

## Chapter 1: Steps to Take When Making a Collect Call to God

There are several steps one needs to take when making a collect call to God:

1. Finding the phone booth, the sacred healing relationship
2. Contacting the operator
3. Communicating with the operator
4. Waiting for the God to “accept the charges”
5. Processing after the conversation

The focus of the following discussion is on placing the collect call, through the phone operator – the mystic/healer. Distinctions will be made clarifying the difference between the collect call and using a direct line. These distinctions will be further elaborated upon in later chapters.

### Finding the Phone Booth

There are millions of phones, all shapes, colors, and designs. But not all of these phones can be used for placing a collect call to God. Many of them are used for other types of communication. God’s operators are linked to special phone lines, sort of like the Hollywood **red phone** that links key personnel (like the five star general) to the President of the USA. Let us call this special red phone the “Direct God Line”. It is a special phone line that can be used by anyone at anytime, but in order to use this direct line they must know how to access the phone booth that houses this special phone and also know how to speak to God directly. This is the role of the mystic/healer, the phone operator. Most people have not yet learned how to access the direct line. This is why the phone operator is available – to help them learn how to use the phone booth, the operator, and how to help make that collect call. This chapter will address the process of making a collect call. Using the direct service line service without an operator will be addressed in a later chapter.

The phone booth housing the “Direct God Line” for making the collect call is available to all who seek to use it, but all who seek may not be able to enter. The phone booth is a sacred place where a sacred healing relationship is established between the operator and the caller. A detailed description of the healing relationship can be found in the book “The Healing Relationship”<sup>1</sup> and accompanying texts. A series of books, backed by years of research, has been dedicated to this topic because of the vast amount of confusion regarding the term “healing relationship”. The reader should become well acquainted with this material on the healing relationship, as it will be referred to throughout this text. Every time the analogy of the “phone booth” is used it is a reference to the healing relationship.

This healing relationship has characteristics unlike any other relationship and not everyone is able to sit in this special relationship (but almost everyone can learn). It is a relationship that enables the operator to empathically know the caller and to pass that knowing on to God as part of the request for a collect call. It is like saying, “God this is Pat calling who is.... Will you accept the call?” It is also a relationship that prepares the individual for the emotional and physiological responses that accompany a collect call to God. There are many levels at which people understand (and misunderstand) the effects and characteristics of the healing relationship. The level at which one understands, and lives within, the healing relationship is the level at which the person will communicate with the operator and then with God (exceptions made for initial calling events and emergencies). It is not possible within this text to describe and discuss all the details of the healing relationship. It is simply important for the reader to know that the entry point to improved communication with God, to making that collect call, is through this phone booth.

We enter the healing relationship, the phone booth, in order to be in the proper place to make the request for the collect call and to help us prepare for the effects associated with the phone call with God. We must be able to locate the phone booth and then enter it before we can access the operator to make a collect call.

There are many people claiming to be guides and suggesting they know where the phone booths are located, but in truth the journey into the phone booth is unique to each individual. It is also unique to each pairing of mystic seeker with phone operator. There are some generalities which can be described and which may be useful in both locating the phone booth. In addition these generalities may be useful in understanding how to access the phone operator (to sit with the mystic/healer) when making a collect call. These generalities should not be taken to be applicable to every individual under every possible circumstance. Rather they should be considered as general guidelines for contemplation and preparation.

When searching for a phone booth the following guidelines should be considered:

1. Understand the characteristics of the healing relationship.
2. Know that there are difficulties to be faced.
3. Beware of cartoon phone booths.
4. Be prepared.

### Understand the characteristics of the healing relationship

The nature of the healing relationship should be understood as part of the mystic seeker’s quest for the phone booth. It is likely that such knowledge will make the seeking easier. This knowledge can be obtained through a sacred experience (like being ‘reborn’) and it can be understood through teaching and devotional study, and it can be learned through sharing with the mystic/healer. In many instances both experience and training blend together to form the foundation for access to the phone

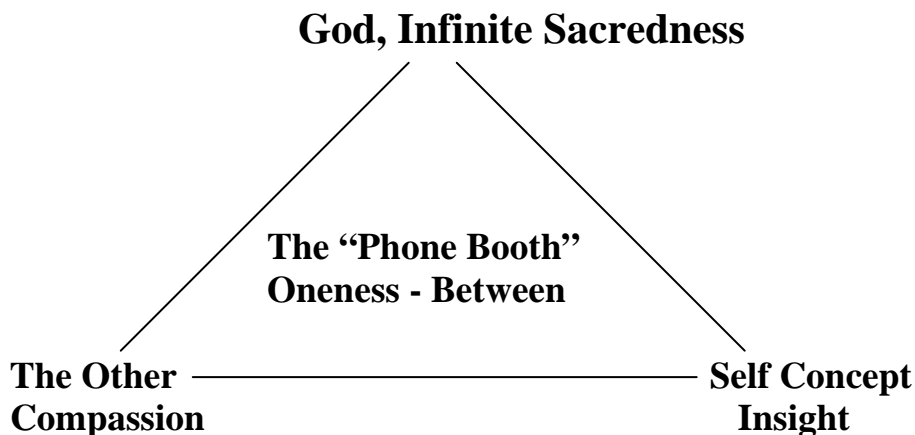
booth. The healing relationship involves a holistic empathy (termed halopathy in my previous publications<sup>2</sup>), a deep compassion, and sacred wisdom. It is not like any relationship normally experienced throughout the course of life, but it is a relationship that can be shared throughout the course of life. An important aspect of the healing relationship is that it occurs between the mystic/healer and the mystic seeker.

This concept of the between is difficult to grasp. It is covered briefly in my other writings but I will expand upon the concept here and in future writings. The reader should take time to carefully process this concept as it serves as one of the foundation blocks for the following discussions addressing communication with God.

