

The  
Corporate  
Mystic

A Guidebook for Visionaries  
With Their Feet on the Ground

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# Dedication

To  
Bob Galvin,  
Former Chairman, Motorola  
and  
Bob Shapiro  
Chairman and CEO, Monsanto

Both of these remarkable men are models of high integrity, daring vision, and clear intuition. They are inspirations to all of us who seek, through transforming business, to improve the well-being of people and planet we live on.

*Work is love made visible.*

-KAHLIL GIBRAN

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*You must have a room, or a certain hour  
or so a day,  
where you don't know what was in the  
newspaper that morning, you don't know who  
your friends are,  
you don't know what you owe anybody,  
you don't know what anybody owes you.*

*This is a place where you can  
simply experience and bring forth what you are and  
what you might be.*

—JOSEPH CAMPBELL

*Often people attempt to live their lives  
backwards; they try to have more things, or  
more money, in order to do more of what they  
want, so they will be happier. The way it  
actually works is in reverse. You must first be  
who you really are, then do what you need to  
do, in order to have what you want.*

—MARGARET YOUNG

## Prologue

### HEART AND SOUL AT WORK

*Work can provide the opportunity for spiritual and personal, as well as financial growth. If it doesn't, we're wasting far too much of our lives on it.*

—JAMES AUTRY

Corporations are full of mystics. If you want to find a genuine mystic, you are more likely to find one in a boardroom than in a monastery or a cathedral. Surprised by this notion? We were, too. But over the past twenty-five years we have been in many boardrooms and many cathedrals, and we have discovered that the very best kind of mystics—those who practice what they preach—can be found in the business world. We are now convinced that the qualities of these remarkable people, and the principles they live by, will be the guiding force for twenty-first-century enterprise.

In preparation for writing this book, we spent a thousand hours in conversation with several hundred Corporate Mystics. As a result, our business and personal lives are forever changed. We will share with you the practical details of what they taught us: how to do soul-satisfying work in a way that empowers, heals, and profits. We have distilled their learnings into brief bits of "just-in-time" wisdom that you can draw on to help you in every minute of your work life.

We are consultants to corporations and to other corporate consultants. From working with eight hundred executives over the past twenty-five years, we make a prediction: Successful corporate leaders of the twenty-first century will be spiritual leaders. They will be comfortable with their own spirituality, and they will know how to nurture spiritual development in others. The most successful leaders of today have already learned this secret. Corporate Mystics know that an organization is a collective embodiment of spirit, the sum total of the spirits of the individuals who work there. Those who think spirituality has no place in business are selling themselves and those around them short.

What is a Corporate Mystic? The dictionary says that mystics are those who have been initiated into esoteric mysteries. It says that mystics intuitively comprehend what is true. The people we call Corporate Mystics seem to operate at a level of effectiveness that appears esoteric until you understand the principles they are drawing on. In addition, the mystics we have known definitely have a strong connection with their intuition and know how to use it where it counts. We go further in our definition, however: Corporate Mystics are those who operate from a base of integrity, pursue their visions with passion and compassion, and evoke the full potential of those with whom they come in contact.

Genuine Corporate Mystics live life from a spiritual base. They are in business for their hearts and souls as well as their wallets. They are in business to support the hearts and souls of the people with whom they work. We have done consulting work with many different types of organizations, so we have a basis for comparison when we say: There is more careful and conscious application of the Golden Rule in business settings than in any other institutions we have visited, including church, university, and government.

*Dad once looked down an assembly line of women employees and thought, "These are all like my own mom—they have kids, homes to take care of, people who need them." It motivated him to work hard to give them a better life because he saw his mom in all of them. That's how it all begins—with fundamental respect.*

—BOB GALVIN,

SPEAKING OF HIS FATHER, FOUNDER OF MOTOROLA

Many of us have a deep sense of spiritual connection when we are young, only to have it erode as we enter the bottom-line world of adulthood. Childhood photographs often show us feeling wonder and delight. It looks as if we are spiritual beings having a physical experience. By adulthood we often look very different, like physical beings having, if we're fortunate, an

occasional spiritual experience. The people we call Corporate Mystics have managed, through good fortune and diligence, to maintain their connection with the spiritual nature of themselves, other people, and the world around them.

