

**Calling God Collect:
The Mystic's Relationship – Sacred Characteristics of the
Compassion Space**

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to two people who have been in my life during most of my awakened journey.

To my brother Michael, whose Job like struggles with the darkness have taught me so much about the “cloud of unknowing”.

To my daughter Andrea, whose light has continued to shine through the darkness despite so many obstacles and to my son Eli whose strength of goodness always reached out to me.

To my wife Darcy – my soul mate – the depth of her support is indeed a gift from God.

Praise to God for always being there even when I was not.

Acknowledgments

This book would not be possible without all the many people who I have encountered along the journey and whose lives are in some way reflected within each page. In seeking help through me they have all enriched me and for that I am humbly grateful. I am especially indebted to Paul Larkin for all those Friday spirituality talks.

Much of this book is based upon the work included within my Ph.D. research and the people that supported its completion. Thanks to Professor Fred Frohock for planting the “mystic” seed. I am appreciative of my son’s reminder that some people seek spirituality through reason as it helped to provide balance against the more mystical approach. Additional literature review was included as part of this book. Access to this literature would not have been possible without the aid of our local librarian Linda Hall. This book would not have been completed without the financial, editorial, and compassionate support of my wife.

Without my relationship with God nothing in this book would have been written.

The case vignettes (this does not refer to my personal stories) presented within this book are created from a compilation of many peoples’ stories. Any resemblance to an actual person is accidental.

Introduction

Gallop polls in the 1990s suggested that more than 50 percent of Americans surveyed had experienced some “moment of religious awakening or insight”.ⁱ Over the past several decades 26 percent of Americans have made “comprehensive shifts in their worldview, values, and way of life”ⁱⁱ and a similar percentage is reported for Europe.ⁱⁱⁱ Most of these people say it is very important to develop more awareness and to not “sleep walk through life”.^{iv}

There is “modern mystical movement”^v occurring in this country, and in Europe, supported by a majority who believe in God and are seeking better understanding of their relationship with the mystical, through developing a more sacred life. The mystical experience has historically served as the foundation for spiritual understanding. In the book “The Healing Relationship”, the compassion space was described as having a “sacred quality”. This book seeks to explore the sacred qualities of the compassion space. One’s quest for spiritual understanding is greatly enhanced through direct experience, through what can be called the mystical experience, followed by wise teaching from a gifted spiritual guide within the compassion space. This book offers some guidance for people on this spiritual quest – and it does so using metaphor (phone call to God within the compassion space) combined with research and the author’s personal experience.

Suppose we wanted to have a conversation with God. How would we accomplish that? Is it as simple as saying a prayer? Are all prayers answered? Are all people able to communicate with God at the same level of clarity and wisdom? If someone says they have had a “conversation” with God then how would we know this is likely to be true? If we think we have had such a conversation then what do we do? Are there people who can help us to communicate with God and understand that communication?

This book proposes answers to these questions through the use of the analogy of making a collect phone call. We all have the innate ability to make that phone call to God. Although innately we may all have the potential to call God many of us do not have regular access, but may wish to improve our access. On occasion we have misplaced (or lost) God’s phone number, forgotten where we put the phone, or because haven’t talked much with God we forgot how to prepare for entering the sacred communication process (the sacred aspects of the compassion space). How many people can say they have talked with God on the direct line and received a clear message back – something more than a good feeling? How many people can pick up the phone almost anytime and get through without “static”?

The basic premise of this book is that throughout history there have been people who have professed evidence of having a direct line to God. These people have been called mystic, nurse, messiah, guru, nun, prophet, shaman, priest or healer. They have served in the role of spiritual guide for the community. They have acquired a “direct line” to God, a “phone line” with less static and more clarity, and it is a line they use on behalf of others. Because of this they were “called” by God to serve as the “phone operator” and the more they served in this role the more skilled they became as a “phone operator”. They are the people in the community who help others to make the collect call to God. They know the sacred qualities of the compassion space. This book will help you to know these people, these phone operators, to

distinguish them from frauds, and then trust that they will help us to have a “conversation” with God through the placing of a “collect call”. There is a lot of fear and mistrust in the world and a lack of understanding about the compassion space. There is fear regarding relationships and fear of authority. But these fears do not mean that there are not wise and gifted sacred teachers among us – just as there always have been. They are gifted in the same way that we have gifted athletes and gifted musicians. Hopefully this book will help people to recognize them more clearly and to minimize the fears. With this knowledge, used wisely, **anyone** should be able to enter the compassion space and make a collect call to God.

The premises of this book are:

- There have been wise spiritual guides throughout recorded history.
- These spiritual guides have acted as “phone operators”.
- We can know the characteristics of these “phone operators” and distinguish them from frauds.
- These “phone operators” offer to us ways of improving our communication with God and we can learn to “sit” with them to place the “collect call”.