Paul Ray and Sherry Anderson use the term “the Between” to signify a cultural transition, or a rite of passage, between one’s old worldview and a newly forming worldview. The between is part of a passage from one way of knowing into another different way. It is the “coincidence of opposites coming together in a single wholeness [that] marks the peculiar unity of the between which is “neither this nor that and, yet is both.”<sup>3</sup> If there is a “mystical movement” occurring, and if there are rites of passage to this movement, then the between can be visualized as a necessary part of this passage. The between represents a place astride everyday awareness and the dimensions of sacred communication. The between represents a “place” to enter between these two worldviews. It is a place where sacred communication can begin, can be shared, and can be explored. It is the place where the collect call process starts. It is the phone booth.

Tielhard de Chardin said that the mystic “realizes that action and communication are situated neither in the Divine nor the created sphere alone but in a special reality born of their mutual interaction.”<sup>4</sup> This special reality of mutual interaction is the nature of *the between*. “Mystical moments also involve a sense of movement between dimensions of experience, and between self and other.”<sup>5</sup> Sitting in the healing relationship requires understanding “the between” as shown in the following diagram:

**Figure 1: A representation of the “Phone Booth”**



What follows is only a brief description of *The between*. The between is simply learning to sit in the sacred healing space between our relationship with self (our concepts of self), our concepts of relationship with another (including the phone operator), and our perceptions of the sacred relationship with God. Sitting in the between allows us the freedom to have experiences outside these conceptual boundaries. This freedom is necessary if we are to experience a successful collect call with God because the call almost always presents perceptions outside our conceptual boundaries. These boundary breaking perceptions, when experienced within the sacred healing space of the between, can advance our understanding of all relationships. Understanding the nature of the healing relationship within the between is a life long journey of practice and being. It is a journey that starts with knowing and then moves to understanding the existence of such a sacred relationship. Then as you move beyond understanding to sitting within the sacred healing relationship you will further improve your success with the collect call. This is the process of becoming. This is what must happen if you are to use the Collect God Line – you will need to sit in the healing relationship of the between with a phone operator, a mystic/healer.

Evelyn Underhill, in her treatise on mysticism, offered four “rules” that “may be applied as tests to any given case which claims to take rank among the mystics”<sup>6</sup>:

1. The life of the mystic/healer is active and practical. It is compassionately connected to the needs of the community.
2. The life of the mystic/healer is “always set upon the changeless One.”<sup>7</sup> It is a life of developing a relationship with Sacred Oneness.
3. The mystic/healer’s life is about a deep compassion for others.
4. The entire character of the mystic, the self, has been transformed.

Thomas Merton stated that it was probably not “realistic to cling to a single standard in such a thing as mysticism, in which the great rule is that there are no rules.”<sup>8</sup> It may be wiser to visualize Underhill’s ideas not as rules, or categories, but as representing components of a pliable space where the significance of each of these components varies in different mystic’s lives. These can be considered the basic components of the between and are demonstrated as part of the mystic/healers life because of learning to sit in the between.

A respected teacher of Jewish mysticism, Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, stated, “mysticism is the desire to remove the outer coverings of things which hide their inner quality” and “its special goal is the identification with the innermost aspect of everything – the divine.” The Rabbi suggests two processes to accomplish this “finding innerness of our own life as well as the innerness of all things.”<sup>9</sup> Add to these to processes compassion and the result is a definition of the between.

The between may also represent the “Divine polarity”, “a union of opposites” and the “mystery of totality”.<sup>10</sup> The between is like a magnet, it has parts, a north and a south pole, that are different yet parts of the same whole and cannot be divided from the whole. In the definition of the between “the divine conception cannot be conceived as a sum of qualities and virtues but as an absolute factor beyond Good and Evil; that the divine, absolute and transcendent are qualitatively different from the human.”<sup>11</sup> We learn to sit in relationship with the divine but we are not Gods.

Learning to find and enter the phone booth is about improving our relationship with God and in doing so improving our reception and understanding of sacred communication. The mystic/healer, through direct experience, has come to a deeper understanding of God – a sense of oneness, but also knows that there remains a separation. William Johnston describes a problem “central to all mystical theology. We know God; and we do not know God. God is the mysteries of mysteries ... Yet ...we can be very intimate with God who spoke to Moses as one might a friend.”<sup>12</sup> This apparent dualistic nature of the sacred relationship appears only when looking from the outside in.

The more that the mystic/healers practices sitting in the between then the more the between becomes part of being (as opposed to practice). Also the phone operator’s life contains aspects of knowing about the between that is more than the basic components applied in practice. In the shift to being there is a knowing that these components exist without separation and yet simultaneously are separate. It is an understanding that the between contains knowing about these components that extends our understanding of them, beyond their separateness and yet deeply into their essence. “True mystics of all persuasions speak of the ground of being, the center of the soul, the true self, the void, the emptiness, the cosmic energies.”<sup>13</sup> Perhaps these are all ways of addressing the experience of the between.

“The mystical path is a return to union. That is to say, it is a return to union with God, union with all men and women, union with the universe and union with ourselves.”<sup>14</sup>

The path to the phone both is through union, through relationship, and through a place between all aspects of union. It is from the between that the mystic/healer’s journey begins to take focus. This is also the mystic seeker’s starting point for making that collect call to God.

There has been much confusion in man’s writings about what one should focus upon during one’s spiritual journey, answering the question “What I should focus on so that I may have better communication with God?” Should I develop the self, perhaps through the contemplative path? Should I focus solely on God, perhaps through the study of sacred teachings? Should I commit myself to compassionate works, perhaps through a dedication to helping others? What path should I set myself on if I want to improve my communication with God?

