

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. We study ethics.

The House of the Mind

Human consciousness is like a house with three rooms. We live in the main room that is called the Present. In the Present we can sense, perceive, experience emotions, and reason. The other two rooms are separated from the main room by glass walls. There are no doors. We can only look through the glass walls into the other rooms. The other rooms are called the Past and the Future. When we look into the room of the Past, we call that Memory. When we look into the room of the Future, we call that Imagination.

All three rooms have a lighting system connected to three variable switches, rheostats, located in the main room. Each room can be darkened or lightened by use of its switch. The individual has the power to approach and adjust these switches. The switches are called Volition.

Tragically, terrible things happen to some people and they do not like to remember them. Such a person might keep the rheostat of the Past set on its lowest setting. Unfortunately, the events in the room of the Past cannot be rendered completely invisible. These terrible memories glow dimly in the dark like radioactive wolves terrifying the person whenever he happens to look in that direction.

In order to avoid being terrified, the person keeps his back to the room of the Past as much as possible. He might adopt other strategies for avoiding the Past. He can focus on any one of the other rooms or his capacities. For example, he might intentionally clutter his Present with chaos. Chaos can take a physical form as in an extraordinarily messy house, car, or desk. Chaos can take an existential form in drama caused by intentionally disrupting personal relationships. In chaos a person's perceptive capacity demands most of his attention. He has less time to be aware of the Past.

Other strategies to avoid Memory can emphasize the capacity to sense (e.g. sexual addiction), the capacity to reason (e.g. excessive rationalization), and the capacity to imagine (e.g. pipe dreaming).

Perhaps the most common strategy to avoid Memory is dimming all the lights by drug or alcohol abuse.

Another terror of the Past is guilt. People avoid guilt using similar strategies.

Terrors, though, need not be only in the Past. Terrors can exist in the Present and in the Future. The terrors need not be reasonable. For example, any capacity or quality that one lacks, as a matter of Present fact, can be the source of a Present terror. Lacking hair, height, beauty, limbs, or health can be a Present terror. Philosophically, metaphysical facts, such as baldness, must be accepted as conditions of existence from which one acts. But most people are not philosophical and they will adopt strategies to avoid awareness of these Present facts. Some people will ignore a cancerous mole until they are hopelessly ill. Some people will project hate upon the world as compensation for the fact that they are ugly.

A common Future terror is that of Death. People invent strategies to ease that terror as well. They rationalize metaphysical systems that deny the reality of Death.

How *should* a person live in the house of the mind?

A person cannot simply turn all of his light switches on maximum. He does not have enough mental capacity for that. Limited capacity is the reason avoidance techniques work.

A person should alternate his full attention among the rooms. If a person has radioactive wolves in his Past, he should turn up the light of the Past and sit very near one of the wolves and study it through the glass. He should note the eyes of the wolf, its teeth, its claws, and its dirty, matted hair. He should study this wolf carefully day after day until finally the wolf disappears. Then, the person should move on to the next radioactive wolf of the Past. Do not be afraid. You are protected by the glass.

After all the wolves of the Past have disappeared, the person can turn down the lights of the Past and turn up the lights in the room of the Present.

A person should look at the perceptible facts of the Present, his sensations, emotions, and rationalized structures and consider their causes. Facts like baldness or ugliness must be accepted as facts, but personal grooming, makeup, clothes, artificial appliances (hairpieces), and surgery can manipulate them. Moral facts should be identified and weakness corrected. Moral strengths should be appreciated. Irrational structures, like fantastic metaphysical systems, should be torn down. Emotions should be analyzed and understood.

After a person has accepted, enhanced, and cleaned up his Present, he can turn down the light of the Present and illuminate the Future room. In the Future he will certainly see Death. Death, too, must be accepted as an ultimate metaphysical fact. But between the Present and Death there is a sacred period of time that he can fill as he wills.

Only a very few and special people are aware of the house of the mind. Be aware of your house. Illuminate each room in turn. Live in peace.

November 3, 2002 Celebration:

Welcome—Master of Ceremonies: Dan
Celebration of Freedom—Ellen
Celebration of Visitors—Dan
Celebration of Each Other—Dan
Celebratory Announcements—Dan
Celebration of Art—Leanna
Celebration of Literature—Carla
Celebration of Performance Art (skit)—Vera
Celebration of Talent—Randy
Oratory—**Dan Barber**
Non-celebratory announcements—Dan
Closing Quotation—Dan

Invisible College

Dr. Glenn Magee is lecturing on Modernity every Thursday night at 7:30 p.m. at Vera's Intellectual Salon. Price: \$60 per month. Call Vera at 404-577-7968 for more information..