Perhaps we have forgotten the importance of these spiritual guides, phone operators, in our society. Perhaps we as a culture have forgotten how to continue the lineage of these guides (passing on the teachings of what it means to be a mystic/healer) and instead we have fallen back on dogma without results, ritual without substance. Perhaps we have forgotten how to recognize, support, and utilize these spiritual guides within our own community. In some small way this book offers a first step in remedying these inadequacies in our culture. These inadequacies need to be remedied if we are to take the next step in our evolution, if we are to turn back the tide of technological inhumanness, and if we are to revitalize the roots of mankind’s well being – compassion and sacredness. The phone operators are the guides we need to show us, by helping to experience the collect call, those aspects of well being and sacred living that we have forgotten. We need now to turn to the skilled operators and ask for their help if we are serious about improving our lives and our communities.

This book will present the following:

1. The steps to take when making a collect call to God.
2. Connecting to the right phone operator.
3. Learning to establish your own direct line.
4. Accessing emergency phone services.
5. How to make more phone connections.

Distinctions will be made between making a “direct call”, making a “collect call” and making an “emergency call”. Everyone has the potential to access each of these “phone services”. The phone operator is simply one who has become more skilled at facilitating the use of these services and is thus a resource in the community. The operator’s role in the community is to help others access these services.

In many ways this is a how-to-book. It is about how to make that sacred phone call. It is about the entering into a relationship with a mystic. Because this is a how-to-book the writing in this book is very directive – meaning that it is full of how-to directions. The directions contained within will appear as “you should” or “you must” statements. At times these directions might seem offensive to some, or perhaps overly authoritative, but they are not meant that way. These directive statements are written as part of this how-to guidebook. They are instructions to be read much like the instructions of a cookbook. In order for the cake to be made you should add this or that. But you still have the freedom to choose whether to make the cake or to not make the cake. You also have the freedom to choose what type of cake to make (it can be chocolate or vanilla). In order for the cake to get cooked you must put it in the oven (or some other heat source). You have the freedom of choice to not bake the cake. You also have the freedom to choose whatever heat source is available to you. This is all that is meant by the use of the two phrases “you should” and “you must”.

In order to be prepared to make the collect call to God this text offers some guidelines about what you “should” do. You have the freedom to do something different and there is almost always flexibility of choice within the “should” directive. There are often many ways to putting the “should” directive into action and you have the freedom of choosing which actions fit you the best. When making the collect call this text offers some guidelines about what you “must” do in order for the call to be clearly understood by all parties. You have the freedom of how to implement these guidelines and the freedom to do something different. No judgment is implied within this book by the use of “should” and “must”. Remember when reading this book that most of this book is an instruction manual – a “how to” book aimed at helping people place a collect call to God from within the phone booth (the compassion space).

I using the term “God” within this text it is hoped that the reader understands that there are no rigid limitations contained within. The use of the term “God” can be replaced with any term that implies an infinite sacredness. Some of the possibilities are as follows: The Divine, The Creator, the Tao, Lord, Yahweh, cosmic consciousness, an all pervasive living energy, the source, the ultimate reality, Allah, an infinite sacredness or simply “I AM” (as was spoken to Moses). There is no need to argue about the term, nor about the difference between your knowing of God and mine. “God hides pretty well in the word God.”^{vi} These differences are as expected as the difference between your knowing of your mate (or best friend) and my knowing of your mate. The difference in our knowing is to be expected, as we each have different experiences with the person who is your mate. These differences in knowing your mate also change over time (as our relationship matures), as have our definitions of God.^{vii} But our differences in knowing do not change the character of your mate. Your mate is still your mate despite our differences in knowing. This is the same with our knowing of God. Before we can begin to share communion with God among ourselves we need to rid ourselves of this argument by accepting each other’s understanding of God at that moment.

“This mystery is beyond name and beyond form, no name or form, no dogma, philosophy, or set of ritual can ever express it fully. It always transcends anything that can be said of it and remains always untainted by any of our human attempts to limit or exploit it. Every mystic of every time and tradition has awakened in wonder and rapture to the signs of this eternal Presence.”^{viii}

The discussions that follow focus on how we may best communicate with this eternal Presence, this infinite sacredness. The metaphor of making a collect call to God, to the infinite sacredness, is used as a tool to examine the possibility of directly experiencing, communicating with, God – either through with the phone operator’s assistance or, after training with a mystic/healer, using the “direct line”. This direct communication has been testified to throughout the history of mystical tradition and has served as the foundation for all religions. It is this direct sacred experience that is at the core of the mystical way. Understanding what occurs when we sit in relationship with the mystic/healer is a fundamental part of making the collect call. This direct sacred experience is what supports the skills the phone operator offers to the community.

