

Mission Statement

The Fellowship of Reason® is an open, benevolent, and vital rational moral community in which we celebrate our lives, our freedoms, and our philosophy of reason.

Live the Life you Will

Have you ever enjoyed swimming in the ocean? I can remember a calm, hot day in warm salty water along a shallow ocean beach. Seaweed floats lazily in the water near the shore. The small, undirected swell raises the water here and there irregularly. I feel a strong, persistent tidal current pushing my body down the beach. I lie face down floating in the warm water. My body undulates with the seaweed. The water is shallow enough that I can touch the hard sandy bottom with my hands. I notice that I am drifting quickly over the bottom. I lift my head for a quick, closed-eye breath. After a lazy while, I lift my head again and I am way down the beach, far from my stuff.

We all like to be carried along, to be told what to do, from time to time.

I can remember another day, another beach, another vacation. The wind is brisk. The sky is clear. The waves are orderly and breaking. I stride out into the surf and press my body into a rising wave. It rolls on by me. I walk out to meet the next wave. This time the water hits my face and knocks my hat off. I retain my balance as the wave goes by. I turn in the trough of the wave to recover my hat, but it is being carried down the beach by the strong tidal current. I let it go and return to face the waves. I can get another hat.

Sometimes we like to feel our own power, to set our own terms.

In life we are pushed around and carried along by many things. I am, for example, my father. He was a lawyer, so I became a lawyer. He gave up the practice of law and became a teacher. I gave up the practice of law and have become a teacher. We all grow up in a culture that has expectations for us. On some level we are aware of these expectations. Our culture expects the "most worthy" among us to go to college. Our culture expects the "most worthy" to achieve a certain modest amount of wealth. Our culture expects that men will not have male friends that are "too" close. Our culture expects of all a certain amount of cynicism. Our culture expects that the "most worthy" will not work at McDonald's as adults. Heroism is not expected. Glory is not expected. Happiness is not expected.

Those of us who are Objectivists live in a sub-culture that has certain expectations for us. Our sub-culture does not expect us to tinker with the canon. Our sub-culture expects us to judge others quickly and harshly. Our sub-culture expects us to apply our philosophy rigorously to the improvement of others and the world, while ignoring, evading, or repressing our own need for self-improvement.

"Wake up, Neo."

Who are you? What is the life you choose? What is the life you **will**? Are you your father? Are you your mother? Are you your next door neighbor's expectations? Are you David Kelley's expectations? Are you yourself as a child? Are you a copper top? Who do you want to be? Define it!

Living consciously means knowing who you are, what your values are, what you want to create in your world, what you want your world to be like, what you want **you** to be like.

It is nice to float along with the seaweed. It is safe. It is warm. It is easy. It is okay. Until one day you find yourself way down the beach and a long way from your stuff.

The Fellowship of Reason® is not like television. It is not like a George Winston concert that we go to or not depending upon our taste. It is not something that happens **to** us. The Fellowship of Reason® is an act that we do or do not. It is not a channel we can flip to. If we want it, we must will it into existence. We create it. It will have the form that we will it to have.

Ellen and others (as performers of Celebration) have walked into the ocean and faced the waves many times. No one has, as yet, lost her hat.

FOR's Saturday night at the movies

Chris will host FOR's Saturday night at the movies on Saturday, January 15, 2000, at 7:30 p.m. We will be showing the movie "The Fountainhead." It's pot luck. So bring something good to eat or drink.

Celebration on Sunday, February 6, 2000

Our next Celebration is on Sunday, February 6, 2000, at 12:30 p.m. upon the grounds of the Northwest Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Martin will speak on "The Stages of Human Life." The virtues required for life are different in each stage of human life. We will explore what the stages of life are and what virtues are required to live life well in each stage. We will learn about the "Fallacy of Anachronism" and why theism is a manifestation of this fallacy.

So far this is the lineup for February 2000:

Welcome
Celebration of Freedom—?
Celebration of Visitors
Celebratory Announcements
Celebration of Each Other
Celebration of Art—?
Celebration of Heroes—?
Celebration of the Sacred—?
Celebration of Talent—?
Oratory—Martin on "The Stages of Human Life"
Celebration of Amateur Talent—?
Celebration of Personal Mission—?
Mindful Meditation—?
Closing Quotation

Contact information:

Martin L. Cowen III is the director of the Fellowship of Reason®.

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