A Corporate Mystic we interviewed for this book shared a story with us: "In my late thirties I felt like I was dying. I had been working in the corporate world for ten years, and though I had experienced quite a bit of success, I somehow knew I would never go all the way to the top. My office was on the tenth floor of a twenty-some-story building, and I remember looking out the window thinking that this was the story of my life. I was stuck on the tenth floor, halfway to the top. As I looked out the window I asked myself why this was true. After all, I worked hard and seemed as smart as everybody else. Then it hit me: I was split in half. Outside of work I was one way, but at work I was trying to be another person entirely. Outside work I was fascinated with human behavior and spent hours browsing in the psychology sections of bookstores. At work, though, I pretended to be this hard-driving fire engine of a person who was single-mindedly focused on numbers and productivity. I had the thought, 'The split is over; the way I am is the way I am, wherever I am.' I actually felt something shift in my body, like I was coming back together again. Looking back, I think what I was doing was accepting both halves of myself and making a bigger container for me to be all of myself. Now, as CEO, I try to emphasize a message of being your full, undivided self whenever I talk to the younger people in the company." This is an example of a spiritual awakening that had profound implications for this person's life and career.

When we talk about spirituality in business, we are talking about experiences, not religious beliefs. Religion usually refers to the organized aspects of spirituality: the rules, beliefs, and traditions that shape how spirituality shows up in the world. The Corporate Mystic demonstrates a type of spirituality that lives in deeds, not words. The Corporate Mystic is primarily interested in the benefits of spirituality, not in beliefs about it.

Corporate Mystics move easily between the spiritual world and the world of commerce. Corporate Mystics are visionaries with their feet on the ground. They celebrate the oneness of everything, yet at the same time they are able to focus on details. They look at a mountain peak and a spreadsheet with the same eyes. They treat the janitor and their biggest client with the same attitude.

What follows is the distilled voice of our own learnings, influenced by the wisest men and women we have ever known. The Corporate Mystic is the mentor of our dreams, the voice that we wish had been coaching us through the tough times of life and business.

There is a Zen monastery near Tokyo that attracts many powerful executives from the nearby industrial cities. One day the master said: "There is no room in my monastery for mushy mystics, dreamy folks who leave their dirty teacups everywhere. Here we meditate and we wash our teacups. Both are equally important. We teach our students to be ruthlessly demanding of themselves and their colleagues. Expect the best! If people cannot function with clarity in the often-tough real world, their meditations and practices have been for nought. You must master two realities: You must revel in that vast inner space, the emptiness that is connected to all the emptiness everywhere. And at the very same time, you must give your full attention to the present moment, whether you are buying a train ticket or kissing your wife or reading the stock quotes."

We offer this book with respect to the hidden saints and mystics of the business world. May this wisdom enliven and enlighten all your hours, at work and at play.

## Introduction

### HOW TO RECOGNIZE A CORPORATE MYSTIC:

Twelve Characteristics of Twenty-First-Century Leaders

*The less effort, the faster and more powerful you will be.*

—BRUCE LEE

Corporate Mystics have certain identifying characteristics. In this introduction, we will describe those characteristics as they appear from the outside. Then, in the rest of the book, we will show you the specific attitudes and action steps that will help you adopt these winning strategies for yourself.

We believe that these qualities will become crucial in the century to come, when change occurs at a rate that may be hard to imagine even in our speeded-up present. Here is an opportunity to check yourself out against these qualities, attitudes, and operating strategies. Find out how many of these characteristics are part of your life already.

In describing these traits let's make it clear that Corporate Mystics are perfectly human and therefore full of imperfections. These are street saints, front-line visionaries who have a hundred opportunities to mess up each day. They would be the last to say they have mastered the following traits. But we have seen with our own eyes that they are all in a serious inquiry into these characteristics every day they live and breathe.

### ABSOLUTE HONESTY

Every single mystic we interviewed said the same thing: The first secret to success in business is to say only things that are true and to say them with total consistency. Business-people get into trouble when they say one thing to the banker, one thing to the customer, one thing to the board. We have facilitated many emotionally charged sessions in which company executives admitted lies, distortions, and concealments to people who had believed them. Yet even though these meetings were often loud and long, we have never seen a situation where absolute honesty

did not pay off. People cannot relax and produce at their finest in an atmosphere of distortion and concealment. Honesty brings out the best in everyone. In other words, integrity is not just a noble idea, it's a tool for personal and corporate success.