The path of the self, or self-actualization, has been a path considered as leading to the mystic way.<sup>15</sup> Even when the path of “no-self” is discussed as important to the mystic way it is stated that the path to “no-self” must be traveled through the self.<sup>16</sup> We cannot know what it is to be “no-self” until we let go of what we know to be “our self”. I prefer the term *empty self* as I think it is more descriptive of this process. If we neglect the self then it becomes too easy to unknowingly project our personal confusion on to others and on to our understanding of God. But if we focus solely on the self, then it is too easy to say that all is within the self and that there is nothing but the self. It is then possible to follow this by saying that all healing and miracles come from the self and that all evil comes from the self. Such a view can lead to a narcissist life style. It is also a view that inhibits preparation for transformative experiences outside the conscious awareness of one’s self-concept. This includes awareness discovered through no-self and beyond through the concept of empty self. A preoccupation with self can also lead to excessive self-examination, a continual revisiting of one’s flaws during spiritual contemplation. This can be dangerous for mystic seekers because “excessive self examination will produce in their spirit only darkness and not light.”<sup>17</sup> Total dedication to self-actualization, and chasing after self insights, can also inhibit the development of compassion.

Compassion can be defined as empathy plus wisdom. Infinite compassion is a widely recognized trait of the Divine Sacredness. We need relationships with other people because we cannot sit in a compassionate relationship with the Divine 100% of the time with 100% success, with the exception of mystical moments. We also can’t share with the Divine at levels of infinite compassion. We can only share compassion with the Divine at a level we are able to demonstrate in our lives. This is the main reason why compassion is so much a part of communication with God. We learn how to sit with more compassion by practicing compassion in our lives and thus learn how to sit in compassion with God. It is very hard to sit alone, look in the mirror, and gain a fair assessment of one’s compassion. It is also very difficult to learn about compassion through only thinking (studying, reading, engaging in ritual, singing) about God. The nature of one’s compassion must be realized in the proving grounds of relationships with others.

Compassion is learned through relationships with others, but should we devote our lives to the other? If we continually give of ourselves to others, without working on personal growth, without taking time for knowing God, then there is the risk that we will maintain the same old habits of interaction<sup>18</sup> and never see the path of growth and spiritual development. There is also the problem of repeating relationship models (habitual patterns) we might have, like trying to “fix” the other person, or having such sympathy we become like the other person (or persons if it is a community).<sup>19</sup>

“The way of cowardice is to embed ourselves in a cocoon, in which we perpetuate our habitual patterns. When we are constantly recreating our basic patterns of behavior and thought, we never have to leap into fresh air or onto fresh ground.”<sup>20</sup>

If we cannot see ourselves clearly then how are we to change, to improve? How can we then develop compassion? How can we better sit in the between?

Should we solely focus on our relationship with God to the exclusion of self and others? If we do this we could seclude ourselves in our own mental constructions of what God's relationship should be and thus restrict the opportunities to expand our understanding beyond our constructed limits. If we spend all our waking hours solely in devotional activities then we risk becoming an addict to our own romanticized relationship with God (which we can do with another or with self equally as easy). God becomes the object of our desires and then it is the "I" seeking the "it". It is this objectified, and often romanticized, relationship that has led to man killing man over religion (or over a love affair, or over needing the self to be "right"). In addition to devotional time we need the time needed to change our awareness of self through insight, and to develop a life of living the healing relationship through compassion toward others.

What is needed in our search to improve our communication with God is a balanced approach. There is a balance to be discovered in living within the between as we seek to share the healing relationship of oneness. In the between there is self and there is no-self together in the state of empty self. In the between there is a union with God and then there is no union possible with the infinite, only relationship from the between. There is the oneness experience of infinite compassion with another and there is the total separation from the other that is accompanied by empty desire.<sup>21</sup> In the between there is a deep compassionate stillness that applies to our relationship with God, our relationship with self, and our relationship with others. This is the phone booth, the sacred healing relationship, from which successful collect calls are made. It is within this space that the deepest and truest parts of our being are communicated to God and to each other.

The healing relationship needs to be put into practice if it to be understood – in terms of its effects on relationships with others (including the phone operator), its effects on self concept and its effects on our placing the collect call to God. Practicing the healing relationship is not the same as simply offering help to others, or being kind toward others, or helping apply healing techniques. Nor is it the same as knowing self. Nor is it the same as the study of knowing God or rituals of practice used when seeking God. It is a special way of interacting with others, self and God that includes the "between". When we learn to sit in the between any relationship can become mutually growth fostering (relationship with self, with others, with God). We learn to accept both the duality and the non-duality (like the self and the non-self) as part of the same experience within the between. Additional features of the "between" are described in my previous publications.<sup>22</sup> The focus in this book is that sitting in the between, a part of our knowing the sacred healing relationship and knowing the healing relationship, is necessary for entry into the phone booth. It is proposed there that entry into the phone booth is necessary preparation for placing the collect call to God.

Sitting within the healing relationship requires practice and with proper practice comes a greater ability to sit in the between (to stay in the phone booth and make the collect call). The greatest opportunity to practice is in daily life. This is why there is almost no difference between how we sit in relationship with our fellow humans and how we sit in relationship with God's phone operator and with God. If we can't sit in the healing relationship (the phone booth) with our fellow humans then it becomes quite difficult to sit in the phone booth with the phone operator. Then because we can't sit with the mystic/healer then we can't place the collect call or we place the call but we can't sit to hear the message clearly and then we can't process it wisely. The level at which we can sit in the healing relationship with others is similar to the level at which we are able to be in a healing relationship with God. The first step to placing the collect call is learning to sit in the sacred healing relationship.

This does not mean that we have to be perfect in our ability to sit in a place of halopathy<sup>23</sup> and sacred wisdom. All we have to have is a basic understanding to enter the phone booth. As with most learning we can gradually improve how we sit in the phone booth. But we must practice to improve. We must practice with others and with the phone operator. We must practice by ourselves, within our relationships with others, and within our relationship with God. We may find teachers who can provide support and help us to improve with this sitting and knowing. There are many different types of teachers and each may offer to us pieces of understanding that will help us with sitting in the phone booth. There is only One Way, but there are many paths and many choices that incorporate a broad range of cultures, rituals, and personal understanding.