FOR's Thanksgiving Day Celebration

Members and friends of FOR, Inc. are invited to drop in anytime between 2 p.m. and 10 p.m. for Thanksgiving dinner at Martin and Linda's house on Thursday, November 28, 2002. The hosts will provide the turkey and ham. Visitors are asked to bring a side dish, dessert or beverage appropriate to Thanksgiving that everyone might enjoy.

FOR's Pub Night

Members and friends of FOR, Inc. meet on the 4th Wednesday of every month at Manuel's Tavern at 8PM for adult beverages and adult conversation. FOR's next pub night is Wednesday, October 23, 2002, at 8PM

Philosophy Tapes

Philosophy tapes are played to a small private audience in the living room of a volunteer on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month. The next playing is at Sally's house on Tuesday, November 5, 2002, at 7:30 p.m. Free.

FOR's Film Night

Members and friends of FOR, Inc. enjoy a monthly movie night at John's studio using his extraordinary equipment. FOR's next movie night is Saturday, October 26, 2002. Arrive at 6:30 p.m. Doors will be locked for safety! Movie starts at 7:15 p.m. Free.

Philosophy Café

Attend Steve Stoke's Philosophy Café at Border's in Buckhead on the second Wednesday of every month at 8 p.m. and at the Barnes and Noble Bookstore in Duluth on the third Wednesday of every month at 8 p.m.

Celebration Schedule

- **Sunday, November 3, 2002**
- Sunday, December 1, 2003
- Sunday, January 5, 2003
- Sunday, February 2, 2003
- Sunday, March 2, 2003
- Sunday, April 6, 2003
- Sunday, May 4, 2003
- Sunday, June 1, 2003
- Sunday, July 6, 2003
- Sunday, August 3, 2003
- Sunday, September 7, 2003
- Sunday, October 5, 2003
- Sunday, November 2, 2003
- Sunday, December 7, 2003

2002 Membership Information:

FOR, Inc. has 39 members.

- Regular membership: \$35 per year if paid prior to October 31, 2002
- Contributing membership: \$70 per year if paid prior to October 31, 2002
- Lifetime membership: \$700 if paid prior to October 31, 2002

Contact information:

Visit us on the web at www.fellowshipofreason.com

To talk to somebody about FOR call Vera at 404-577-7968 or Martin at 770-471-9800 or Dan at 770-831-3010.

To receive e-mail notice of FOR's activities send your e-mail address to mlcowen@mindspring.com

To receive this newsletter free for 3 months in the U.S. mail send your U.S. Mail address to mlcowen@mindspring.com

To participate in unmoderated e-mail chat, please subscribe to our Yahoo! Group by sending an e-mail to reason-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

A subscription for 12 monthly issues of this newsletter is \$15 per year.

Fellowship of Reason, Inc. is a Georgia nonprofit corporation.

How can you help support the Fellowship of Reason, Inc., the world's first and only reason-based moral community?

If you would like to support our activities, including our building fund, please consider these opportunities:

1. Attend our activities
2. Bring donuts
3. Subscribe to our monthly newsletter
4. Perform at Celebration
5. Recruit a person of like-mind and values
6. Volunteer your home for a potluck or other activity
7. Become a regular member
8. Become a contributing member
9. Become a lifetime member
10. Donate cash, property, time, or expertise
11. Locate and help us apply for a public or private grant
12. Make a testamentary gift

Make checks payable to Fellowship of Reason, Inc. and mail them to 8188 Pembroke Terrace, Jonesboro, GA 30236-4179. Use PayPal on the web at www.fellowshipofreason.com

To make a Last Will and Testament with a gift to FOR, Inc. contact your attorney. If you live in Georgia, Martin L. Cowen III, Attorney at Law, without charge, will prepare and supervise the execution (inside the perimeter or within 10 miles outside of I-285) of a simple will with a minimum unrestricted testamentary gift to FOR, Inc. of \$1,000. Call 770-471-9800 for more information. This offer may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Mr. Cowen, a licensed Georgia attorney, and not FOR, Inc., is solely responsible for any legal services rendered by him with or without charge.