There is a purposeful absence of religious orientation in this text. This is not done as personal offense. It is not meant to be sacrilegious. It is done so that a large number of people, from a diverse array of religious traditions, may read this material and infuse their own spiritual orientations into the reading. I have attempted to leave room within this book for each person to explore his/her personal spiritual relationship when reading the material within. I also hope I have made enough room for each person to integrate the basic concepts described herein within their own religious ideas. Communication with God is not only about knowing the “signs” (characteristics, traits, outcomes) that signify communication but also about doing the integration. It is about integrating into our lives what is learned from the collect call conversation. Both communication and integration are consistent features discovered along the mystic way. This has been the path of the mystic/healer – the phone operator – throughout time.

The characteristics of a skilled healer are presented in my earlier publications^{ix} and they apply to understanding how to place that collect call though sitting with the mystic/healer. A basic definition of the mystic is as follows:

“A mystic is a person who is deeply aware of the powerful presence of the divine spirit: someone who seeks, above all, the knowledge and love of God and who experiences to an extraordinary degree the profoundly personal encounter with the energy of divine life.”^x

“The mystic is one who is fully alive in a vibrant relationship with God. The mystic’s God is not a distant, foreboding power, but the intimate One who is here and now... It is not so much that mystics have something that others do not. Rather, they are beacons pointing each of us to a divine intimacy that God offers to all.”^{xi}

Several authors have stated that the word *mysticism* has been abused and has become almost meaningless.^{xii} “The breadth and intensity of the interest in mysticism during the last half of the twentieth century have given rise to many different interpretations of mysticism and conflicting theories about it.”^{xiii} In this book I hope to present a clearer picture of the roles and duties of the mystic/healer. I will also describe the proper intent and responsibilities of people who seek the mystic/healer or the mystic experience. I term these people *mystic seekers*. I will expand upon the above definitions of the terms mystic/healer and mystic seeker in an effort to bring a clearer understanding to the life of the mystic/healer. As an introduction, the mystic/healer, or phone operator, can be viewed as someone who shows us the experiential path to improved spiritual communication.

“Only in the mystic do we observe the full expanse of mankind’s spiritual potential.”^{xiv}

Before I finished my work on “The Healing Relationship” there was a published interview describing me as a “mystic”^{xv}. Initially I did not agree with the label, and today I accept it only with great caution because it is so laden with misinterpretations. I think of myself more as a healer and a guide – a guide to a sacred place (the compassion space) where well being can be experienced, where the collect call to God can be made. In this book I will use both the terms mystic/healer and phone operator to signify the same thing. I think that the term mystic needs more clarification and I hope that this book helps to limit the over application of the term “mystic”. It is not a term to be applied to anyone who is seeking spiritual development or anyone who has had a “spiritual” or “psychic” experience. We are all mystic seekers but we are not all mystic/healers. There is no evidence in the history of man that all the people in any given community were mystic/healers – not even in sacred communities dedicated to that purpose. There are those who know, if we can see.

We are all mystic seekers^{xvi}. As mystic seekers we desire to have sacred phone conversations, but we are not all skilled enough to be phone operators. We need to know this so that we can admit to needing additional training before professing to be a skilled phone operator (mystic/healer). It is wiser to say, “I am a mystic seeker” than it is to profess to be a mystic/healer when it is inappropriate, and perhaps harmful, to do so. This does not mean that the mystic seeker’s life is less revered than that of the mystic/healer. We are all mystic seekers and it is a revered path to be cherished and nurtured. It also does not mean that the mystic seeker is somehow restricted from having less access to transformative experiences because there is evidence to the contrary – we all have the potential to experience mystical events in our lives. The only important difference is that the mystic/healer is called by God to fulfill the role of phone operator in society.

“We get the word Mystic from a Greek root that means ‘mystery’. A mystic is a person who is ‘introduced into the mysteries’ (through direct experience)... that is what sets a true mystic apart from the crowd. Mystics enjoy a special closeness to God (and)... frequently experience miraculous phenomena and exercise extraordinary powers.”^{xvii}

I hope that this book clarifies the term “mystic/healer”. It needs to be clarified so that people are not abused by frauds or lost in confusion about their personal mystic seeking journey (e.g., thinking that they have become skilled phone operators when they have not). There are “fake” mystics, just as there have been “fake” healers, who use trickery to acquire what they need from people. They hold up “magic” and “feel goods” as the sacred path. They can be very alluring to people. The lives of those who proclaim to be mystic/healers need to be held up for scrutiny and this is one reason I offer my life as example, in this text and in my earlier publications. The other reason is so that it may be compared to the lives of other mystics who have spoken before me, so that it can be seen as an example of what it means to be a mystic/healer in today’s world. It is also offered as testimony to God and it may also be something that brings genuineness to these writings.