At this point some readers may have a myriad of questions about the nature of the between. Some may have been answered by the above description. Some of these questions may be answered by reading my earlier publications. Some will be answered within the remaining chapters. But some questions probably exceed the scope of this text and hopefully will be addressed in future texts. The concepts associated with sitting in the between are far reaching. It is a basic concept that extends to all aspects of living a life closer to God. It is a basic concept that extends to both outer action and inner discipline. But, for now, in this analogy of the collect call, the reader needs only to understand that the phone booth is a metaphor for the sacred healing relationship and sitting in the between with (or without) the phone operator.

Sitting in the phone booth is the beginning of the process, but it is a beginning that must be incorporated into the entire collect call process. How you learn to do that is of your own choice. Sitting in the phone booth is a requirement for placing the collect call and it is something you can continually improve. As you improve it will be easier for you to access the Collect God Line. This path of improving communication with God within the healing relationship, and often with the help of the operator, is a defining characteristic of the mystic seeker's path.

## Know that there are difficulties to be faced

In order to make the collect call you need to sit in the phone booth. In the journey to find the phone booth, to enter it, and then to sit in it, you are likely to face personal difficulties. The most obvious of which are those personal issues that prevent you from sitting in the sacred healing relationship with the phone operator. There are many different obstacles that could be part of your personal quest. Some of these obstacles, or barriers, are described in my previous publications.<sup>24</sup>

Everyone will face barriers during their quest for the phone booth. This is a natural part of the process. When you develop a relationship with an operator then s/he should be able to help you understand the nature of these barriers in relation to your sitting in the phone booth. Once you understand these barriers to sitting with the mystic/healer then it becomes easier to use other resources to address the obstacles preventing full use of the phone booth.

I am not going to discuss the nature of personal barriers (this will be done in another book<sup>25</sup>) here except to say that I am very familiar with them. My life has not been pristine. I have not secluded myself in a retreat center in order to “find God”. I have lived in the world and faced the challenges it has offered (and continue to face them) and I have done many things for which I have trouble forgiving myself. Such is the nature of being human and being in the world. In addition I have the memories of childhood abuse and the memories of personal attacks from my closest friends and relatives. These are both connected to haunting voices in my mind that serve as barriers to my communication with God. There is seldom a week when I do not “hear” that inner voice of worthlessness, and to make it worse I will agree with that voice. I can be very hard on myself, very self-critical. I hate making mistakes and I am very hard on myself when I do. Showing compassion toward myself in the face of all my weaknesses and faults is difficult for me. I will often join those “old voices” that tear down what little self-esteem I have. Then as I am whimpering in my self-loathing I have a hunger to “feel good”. I have chased this hunger down many different paths over the course of my life and all but one has led to increased barriers and more suffering. The only path that has not been a barrier has been to let go of the hunger and sit in the between without expectation (empty desire) – to sit with only naked faith. When I do this I experience that my life has a Divine nature and I see that I do not wish to act in any manner that separates me from that purpose. I see the true nature of my being. Do I sometimes feel separate and lost – yes! But I also know that I can find my way back.

In dealing with my own barriers I have learned the progression of not knowing – knowing – doing – being. My past writings reflect his progression. Recently being has been the focus of my personal release from the barriers influence -- to simply “be” in the between. For me there are new aspects to barrier release discovered in being that I never saw in all the more pragmatic approaches. In some ways being allows the barriers to disappear more easily, but not until they have first become intolerably loud. Being the phone operator has placed me face to face, every moment of my life, with the

option, “Do I want to listen to my barriers or do I want to listen to God?” It is a fork in the road where I must choose between the *serenity path* and the *confusion path*. I am gradually learning to not only walk the serenity path but to be a radiant example of that path through being rather than doing. I am learning that I do not need to proclaim the serenity because it will proclaim itself through me. I simply need to teach about its nature when the opportunity presents itself for me to do so.

I think if we are honest then all of us face barriers, some worse than others. We may eliminate some only to find new ones. We may place some in the closet only to have them surprise us when we least expect it. The concept of connecting through on the phone line to God is one of clarity. Both parties ask “Can you hear me now?” This is true for human relationships, our sitting with the mystic/healer and our relationship with God. Knowing the impact of our barriers is about improving the clarity, and the consistency of that clarity. It is not about carrying the persistent burden of shame and guilt. The operator can illuminate the nature of the barriers, but there are many helpers in the community who can assist in decreasing their effects. We can seek these helpers to reduce the effects of the barriers. This is all part of the journey to understand the phone booth and our personal responsibility to sit in it.

#### Beware of cartoon phone booths

Beware of phone booths that appear to be those that offer the Collect God Line but do not. Like cartoons they present the illusion of reality but have no substance behind them. You could think of a cartoon phone booth as being of paper, like a prop in a movie or a play. It may look like a phone booth, but when you enter there is no phone, and there is no true operator. It is totally absent of substance.

Some times it is difficult to know the difference between a skilled operator and one who is pretending, or professing, to be so. Remember that the phone booth is more than just the “image” of the operator. It is also the relationship you establish. In the beginning it is best to gather information about the nature of the phone booth, and then wait before asking to place the call. Check and see if the phone booth fits the nature of the sacred healing relationship (as I have described elsewhere). If it doesn’t fit the definition then find another phone booth. There are many people offering the illusion of the healing relationship. Sometimes it is difficult to know the difference. Learn the difference and choose wisely.

#### Be prepared

Be prepared to take the journey into the phone booth and into the collect call conversation. Make sure you have done all you can to be ready to enter the phone booth and to participate in the sacred conversation. Take whatever appropriate personal quests needed to get yourself prepared. Find the resources needed to get prepared. It is very difficult to enter the phone booth with no knowledge of what to expect and no

knowledge of how to act (or be). This lack of knowing often makes finding the phone booth and sitting with the mystic/healer, difficult because you do not know the number, or how to speak to the operator, or what to expect when the collect call is made.

