

Musings about Franchises

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June 29, 2014

Alone on my back porch, I write not for your consumption, rejection or response; but rather, I seek reality for my own grounding. If you are listening in on my musings, welcome to a rocking chair on my back porch.

I think a CPE Center is a “**franchise**” entity of the ACPE, Inc.

According to *Webster’s New World Dictionary*, “franchise” is derived from “frank.” *Synonyms* of “frank” include these words: “candid,” “open,” and “outspoken.” “*Frank*” applies to a person who is free or blunt in expressing the truth or an opinion, unhampered by conventional reticence. “*Candid*” implies a basic honesty that makes deceit or evasion impossible. “*Open*” implies a lack of concealment and often connotes an ingenuous quality. “*Outspoken*” suggests a lack of restraint or reserve in speech” (*Webster, p. 554*).

The first definition of “franchise” is “freedom from some restriction, servitude, etc.” The next definition is “any special right or privilege granted by the government.” Then, thirdly, comes “the right to vote; suffrage.”

The fourth definition is “the right to market a product or provide a service ... as granted by a manufacturer or a company.” It was this latter definition that prompted my analogy of the accredited CPE Center being a franchise of the ACPE, Inc.

This fourth understanding of “franchise” is definitive of an accredited CPE Center/Program. The Center/Program pays a fee to be identified with, accredited by, and abiding by the established standards of the ACPE, Inc. That Center/Program does its business under the umbrella and logo of the ACPE, Inc. That Center/Program “represents” the ethos of the ACPE, Inc. within a particular locale. Like McDonalds or any number of corporations with local franchises, the local, particular CPE Center/Program “is” the ACPE, Inc. within a particular community. And, therefore, it is right and proper for the CPE Center/Program to pay the fees appertaining to the franchise.

But I’m glad to be informed by *Webster* that a franchise is derived from some particular words cherished by colleagues and mentors I’ve known and respected as clinical pastoral educators. Those words...”candid, open, outspoken” ... characterize the way our forebears related to one another and forged the ACPE, Inc.

Knowing that “franchise” is grounded out of “*franc*” is encouraging to me. What do you think about your CPE Center being a “franchise” of the ACPE, Inc. in light of the fuller definitions and associations?

Blessings and peace to you on your back porch. Jap