

My Somerset Life

A diary by Brian Snellgrove

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Allegiance to a group

I am attending a particular group on a fairly regular basis and have issues with the way the group is being organized and the path it is intending to take in the future. The question is 'who owns the intellectual property which is the group'? The likelihood is that the responsibilities are not clear.

In my thinking the wisest thing to do is to get everyone together and get their views to make sure everyone is on the same page. However if people who run the group are autocratic or think they know best there's not an awful lot you can do, and stand up fighting his not my style. Words, once uttered, cannot be unsaid.

The point is that there is a mixture within the group, those who had here to its principles faithfully and move on and move forward as one. What I am most concerned about is the unspoken underlining tensions and differences which the English temperament is so good at keeping under the surface, and disguising their feelings in terms of smiles and 'how are you' and so on.

It's not like I want to get married to the group but I like a clean atmosphere where people are honest and upfront about what they really believe and without this it is difficult to give a ringing endorsement to a group of people. For example with my allotment I want to talk to people who really believe in allotments because of their value and don't put anything political into the mix.

With religious activities I want to mix with people who really believe in God and promote His purpose on earth and not have any power squabbles. It is difficult to find this wherever there are hierarchies. My current decision with the aforementioned group is to realize that it is not my group and those who run it have laid claim to it as a territorial thing

and will not be unseated.

I have decided to distance myself from any administrative side and just let them get on with it, and attending occasional meeting as an opportunity to have dialogue with those who I do get on with; there are about four such people, and then just ignore the rest. There is no divine law requiring that I get on with every person in every group I join.

I just have to accept the fact that people have had vastly different backgrounds to myself, have different prejudices and priorities, have different causes of stress and strains in their life and to expect everyone to melt together as if there were no differences is probably a trifle naive.

The idea of **Live and Let Live** is an old saying which irritates me somewhat that I think at Heart it is true. We can look at this phrase from various perspectives but here's one from the psychoanalytical point of view as follows " it means to have a human and a humane attitude towards your fellow human beings in which you want to make money and earn your living, and at the same time help others to do the same. This is achieved by moderating your own greed making a little less money yourself, but helping others enjoy the benefits of your economic activity. This attitude leads to a win-win attitude in life and in economics. This is the opposite philosophy of wild capitalism that Focuses exclusively on a maximum profit and



which is driven by sheer greed".

I find that this definition is a little bit limiting and I would rather say that we have to respect or we are advised to respect where people are in their developments. Whereas I may

be a very advanced in some ways I'm very limited in others due to my lack of relevant experience so I should forgive others and forgive myself for shortcomings.

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