“So much of the contemplative process is preparatory. We must prepare ourselves to be receptive and sensitive to the divine presence.”<sup>26</sup>

Much of learning how to make the collect call is about preparation. This is preparation that is needed so that one can find the right phone booth and use it properly. It is preparation so that one finds the right operator. It is preparation so that one can communicate with the operator in a manner that decreases the effect of “static and background chatter”. If you present yourself unprepared to the operator then the operator may provide feedback informing you on how to become prepared. This feedback may be directed at one or all of the following: illuminating the barriers, evaluating the effects of conflicting mental models, knowing how to sit in the phone booth (the healing relationship), how to request the collect call, how to act during the collect call and how to process and integrate the content of the phone call. You may need to spend time involved in additional preparation prior to making another collect call attempt.

The lack of preparation makes any collect call hard, but it makes any direct call extremely difficult. When using the direct line you don’t have an operator to give you feedback on what preparation you need to make in order to improve the success of your call. You will have to try to figure it out yourself. This can be an arduous journey. It is important to know that the direct line requires considerable more preparation than the when placing a collect call. The process of direct line preparation (keeping the phone lines clear and understanding the messages) will be elaborated upon in a later section.

Emergency situations require a different type of preparation and this will be discussed later.

### **Contacting the Operator**

Let us assume that you have found the phone booth (you have some knowledge of the sacred healing relationship) and you have made some preparations to enter the phone booth. Now you want to contact the operator to place the collect call.

First, and most important, is to understand the behavior and character of skilled operators. This is necessary so that a) you know you have contacted an operator (and not someone else) and b) that this person has the skills necessary to place your collect call request in the manner that you desire. This is discussed further in the next chapter “Connecting to the Right Operator”.

Second, you must understand your personal responsibilities in the process of contacting the operator. These responsibilities are as follows:

1. Seeking with the proper intent.
2. Knowing when to use the collect call services.
3. Knowing the right match.

When you are seeking to contact the operator to place a collect call to God it is important to have the proper intent (this is also discussed in the book “The Healing Relationship”). Proper intent refers to the attitude and motives you have when trying to place the collect call. Here are some examples, each beginning with “I need to talk to God about helping me...”

- Win the lottery.
- Become famous (like a movie star).
- Get back at the person, or people, who did this to me (revenge).
- Help me get high so that I can feel good.

These examples have ego intent (self centered intentions). There are numerous examples of intent with ego involvement. In some way they all interfere with placing the collect call. The proper intent comes from the place of empty desire and the empty self, the self that has “died” and left room for God to enter. The proper intent comes from sitting in the phone booth and asking for blessing, understanding, and compassion. The proper intent comes with a devotion to responsibility – the personal responsibility to listen and obey. This learning of proper intent is an important part of each person’s personal responsibility to the collect call process.

Knowing when to make the collect call is an important part of the process. Imagine calling collect to a relative, or friend, everyday for six months (a total of about 180 calls). Would your friend continue to accept your calls? Would your friend maintain a listening ear during every one of the 180 calls? Then what about the bill? Is it really necessary to make all these calls? Do you continue to make the same type of call without paying attention to how you could improve the success of that call? It is important to make some personal decisions about when to visit the operator for the collect call request, and when you should try to find other resources. There are various types of helping relationships<sup>27</sup> and each can be of assistance to the mystic seeker. It is important to learn how to select the proper time to use the operator and when it would be wiser for you to work on making changes in your life. And it is important to use the encounter with the operator to further your growth and awareness so that it will be easier, and more successful, the next time you wish to make a collect call.

In addition to proper intent and proper selection there is also proper match. There is no one operator (in human form) that is suited to all peoples needs. No single operator can place all collect calls, in an efficient manner, meeting all peoples’

requests. But there is likely to be an operator available, within your culture, which will meet your individual needs. There is likely to be an operator who can place your collect call and provide useful feedback to you about the process.

No one can find this match between you and the operator except you. No one can tell you when a match has not happened if you believe it has, because this is a choice only you can make. You must seek to find the match and you must know what is not a match. Beware of frauds that disguise themselves as “mystics”. Time with them is time wasted. This is discussed further in a later chapter.

### **Communicating with the Operator**

Asking the operator to make a collect call to God is not as simple as making a similar type of call to your best friend or a relative. There are special considerations that need to be given to HOW to make the request and WHAT information must accompany that request. These are also issues one faces when trying to develop a direct line to God (see the chapter on developing a direct line). But if you have found the right operator you don't have to struggle trying to build your own direct line. When communicating with a phone operator (mystic/healer) the operator should be able to guide you along in the process, making sacred communication easier than if you were to try it alone. You should expect communication with the operator to involve instruction in these matters.

There are definitely more communication skills demands placed on the mystic seeker trying to use the direct line as opposed to the collect call. This is why many people need to access the operator first, before trying to establish their own direct line. The phone operator lessens the demands by acting as an interpreter helping to communicate your message. In addition the operator can tell you if your request has been received, at what level it has been received, and what actions need to occur next. This human feedback can be very helpful in the continued quest to develop a stronger relationship with God. Communication with the phone operator is of this nature.

The idea of developing better communication with the phone operator is not meant to replace the possibility of direct communication with God. Both approaches should be used to compliment each other. For the mystic seeker, one helps the other to develop. The communication with the phone operator allows you to share the process communicating with God and in this sharing learn more about improving.

In any attempt to communicate with the phone operator there are four parts to the communication process: 1) intent, 2) doing 3) waiting and 4) processing. Intent has previously been discussed. Waiting and processing are both addressed later in this book. Doing, the ever-present status in our culture often appearing as “What do I do?”, is addressed next.

The concept of doing, within this context of this book refers to the acts of doing when we interact with the phone operator. An examination of your doing means that you are willing to do what is needed to initiate and maintain an open line of communication with the operator for the purpose of making the collect call to God. Your operator should be able to show you what form doing will take for you in your request for the collect call.

