

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.

Exercise Your Faculties In Accordance With Virtue

I will be 50 this year. *In protest* I have signed up to run in the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C. this fall. I will run, legs willing, 26.2 miles with over 12,000 others. In order to get ready for the ordeal I have started running about 20 miles per week. I need to get up to about 30 miles per week. I need to lose about 20 lbs. Since I have been running I have felt better physically and spiritually.

The improvement in my spiritual well-being has caused me to reflect upon Aristotle's statement about happiness. His actual statement is, "It is the active exercise of our faculties in conformity with virtue that causes happiness, and the opposite activities its opposite."

I focus here not on *virtue* but on the *exercise* of faculties.

I am reminded that I must *act* (exercise my faculties) in order to be happy. I must perform those tasks which I am capable of performing and which I enjoy performing. My personal list of "faculties" will necessarily be different from yours.

As I start writing this essay, I really do not know what "my faculties" are. Let me think about it. Well, my faculties must be in two broad groups pertaining to body and mind, physical and spiritual. Certainly my ability to jog, pitiful though it is, is among my faculties. As is my ability to ride a bike and play basketball. My "work" mental faculties include the ability to write and speak passably and an interest in the study of philosophy. I like to read. My "play" mental faculties include the ability to play some games like bridge and chess and Pictionary. My

social faculties include an ability to play well with others.

I do not think that watching TV is a "faculty" for me, though of course I do it a lot. My guess is that watching TV does not contribute *actively* to my happiness. Certainly it contributes passively to my happiness, since I do it.

I do not think that drinking adult beverages occasionally is a "faculty" for me, though of course I do it. My guess is that drinking adult beverages contributes passively to my happiness by relaxing me.

One of my faculties is loving children. I love my son well. I need to develop my capacity to teach him well though.

That is a pretty good list of *my faculties*: Jogging, bike riding, basketball, studying philosophy, reading, writing, speaking, playing games, playing with others, parenting, teaching.

So, if Aristotle is to be believed, in order to be happy I must exercise all of my faculties.

Sounds like fun!

So far this is the lineup for July 2001 Celebration:

Welcome
Celebration of Freedom—Calvin Coolidge by **Tom**
Celebration of Visitors
Celebration of Each Other
Celebratory Announcements
Celebration of Heroes
Celebration of Literature—**Ellen**
Celebration of Art—
Celebration of Talent—**Linda**
Oratory—"The Art of Friendship, Part III: Character" by **Martin Cowen**
Celebration of Personal Mission—
Closing Quotation

Bring your Personal Mission Notebook to Celebration.

FOR's Pot luck supper

Second Saturday Evening following Celebration: Michaela is hosting our pot luck supper and games night this month in her Grant Park home. Since she has no TV, it will be games! Remember to bring something good to eat or drink. 7 p.m. this Saturday, June 16, 2001.

FOR's Café Discussion Group

Third Saturday Morning following Celebration: Our discussion group happens at Après Diem, 931 Monroe Dr. NE. Atlanta, the Midtown Promenade, on Saturday, June 23, 2001, at 11 a.m. Our subject is yet to be determined. Do you have a suggestion?

FOR's Philosophy Tapes

Each Thursday Night: FOR is sponsoring a philosophy survey course that is free to attendees. We meet every Thursday night at 7:30 p.m. at Vera's house.

Celebration Schedule 2001

- Sunday, July 1, 2001—The Art of Friendship, Part III—Character
 - Sunday, August 5, 2001—Massimo Pigliucci: "Sci-Phi: The Unity of Science and Philosophy"
 - Sunday, September 2, 2001—Personal Moral Progress, Part I
 - Sunday, October 7, 2001—Personal Moral Progress, Part II
 - Sunday, November 4, 2001—Personal Moral Progress, Part III
 - Sunday, December 2, 2001—FOR is NOT a church!
 - Sunday, January 6, 2002—Felix the Cat is my God
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Contact information:

To receive e-mail from the Fellowship of Reason®, please subscribe to our Yahoo! Group by sending an e-mail to reason-subscribe@yahogroups.com

To receive this newsletter in the mail send your U.S. Mail address to mlcowen@mindspring.com

To talk to somebody about FOR call Vera at 404- or Martin at 770-471-9800.

Fellowship of Reason® is a non-profit, unincorporated, volunteer-supported association.

Our web address is <http://www.kindreason.com>