I do not offer the picture of a “perfect” guru, or “enlightened” mystic. Nor do I wish to be put on that pedestal by others. I am certainly no saint. I am a man who has sinned grievously, who has been abused and maligned, and who has been miraculously transformed into a man of faith in spite of it all. I offer the wisdom of these pages not as a testimony to my own brilliance for I have no such radiance without God. I offer these words in hopes of improving the pathway of sacred communication within the compassion space for others and myself. I offer this book as an introductory instruction manual so that those mystic seekers who wish to begin the collect call process may find it less perilous.

I offer the ideas in this book from my personal perspective of living the life of a healer/mystic/guide, or “phone operator”. It is this practice that infuses my writings more than scholarly rigor or theological training. I have accessed some materials describing the lives of mystics, and the way of the mystic, in order to hinge this work to the existing literature. This is not meant to be a comprehensive review, but rather a blending of the old with the new.

There are many ideas offered in this book. Some of them are built upon the ideas offered in my previous publications describing the “The Healing Relationship”.^{xviii} The reader should be familiar with the material in my previous publications as it directly pertains to making a collect call to God. There are also ideas new to this book. Both the foundation of published ideas and the new ideas presented herein are meant to assist people in their journey toward well being through improved communication with God. They are ideas meant to serve as a bridge between people of all cultures and faiths. It is a bridge built of improved spiritual communication and deepening compassion.

This is not a long book, but it is packed full of ideas that should be read several times and then contemplated upon. It is also a book that should not be read in isolation from other materials by this author as the topics presented herein are linked to topics described in more detail within those other texts. In that sense this can be viewed as a long book, that is, it is long if the reader were to read the material several times and also read the linked material. The length is necessary because the mystic seeker learning to sit with the mystic/healer cannot improve their phone call clarity by following any “quick fix” path. The journey has always been one of hard work and dedication. I offer these writings as guidance, as a general how-to-book for mystic seekers in today’s culture.

Professor Borchert echoes the current cultural transformation and modern mystical movement briefly mentioned at the start of this introduction:

“A modern mysticism is growing that challenges – and is challenged by – Western culture. And when I talk of Western culture I mean the scientific, rational, and technical culture, the secularized and atheistic world of today, the democratic consumer-society, the “ego-culture”, the “hard sector”, the confrontation of East and West. In my opinion it is in this setting that a new mysticism can develop, if it will rise to the challenge.”^{xix}

This book offers a first step to meet that challenge. There is a mass of people seeking to fill an emptiness that has not, perhaps cannot, be addressed through the presenting culture. John Kirvan speaks about a population of “restless believers”^{xx}, people who have a spiritual hunger but who do not feel comfortable satisfying that hunger through the “establishment”. What underlies this spiritual hunger is the need for an authentic experience, which can occur inside or outside the establishment. This book is a call to return to the authentic nature of a spiritual life and to bring it into all facets of life, including interaction with religion and, in particular, integration during the act of helping others from within the compassion space.

“Western man will not be able to live indefinitely cut off from an important part of himself, a part that is made up of fragments of a spiritual history the significance and message of which he is incapable of deciphering.”^{xxi}

Mankind has a long spiritual history and we have drifted away from the deeper spiritual lives of our ancestors.^{xxii} The spiritual life was part of our cultural heritage. We need to return to a deeper spiritual knowing and to do that we need experienced guides to help us understand the nature of sacred communication. This is the role of the mystic/healer, the skilled phone operator.

What follows is a metaphor, an analogy. The analogy of using the phone to contact God is a metaphor that should speak to many people. The analogy is used in order to more easily convey difficult material. This does not mean that there is an actual physical phone, or a physical phone number. There is not.

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.

ⁱ Newsweek, May 7, 2001, p. 56. Earlier survey also support this and showed that the respondents were of above average intelligenc and without obvious mental health problems (Greeley, 1975).

ⁱⁱ Ray & Anderson, 2000, p. 4.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Ibid, p. 192.

^v From Hank Wesselman, www.sharedwisdom.com

^{vi} Kamenetz, 1997.

^{vii} See "History of God,

^{viii} Harvey, 1996, p.x.

^{ix} Hoisington, 2002.

^x King, 2001, p. 3.

^{xi} Rossetti, 2003, p. 8.

^{xii} Borchert, 1994; Rossetti, 2003; Underhill, 1999.

^{xiii} Ruffing, 2001, p. 1.

^{xiv} Sinetar, 1986, p. 75.

^{xv} Frohock, 2000.

^{xvi} Gallup polls have consistently revealed that 9 out of 10 people believe in God and think that a relationship with God is important.

^{xvii} Ghezzi, 2002, p. xi-xii.

^{xviii} Hoisington, 2002.

^{xix} Borchert, 1994, p. 306.

^{xx} Kirvan, 1966.

^{xxi} Eliade, 1965, p. 14.

^{xxii} Smith, 1976.