The teaching of doing will follow a natural progression as follows:

Not knowing (unaware consciously)  
to  
Knowing (the practice of proper thought)  
to  
Doing (the practice of proper action)  
to  
Being (the practice of not practicing, of being)

The intent of this progression is to learn your personal awakening path to clearer and more successful communication with God. This progression will be repeated each time you face new challenges, new barriers and new quests to expand your relationship with God. And there will be times when the progression is transcended, and time when it seems to go in reverse.

Sometimes when you are faced with completing this progression from one aspect of our awareness to another it may seem that God has “put you on hold”. While on hold, God may appear distant and perhaps absent. In the face of the being put on hold you may struggle with the interpretation. Is this an “assignment” (quest, journey, training) as part of improving my relationship with God? Is it of my own making? Or is it all an illusion? Do I have the patience and wisdom to wait for improved communication until after we have fulfilled our responsibility to the assignment? Being on hold can be a difficult experience. It is one that is made easier with the wisdom of the phone operator who can explain the various aspects of being put on hold. This requires patience, and sacred waiting, while doing whatever “assignment” may be revealed. This is an important part of our personal responsibility to our relationship with God. The concept of sacred waiting is explained further in Chapter Four.

Doing the “assignment” is not the same as doing some “good deed” or some “act of charity” and then waiting for God to thank us with a blessing. (But it also doesn’t mean we should stop acting with compassion.) Rather every doing (and waiting) should be viewed through our devotion to a personal responsibility for entering the sacred healing relationship. It is a responsibility we can never relinquish. It is a responsibility that mirrors itself in the relationships we have with others. And we use intent, doing, waiting, and processing – all held in balance with each other – to promote our development within this special relationship.

Doing involves action and then understanding the consequences of action as well as persistence. Doing also involves not doing, or the importance of being, and presence. Waiting incorporates patience, and a sacred tranquility. Waiting also involves a depth of knowing that supports patience and tranquility. Waiting and doing are constantly kept in balance with each other through the use of processing or interpretation. Processing involves compassion and connecting with all aspects of the between. Compassion is empathy plus wisdom. Combined, and lived as balance in the between, intent, doing, waiting, and processing form the foundation for skilled communication with the phone operator. Skilled communication increases the likelihood of a successful collect call. This is the responsibility we all have as mystic seekers when communicating with the phone operator.

### **Waiting for God to “Accept the Charges”**

After the collect call request has been successfully placed by the operator then there is a pause, a time to wait for the answer to “Will God accept the charges?” Sometimes the waiting is only for moments as the call is placed and the answer received by the operator, and then translated to you. Often you will know when the answer has been received even before the operator confirms the response. But sometimes we have to wait for that response and that knowing.

Sometimes waiting for the answer happens because the operator says that God has something for you to do first (an “assignment” which is a type of answer to your collect call, although perhaps not the one you may have wanted). You then have to complete the assignment and return another time to place that collect call again. This often involves waiting, and waiting can be quite difficult in a culture that is so anxious for the do – fix – cure.

If you are not given an assignment and God is willing to “accept the charges” then what is your personal responsibility? The concept of “accepting the charges” in this analogy means that God is willing to let you forego the normal rigorous transformation process needed to have, and maintain, a direct line. You are not asked to demonstrate efforts toward purification prior to that moment of communication. God is willing to “take on that fee”, at that moment, and engage in a brief dialog with you in the presence of the operator. Both you and the operator will know when this dialog occurs. There will be no confusion about whether it occurred. It will be a dialog that speaks to you in the way that you understand God’s presence at that moment. It will be witnessed by the operator, which further eliminates confusion. In addition the operator should instruct you on the unique nature of the conversation, as it is occurring, so that you can become familiar with the process. This will help in future processing of the event and in future communications with God.

Sometimes the communication reveals that there is no answer at this time, but that one will be discovered soon. This communication may even include some warning signs or some indicators of success. In some instances the communication may state

that your prayers are answered, but that some time needs to pass first before the answer can be clearly seen. These are examples where *sacred waiting* needs to happen.

Sacred waiting happens within a state of peace, trust, and compassion. Sacred waiting involves a centering of one's being in a state of holy prayer, not necessarily all the time but during the times you are waiting to hear an answer. More details on the nature of sacred waiting will be discussed later in this text. These are all aspects of how the communication with the operator might unfold. It is our personal responsibility to process this sacred communication and to then integrate its insights into daily life.

### **Processing After the Conversation**

Every conversation with God has consequences. Consequences are not necessarily good or bad; they are simply the result of the conversation. A consequence means that there is something that will occur as a result of the collect call. This is an unshakable truth. Our personal responsibility is to know as much as we can about the how to be prepared for these consequences. These are consequences that need to be prepared for, and followed through with proper intent (or proper orientation). What is meant by proper intent here is that preparing for and accepting the consequences of communication with God should be done with reverence, compassion, empty desire and the empty self. Maintaining this proper intent is quite difficult for most people and it is why mystic seekers need to use the collect call services. Maintaining proper intent is a consequence that if not followed has additional consequences. Ignoring the consequences of the God conversation, or ignoring the preparation for the consequences, can and often does, lead to more suffering. (This does not mean that all suffering is related to this process.)

Every conversation with God comes with information. This is one of the consequences. It is our personal responsibility to seek understanding of that information. It may be difficult to interpret this information and the interpretation process may get confusing. Our personal habits of relationships and understanding relationships are often intertwined with the interpretation process. The operator can help you clarify your own interpretation process. Operators should limit imposing their own interpretation process, and help you to clarify your personal interpretation of the conversation and its life-oriented consequences. A skilled operator will also help you to clarify the process behind the interpretation process. If barriers get in the way a skilled operator will illuminate these and may suggest additional time be spent in a helping support relationship.<sup>28</sup> This may also be a consequence of the collect call conversation.

