

The Obligation of Friendship

You ought to be fine for the sake of the folks
Who think you are fine.
If others have faith in you doubly you're bound
To stick to the line.
It's not only on you that dishonor descends:
You can't hurt yourself without hurting your friends.

You ought to be true for the sake of the folks
Who believe you are true.
You never should stoop to a deed that your friends
Think you wouldn't do.
If you're false to yourself, be the blemish but small,
You have injured your friends; you've been false to them all.

For friendship is a bond
That is founded on truth:
It believes in the best of the ones that it loves.
Whether elder or youth;
And the stern rule it lays down for me and for you
Is to be what our friends think we are, through and through.

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)