

Shot down in flames

Amway, cult of profiteering

AmWay runs what it calls "Process of Duplication." It begins when you're invited to a friend's place to hear someone tell you "how to make it economically in the '80s." So you go and you learn about "People Helping People," and the speaker will draw a bunch of circles on a chalkboard and explain how the business works.

The first circle on top represents the friend who invited you, the other circles directly below represent yourself and the other friends that are listening, and more

circles underneath each of those represent your friends and other people's friends who have seen this plan. Now, all these people have sold \$100 worth of AmWay products, like soap and cleaners, vitamins, cosmetics, clothing--you name it, they sell it. For each \$100 worth sold, the person above them gets a certain percentage of profit. So the more you sell, the more your sponsor makes. And the more people you sponsor the more profit you make.

So the poor get rich, and the rich get richer--well, ain't it

great!? But, after you've become involved in the business, say, after the first or second month, you discover that there are drop-outs and quitters, and you're left not only trying to build your business, but you've got to keep the people you've already got enthused. And then you begin to think about that percentage, and you realize you're going to need a **whole lot of busy** people working under you to even make a reasonable profit. In short, you find out there are few winners in this deal--the others are the suckers supporting them. This is what they call "People Helping People." You wind up with a contract you signed as a newcomer in the business that obligates you to sell \$100 worth of products that you can't possibly fulfill without taking the money from your own pocket, because if you don't fulfill the contract, your business, the people working under you, and your profit--all go to that friend of your who showed you the business.

But before all that, there's an initial investment involved. Just the price of a good pair of shoes (so they say), or \$75. With AmWay, that investment buys you a lousy blank chalkboard, a couple pieces of fancy chalk, and an empty notebook--a bit expensive, perhaps, but not an empty investment.

Claims used by AmWay to seduce newcomers into the business include every possible rhetorical tactic in the book. To name just a few: ad populum, ad patriotism, the bandwagon

approach, testimonials, pie-in-the-sky appeals, and lots of impressive statistics, all very well-rehearsed and worked out to a science. Exploiting, among other things, Christianity and a Positive Attitude. And the list goes on, and on.

This type of persuasion is all very obvious and expected, but let's take a look at how they exploit this "positive" attitude of theirs. AmWay people believe that a good income is created by a good attitude. Which is all very good and well, but they take this one step farther by beginning newcomers on a brainwashing process of reading books and listening to tapes (and they provide hundreds of tapes) on the power of positive thinking and AmWay propaganda, and then, once you've gotten a little enthused, they use emotional fallacies like "Dream Shopping," where they take you to see the car or the house of your dreams, and you actually get inside to get the feel and experience of it while they tell you with the bandwagon approach by taking you somewhere like the Hilton Hotel's Huge Ballroom, where it's jammed with wall-to-wall people telling you how AmWay has changed their lives and made their hopes and dreams real possibilities and realities. Then you look around you and see literally thousands of people, and someone shouts from somewhere, "Do You Believe?" and you hear the shouted reply, "Yes, We Believe!" and before you know it you're listening to chorus upon chorus of "I Believe" and chants of "AmWay or No

Way!" "AmWay or No Way!" "AMWAY OR NO WAY!!!"

In reality, these people haven't changed at all--they're still the same people with the same problems they've always had. They've just been so sucked up in the vacuum of AmWay, so blindly positive, that they don't see the reality anymore. AmWay people have dreams and don't have time for negative people. AmWay people are willing to change their priorities to become more positive people. AmWay people have an AmWay family backing them up. AmWay people have a CULT that tears people away from their "negative" family and friends who can't "See the Light" of "AmWay or No Way."

But there is a solution--and this is one time you're not going to get to call your congressman. Instead, you can do something much simpler and much more effective. Boycott. If you buy AmWay products, sit down and have a nice, long talk with them--but don't allow yourself to become vulnerable to their kind of attacks. If you know of a business that operates like AmWay--suckering people into a scheme with brainwashing techniques to get the people to believe the business will benefit them, when in reality it is only ripping them away from their family and friends while changing their priorities to better fit the money-making ideals of the business--if you know of another business like this one, TELL PEOPLE ABOUT IT!

By Karen Prouty

'Tisn't the season yet

They started appearing around late October. Slowly at first. Now they are almost everywhere. Soon they will be in every place we look. In every little corner of the universe. They will consume us all. During Christmas time, no one can hear you scream.

So much attention has been focused on Dec. 25, I have almost have forgotten about Nov. 27, the date of another holiday, known to all of us as Thanksgiving. Why doesn't America (pronounced in other countries Uh-mud-i-cun) take one holiday at a time?

We had yet to have celebrated Halloween (good movie, by the way) when Christmas decorations and advertisements appeared. My

questions is, why so soon? I'm well aware of the importance of Xmas to the entrepreneur. Still, is it that important that the celebration of a religious (turning into a consumer) holiday start three months in advance.

Advent is one thing. Consumerism is another. What is so god-awful about celebrating a holiday such as Christmas as is, rather than turning every holiday we have into mass capitalism. Sort of takes some of the meaning out of the holiday, doesn't it?

However, that is the problem with our economic system. So I better go out and get my mother's Groundhog's Day present. There's only 74 shopping days left!

People nothing like snakes

I wish to object to the recent "Shot Down In Flames" article. This article presented a biased viewpoint and unfairly depicted a group that cannot defend themselves. They are, of course, snakes.

Ever since the writing of the Bible, people have unfairly persecuted snakes. Even harmless, innocent, and I don't hesitate to say, friendly varieties--such as

garter snakes--are treated with revulsion. Snakes are not slimy! They are warm and dry, and go directly about their business, attempting to stay out of trouble and bother as few people and other animals as they can. Can people say the same?

Such sayings as "snake in the grass" are unfair and prejudiced. Snakes won't go out of their way to attack people. They avoid

any contact with humans as much as they can and only strike when provoked. Even then, many varieties warn anyone approaching before they come within striking range. Rattlesnakes and cobras give fair warning and will only strike if forced to. What do people do when faced with such a warning? Do they avoid the area and the snake? No!

Compared to people, snakes are positively noble. They don't purposely make a nuisance of themselves. They're basically friendly and can be domesticated, they try to avoid trouble as much as possible, they attack only when absolutely provoked beyond tolerance, and they perform a useful function. How many people do you know that can fulfill everyone of those qualifications?

--T.L. JEFFRIES

feedback

All letters in response to "People are snakes" appearing in Nov. 12 issue.

All letters to the editor must be signed and

delivered to Trailer B prior to 2 o'clock on Monday. Otherwise, printing is impossible.

Where is your love?

To the Editor

You may speak with tongues for healing
Pretty prayers with voice so full of feeling
Then YOU must be on your way

WHERE'S YOUR LOVE?

All the ministries that you speak of
Preaching Gospel words and Jesus love
If YOU can't spare a few more minutes

WHERE'S YOUR LOVE?

Can't you see I'm reaching out
To fill this spot so full of doubt?

Do you know what I'm talkin' about
WHERE'S YOUR LOVE?

By Shirley Audette Nelson

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