It is important to know that coming to understand the consequences of a conversation with God *always involves personal responsibility*. Various aspects of this personal responsibility have already been mentioned. If you expect to make another

collect call, and to have that call well received, you need to make the effort to understand the consequences of the conversation you just finished. You also need to integrate the information acquired from the collect call into your daily life. You need to act in a manner consistent with that conversation – both in attitude and in deed. Living a life closer to God, where you become more successful in placing that collect call, requires improving daily awareness, daily devotion, daily action, and proper processing of regular feedback from others (that we listen to and use to promote our personal and spiritual development). The phone operator should provide you with direction on the nature of your personal responsibility so that the processing happens with less confusion.

Personal responsibility equates with freedom to choose. This is not so much the freedom to choose anything, but rather the freedom to choose within the realm of choice fitting our nature and situation. Personal responsibility is also balanced against the process of letting go and letting others, along with God, provide. Personal responsibility is connected to discernment and to listening to the discernment of others. Personal responsibility, as balanced against letting go, is another aspect of the between. The two (personal responsibility and letting go) meet at a point of compassion and humility. This is a difficult view of the between to process and it is easy to get confused about what is freedom of choice and what is God's will. There is great danger in getting lost around this issue. "In my opinion, the relationship between personal and divine will is the most fierce and treacherous confrontation faced by modern spiritual guides and leaders."<sup>29</sup>

It is very easy to become confused, to "get lost" in the processing of the sacred communication event. Perhaps the event only lasted seconds, the insights were brief, and the ecstasy faded too quickly. All that remained was a brief memory. The memory seeks integration into the mind and in seeking to do so, particularly without guidance, it is easy to lose oneself in confusion during the process of interpretation. It is easy to forget the importance of the sacred healing relationship. It is easy to forget the need to return to the healing relationship frequently as part of the practice to prevent getting lost. This is where skilled phone operators can be of assistance. You can return to the sacred healing relationship and process aspects of the previous event that remain mysterious, or perhaps even troublesome.

The central tenant of this text is that ***there have been gifted spiritual teachers, phone operators, throughout human history. Their responsibility has been to guide people on the journey*** of their own personal spiritual development – so that they can be more successful in placing the collect call to God. In addition their job is to help process the events around the placement of the collect call. It is a wasted call, and perhaps a wasted life, if time is not spent deeply reflecting on the life changing qualities of a conversation with God. This is your personal responsibility. You should get all the help you need in doing this processing. Help with the processing is the responsibility of the operator. Be prepared to receive the help is the responsibility of the mystic seeker.

One of the central reasons that you use a phone operator, and why operators are available, is to have a *witness* to the nature and content of your conversation with God. This concept of witness is as it sounds – someone who was there with you to witness what transpired. The operator is there during the event to help place the collect call to God and the operator has shared with you what transpired during that call. The operator is now a witness to what transpired during that call – and skilled operators understand that responsibility. As a witness they make sure that before you leave the phone booth you have reviewed what transpired. Skilled operators are also there for you to return to as part of the necessary follow-up processing. It is wise to do the follow-up processing with the operator who was *your witness*, because it is easy to get lost in confusion about what happened, and what it meant, when exploring what occurred with someone who wasn't part of the experience. If you can't return to, or speak with, the operator who was the witness then speak with a different operator or at least someone who is knowledgeable about the role of the phone operator. Processing (interpreting and integrating) the consequences of the collect call with God is your personal responsibility and absolutely a requisite for further improved sacred communication.

A proper perspective on processing sacred communication is important because you will not be able to spend every hour of every day sitting in the phone booth with the operator making collect calls to God. You will need to go about your daily life and do the business of living in the world as it exists. The operator also has to do this – live a daily life. There are things that you will learn from your collect call. These are things that should be applied in daily life. The operator may have suggestions to help you with this process, or suggest others who could help you (by using the support relationships available in your community). This is where personal responsibility is put to the test. Can you assume the personal responsibility to change how you interact with your daily life? Can you integrate the information received from the phone call into how you live?

I continually seek ways to improve how I interact with my life. I have moments, hours every week, when I do not feel joyful or “sacred”. Maybe I am angry at some hypocritical behavior someone did (saying they are compassionate or spiritual and then harming someone). Maybe I don't like my job because it seems too “empty and meaningless”. Perhaps I am tired of listening to all the suffering of the world and I would just like to escape. More likely I am tired of listening to my own suffering and I would like something, anything, to help me feel better. Or even worse I hate myself because I think that I am a really “messed up” person and that I will never get anything accomplished (and nothing that I have accomplished is any of any use). If I could just “do” better, accomplish more, than I would feel better. There are also days when I feel physically miserable. Perhaps I think that I should be spiritually stronger and be able to sit within in a sacred presence more often and I am upset at myself for not being able to do so. There is seldom a week that goes by when I am not thinking or feeling one of these things. I am simply another human being struggling to be closer to God.

Sometimes it seems strange to me, after all the enlightenment experiences I have had in my life that I would still have these moments of suffering in my daily life. But that is the nature of my humanness and it is not something I wish to avoid or escape. Rather I wish to embrace it and transform it into a “proper” way of processing daily life. I applaud myself for the small progress I make each year in my attitude toward my own suffering (physical, emotional). I assume the personal responsibility of taking what I have learned from my conversations with God, and from the collect calls I have placed for others, and applying it to daily life. I also give humble gratitude to God for those conversations and their consequences.

From my communications with God I have received information that has shown me problems in my life, habits of thought and action that keep me from hearing God’s message. For example, my childhood history was less than nurturing and I developed and internal dialog of self defeating statements. “You are a failure.” “You will never amount to anything.” “You are a terrible person.” This dialog was, and still is, particularly loud whenever I make the smallest mistake. If someone pointed out the mistake to me then I had the compounding habit of having to defend the mistake. “But I really meant this.” “It happened because they did that.” But while defending myself I was trying to protect that little child who felt so unloved so many years ago. These habits were so deeply ingrained that I wasn’t sure it was going to be possible for me to change. The more I focused on changing them the more I hated myself for not changing and the worse things got. It became a recurring recipe for self-destruction. I needed to find a way out of the confusion left by this heritage of darkness.

