the maxim Help others to help themselves. Do not give food away except in the case of famines: rather, help people improve their cultivation methods, reclaim desert land, and pool their resources and skills in cooperatives. In short, give tools, not goods; in particular, educate and organize for a good and useful life, rather than give away the crumbs of your table. Shorter: Help become become self-reliable rather than dependent upon hand-outs.

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