Corporate Mystics are also honest, even brutally honest, with themselves. They want to know the truth, even though that truth sometimes is personally painful. In his first major consulting job, Gay had the sweaty task of delivering a litany of bad news to the president of the world's largest corporation of its kind. Not only was the news bad, but it involved one of the president's own pet projects. "I had been engaged to measure the success of the project and instead had found that practically everything was wrong with it," he recalls. "I went into the session feeling fear and trepidation. After all, I was a freshly minted psychologist, barely thirty years old, and he was a multimillionaire who frequently dined at the White House. I was worried that I would get blasted if I told him what I had concluded, but I decided to call it as I saw it. I had learned the hard way the consequences of soft-pedaling the truth, and I figured the worst he could do was fire me. But I soon found I had nothing to fear. When his attention focused on me I was treated to the best listening I had ever experienced. His interest did not waver, even during times I was telling him things he could not have possibly wanted to hear. There was never a trace of blame in his voice, either. His first move, upon hearing the bad news, was to reflect on whether anything was amiss in his own intentions and visions. He did this with the same attitude of blameless inquiry that he focused on the staff of the project under consideration. His attitude was: What actually happened? What can be done? Fix it or fold it? I had walked into the meeting expecting to be grilled and possibly dismissed from my contract. I walked out feeling completely valued. It was the first time in my life I was certain I had been in the presence of greatness."

*How do you demonstrate respect? Through the integrity of the message you communicate. It sounds simplistic, but we found that the easiest way of getting things done was by being straight. It's in our self-interest to be straight and treat people "square."*

—BOB GALVIN, MOTOROLA

## FAIRNESS

Scrupulous attention to fairness distinguishes the Corporate Mystic. They do what they say they are going to do. They don't do what they say they're not going to do. And all of this is carried out with across-the-board fairness and consistency. A high compliment often applied to the mystic is "Tough as nails but always fair." Everyone wants to be treated fairly, but many of us forget this under the stress of decision making. One of the mystic's edges is the ability to apply the question—Is it fair to all concerned?—even when the pressure is fully on.

For the Corporate Mystic, fairness goes beyond a moral injunction. In other words, they are not fair because they should be fair. They are fair because they see that equality pervades the universe. All of us are equal, all of us at the core are the same. As one person put it, "Fairness is the way everything hangs together in the world. When I act unfairly I disturb the actual workings of the world. When I am fair I participate in the way the world is woven together."

When Ken Levy of KLA Instruments was leading his firm through a tough time, he opened a meeting like this: "I'm announcing today across-the-board pay cuts of 10 percent for officers. Because I make more money than a lot of people in the company, I'm taking a 20 percent cut." People at the meeting, instead of grouching about their own cuts, tried to talk him down to 10 percent. He held firm, and the corporate grapevine hummed with this radical approach to fairness. Morale soared instead of plummeted.

## SELF-KNOWLEDGE

Human beings are born learning, and the moment we stop learning we start to die. Corporate Mystics are particularly concerned with learning about themselves. They recognize that our minds, bodies, and spirits are the instrument by which we carry out our actions, so they put a great deal of attention on examining their motives, history, and feelings.

Corporate Mystics are committed to their own learning and at the same time committed to helping others learn. The attitude of inquiry, of wonder, is sacred to the mystic. Few things anger them more than people claiming to be right, to have all the answers. We have not yet met a truly successful person who wasn't actively learning about themselves every day.

*It's what you learn after you know it all that counts.*

—JOHN WOODEN

As consultants, we are most often hired by an executive to work with his or her colleagues. A chairman will hire us to work with the company president, or the president may hire us to work with a management team. We can think of fewer than a dozen instances in which executives have sought our services for their own development. Yet in each case, they were extraordinary. Among them: The head of an entertainment conglomerate, a woman who is on her way to becoming the head of a *Fortune* 100 company, the chairman of a \$20 billion company, a high-tech start-up entrepreneur. Our conclusion: The more talented you are, the more likely you are to go out of your way to learn and improve, even if you are phenomenally successful by the world's standards.

Corporate Mystics gain self-knowledge in three crucial ways. First, they acknowledge and appreciate their emotions. Although businesspeople have the reputation of being controlled and unemotional, and some certainly are, we have not found this to be true of the leaders we call mystics. More often, they simply deal with their feelings without dramatizing them. Mystics never hide their feelings, even their painful fears, angers, and grief; they can report them to you with the same clarity as they can tell you the time of day.