God seemed kind toward me in my struggle, but also firm. I was continually shown the problem and provided with the opportunities to change. Since this inner dialog was so persistent I often had opportunities every day. Sometimes I had opportunities with consequences that I didn’t want – like getting into defensive arguments with people. I would spend days after these arguments scolding myself and asking, “How could you be so stupid to do that same thing again?” I could clearly see that I needed to change and when I got to the point where I was dedicated to changing, willing to sacrifice myself for that change, give myself totally to God for that change, do anything to change, then the process became clear, and surprisingly simple.

I realized three things that helped in this process. First was that I could shut my mouth and not say anything until I had reviewed it in my mind. If I had to say something I would ask for clarification, “I don’t understand. Could you explain it again to me please?” This gave me time to practice keeping my mouth shut. I learned that I could interact instead of react. Second was that I came to understand that all this dialog was about the past, about the “hurt child” and that I was no longer that “hurt child”. I had a loving relationship with God (and a few others in my life). I needed to focus on the me who was me NOW! And the third was a technique I developed for proper processing my reactions (thoughts and feelings) in response to a wide range of difficult events.

For years I have been practicing a simple technique to help me with “proper processing” of both difficult events and Gods communications. At any given moment in my life I consider myself at a fork in the road. I have the option, the free will, to take either the fork on the right or the fork on the left. These are the only two choices I have. This is the nature of personal responsibility. Doing nothing is still a choice that takes me down one of the two paths. These two paths (forks in the road) are termed *the serenity path* and *the confusion path*. The serenity path involves interacting with life in a serene and sacred way. The confusion path involves interacting with life in a confused manner resulting in consequences that require more time and effort to repair. The confusion path often leads to more suffering and the serenity path to more healing.

This technique of the “forked path”, of knowing moment by moment that we have the option to take either the serenity path or the confusion path, can become a practice of “proper processing”. The meeting with the operator should offer direct experience of walking on the serenity path (or at least an explanation of what to do to get there). This can be compared with the times that you walk the confusion path. With time and practice you can learn to tell the difference more quickly. With each visit to the phone operator you will learn more. This is the path of the mystic seeker. It is the responsibility of the operator to help the mystic seeker in these matters.

## Chapter One Summary and Conclusions

This chapter presented a quick introduction into how to make the collect call to God. Some of the topics presented in this chapter are further elaborated upon in other chapters in this book and in other publications by this author. The following topics were discussed within this chapter:

- You need to find the phone booth, the sacred healing relationship, before trying to place the collect call. This means understanding the characteristics of the healing relationship and practice sitting in the sacred healing space of the between. This means accepting the responsibility to understand the empty self, empty desire, compassion and oneness.
- You should know how to contact the phone operator, which means knowing the behavior and characteristics of skilled operators in order to locate one.
- You should know how to communicate with the operator:

Communication involves intent, doing, waiting and processing.

Progress is made by moving through not knowing (unaware consciously) to knowing (the practice of proper thought) to

doing (the practice of proper action) to being (the practice of not practicing).

- The phone conversation often involves waiting for the God to “accept the charges”. Understanding this is a part of the collect call process.
- After the collect call is done you should take the time to process (think about, reflect on, share with others, discuss) the conversation. This includes:

Acknowledging personal responsibility to accept the consequences of the phone call.

Knowing the role of the witness.

Choosing the serenity path over the confusion path.

When seeking to make the collect call to God the most salient points are 1) that you must utilize the phone booth – the sacred healing relationship – properly, and 2) that one must locate a skilled operator, which requires you to understand the characteristics of the mystic/healer. If you know how to properly use the phone booth, and you know how to access and communicate with the operator, then the process of making the collect call is most likely to be successful.

### **End Notes and References Cited**

To locate the reference go to the reference list and look up the authors name and the year of publication.

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- <sup>1</sup> Hoisington, 2002
- <sup>2</sup> See “The Healing Relationship”.
- <sup>3</sup> Ray and Anderson, 2000 p. 269. Includes a quote from Turner, 1987, p. 8.
- <sup>4</sup> King, 1996, p. 63.
- <sup>5</sup> Eigen, 1998, p. 30.
- <sup>6</sup> Underhill, 1999, p. 81.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> Merton, 1967, p. 148.
- <sup>9</sup> Quoted in Weiner, 1969, p. 97.
- <sup>10</sup> Eliade, 1965, p. 80-82.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. 82.
- <sup>12</sup> Johnston, 2000, p. 61.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 159.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 160.
- <sup>15</sup> Sinetar, 1986.
- <sup>16</sup> Roberts, 1985.
- <sup>17</sup> Merton, 1967, p. 167.
- <sup>18</sup> Old habits of interaction are described as barriers in my earlier publication.
- <sup>19</sup> Some of the risks associated with deep empathy are described in my earlier publication. They are important for the novice to understand. All these problems are resolved when sitting in the between.
- <sup>20</sup> Trungpa, 1984, p. 37.
- <sup>21</sup> The term empty desire is described in more detail further in this text.
- <sup>22</sup> Hoisington, 2002.
- <sup>23</sup> Halopathy is a term equated with holistic empathy and described in “The Healing Relationship”.
- <sup>24</sup> Hoisington, 2002.
- <sup>25</sup> For an introduction see Hoisington, 2002.
- <sup>26</sup> Teasdale, 1999, p. 101.
- <sup>27</sup> Described in my earlier publications.
- <sup>28</sup> Different types of helping relationships are described in my earlier publication.
- <sup>29</sup> May, 1982a, p. 16.