

This month's article is an example of the kind of reading the Eagle Wing CITs do in preparation for their twice weekly meetings with Chick to discuss our Camp's Mission. Essays like this become prompts for conversation and practice material used in learning how to methodically consider ideas and their consequences. The Eagle Wing CITs affectionately named these discussion periods "Chick Time". (To read the Camp Mission, go to The Parent Handbook at [cameaglewing.com](http://cameaglewing.com)).

A "Chick Time" Sampler  
Moral Anarchy is More Than a Concept

What is the effect of living in the midst of two moral conditions, the first of which requires us to choose between right and wrong, and the second presents us with a myriad of choices, none of which are *allowed* to be called either, right or wrong? The acceptance, by many, of this second condition, which demands "...a myriad of choices..." has created an atmosphere of *moral anarchy*.

Every one of us is now directly and or indirectly subject to the consequences of this moral free-for-all, which is producing some highly visible effects: a general degradation of our public life as manifest by bad language, slovenly dress, sex as sport (or an experience to be *had*); marriage and children as yet another experience to be collected, or (had); ungrateful attitudes and a disrespectfulness to ourselves and each other; and music, movies and television that laud those things that should fill us with disgust. At what point do we [parents] say, "Enough is enough?"

So...why, among other reasons, at Camps Eagle Feather and Eagle Wing, do we cling to the outmoded, old fashioned and restrictive set of standards, which the Virtues demand of Ladies and Gentlemen? Because of a far greater consequence — *without these restrictions, we lose our freedom!*

How can freedom be preserved by giving up freedom sounds like an oxymoron? When I demand (and acquire) the personal autonomy that comes with moral anarchy, I vouchsafe to myself the privilege to believe that *I* am the reason for everything; when I do that *you* lose. What do you lose- you lose every freedom that I step on in my furious attempt to become fully *self-actualized*.

Now there's a phrase from the past that is now, unfortunately, practiced daily. Self-actualized: to *compel* my fullest potential to become reality (by my own efforts). Sadly, the world of the fully actualized individual is colored by an unstated corollary: I do this [self-actualize] without regard to the effects upon others.

How can I be so uncaring? Because I began my quest with the acceptance of a (false) premise: *I* am the measure and center of all things. Do I really think this way? Our words are often an indication of how we are thinking. How often have we heard (said) these phrases, “my health, my education, my career, my marriage, my *life, my...?*” The word “my” has become the universal prefix.

Once I begin with such a premise, you’d better watch out! If you’re my boss, you mean nothing other than *my* paycheck; if you’re my employee, you mean nothing other than a tool to achieve *my* paycheck; if you’re my spouse, you mean nothing once you fail to supply *my* needs (that’s why I acquired you in the first place— right); if you’re my child, and you become a burden or an obstacle to *my* happiness, desires, ambitions, then you become *subordinated* to those things. As I said, “Once I begin with... you’d better watch out!”

What happens when I start with a different premise: ***The epitome of self-actualization, in the world of a Lady or a Gentleman, is that of self-denial?*** Is this another oxymoron? How can the epitome of maximizing my potential be reached by limiting or denying myself *anything*?

Consider this, My (Chick BeVier’s) life belongs to:

- my wife (not merely because, without her, my life would be hollow) but, ***absolutely, because I promised it to her***
- my children (not merely because without them my future would be empty) but, ***absolutely, because when I gave life to them I became responsible for them, for the rest of my life***
- my employees (not merely because without them my work would be impossible to carry out) but, ***absolutely, because I became responsible for (and to) them the moment I hired them***
- my campers and their parents (not merely because without them my work would have no object) but, ***absolutely, because I have made them promises, which I must keep***
- my friends (not merely because without them my life would be solitary) but, ***absolutely, because they are a gift, which demands my care***
- my country (not merely because without it I would have neither the place, nor the stability of life by which my freedoms are ensured) but, ***absolutely, because I’m indebted to those who have made it possible, and to those who are depending on me to preserve it***
- my God (not merely because without Him I would not exist) but, ***absolutely, because He is my [our] future***

The oxymoron undone: my life can't really be mine until I give it away! The rights of possession, attendant to a human life, begin and end with the 'right' to give it [my life] away! Consider it like money: it has no value until you spend it. When life is viewed in this way, a hard thought comes to mind: upon what (who) have I been 'spending' my life?

*None of us, most particularly myself, are immune to the effects of living in moral anarchy. It's causes are often invisible, and its effects, while subtle and innocuous at first, become insidious in the end.*

Once I begin with the premise that my life's value and meaning proceeds from all those instances where I deny (rather than self-actualize) myself, your freedom is not only preserved, it's made possible.

"So why, at Camps Eagle Feather and Eagle Wing do we cling to the outmoded....?" Consider this, "...the pursuit of happiness" turns out to be the pursuit of Virtue, and to preserve your freedom requires me to give up my **absolute** freedom. Perhaps we need more Ladies and Gentlemen and fewer chicks and guys.

This summer at Eagle Wing, during my discussions with the CIT class of '09, I made a wonderful discovery: the boys and girls who have passed through the ranks as day campers at Eagle Feather and resident campers at Eagle Wing are getting it! They truly are becoming Ladies and Gentlemen. To the CIT class of '09...Well Done! It's only October and I'm already looking forward to the 2010 continuation of the process of discovery and "self-examination" that you made such an enjoyable and integral part of the 2009 Eagle Wing CIT program – Thank You!

The CIT program at Eagle Wing is not for everyone. But, for those young men and women wanting to engage in this process of learning how to think, to speak and to act, not only like a Lady or Gentlemen, *but as a PARENT* (which is precisely what you become when you put on an Eagle Feather/Wing staff shirt), please join us at Eagle Wing in 2010. *Eagle Wing CITs do not have to have been campers at Eagle Wing, or Eagle Feather, but must be 16 years old.*

For more information regarding what it's like to be a CIT at Eagle Wing, contact any of the members of the 2009 CIT class whose Email addresses are listed below. Or, write to me, [Chick@campeaglewing.com](mailto:Chick@campeaglewing.com) .

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PS Please write to me. If you too, are fighting this toxic atmosphere tell me how you're doing, what works, what doesn't.

If we take the three degrees of degradation left over from yesterday, add the three degrees of today, what will tomorrow look like? We are not seeing a blip, a spike, an anomaly; we are seeing a *trend*. No group, not economic, religious, political, social, educational, or racial, has been spared. This toxicity is affecting all of us. At what point do we [parents] simply say, "Enough is enough!"

**Articles coming soon:**

*Nate: A Big Fish*; a story which explores the danger of *living* in cold water

*The Dollar and the Pen*; an Eagle Wing chapel talk considering the economic dangers that proceed from the decline of honesty.