Second, they understand their programming from the past, and hence are less likely to be blindsided by it. The mystics' edge is a thorough and deep knowledge of their own story—its limitations and glories—so that those limitations do not hold them back or overshadow the present.

Third, they are open to feedback, even when it is expressed as criticism. Kate was once invited to spend an evening working with CEO Ed McCracken and the executive team of Silicon Graphics. This company is responsible for many innovations, including special effects for many hit Hollywood movies. Ed McCracken, who has also taught meditation classes, meets every month or two with the executive team for an evening of leading-edge learning. On this occasion, the focus was on getting 360-degree feedback from people close to you.

Kate: "I gave out colored sheets of paper, one color per person. I invited them to pick one area that needed improvement in themselves and in each of the other people present. Each person wrote his or her own area of improvement on a colored sheet, and peers used that color to select

an area they felt that person needed to improve. Thus, every person gave themselves feedback, got feedback from the others, and gave the others feedback. It was a very rich evening of learning for all concerned, but two aspects stand out vividly in my memory. First, nearly every person picked out areas they needed to improve which were considered by the others to be strengths already. In other words, they were harder on themselves than the others were on them. Second, everyone was eager for the feedback! Nobody got defensive throughout the whole evening. I had done this activity with groups of middle managers at other companies and had seen a great deal of peevishness, put-downs, and general defensiveness. But Silicon Graphics had built a corporate culture of openness to personal learning. It was heartening to see a roomful of powerful executives who had such a high commitment to self-knowledge."

### A FOCUS ON CONTRIBUTION

Jokesters and cartoonists often depict business leaders as greedy, but we have very seldom met a high-level leader who was motivated by greed. Most were deeply concerned with the well-being and empowerment of other people. Contribution was at the forefront of their intentions.

Early in his executive development work, one of Gay's clients was a CEO who had been uprooted by the shifting winds of corporate politics. Gay recalls, "I asked him point-blank why he didn't just retire right then in his early fifties. After all, I said, you have more than enough money to live on for the rest of your life. You could play golf, enjoy your grandchildren, get to know your wife. What would you miss that would be worth getting back into the fray for? He looked at me with a total incomprehension. '*The contribution*,' he explained, as if he were showing a child how a clock worked. 'When I retire I want to be completely satisfied that I have made my full contribution. I'm not finished yet.'

"At that moment I realized that I had never fully understood why people work. They work for contribution, for the opportunity to serve. Ultimately they work for love. I felt as if I were looking directly into his soul, into his deepest and highest motivation. This conversation allowed me to open up more to my own soul-level commitment to contribution."

## NONDOGMATIC SPIRITUALITY

The four characteristics we have described—honesty, fairness, commitment to self-knowledge, and focus on contribution—are in themselves the ground of a perennial, universal spirituality. Corporate Mystics tend to be allergic to dogma, and often remain at a distance from religion in its more structured forms. Rather, they attempt to live their lives from the universal sources of spirituality that underlie differing beliefs. Bob Galvin once said that it is important for business-people to stay out of theology and potentially divisive beliefs about spirituality, and instead to focus on the unifying benefits of spiritual practice.

Above all, spirituality means deeds, not words, to the Corporate Mystic. They have an ability to see through the particulars to the universal connection points of us all. This ability to look beneath differences to the essential core frees up the mystic to focus on how spirituality expresses itself in action.

*Spirituality cannot be something a person toys with, a little compartment of their lives. It has to be at the core, in a way that affects every other part of their lives.*

—STEPHEN COVEY

*My objective in life is not to have a spiritual part of life that is separate from the rest of my life.*

—ED McCracken, CEO, SILICON GRAPHICS

## THEY GET MORE DONE BY DOING LESS

An executive of a West Coast corporation describes his first morning as an aide to his mentor many years before. "He had an apartment in the corporate headquarters, and that's where I was asked to meet him that first morning. He came out of the door at seven A.M., greeted me, and

took me into his office with him. An hour later, I excused myself to go to the bathroom. When I got in there, I just stood there shaking and trying to catch my breath. He had gotten more done in an hour than I had ever done in two weeks! And yet he did it all effortlessly; one thing just flowed into another. He never even looked like he was working. He focused all his attention on what he was doing right then and there, then he went to the next thing and gave it that same attention. It was remarkable to see someone so centered in the present. I felt like a U-Haul trailer being pulled along behind a Ferrari. I vowed then and there that if I ever found myself working too hard or looking busy, I would take it as a sign that I wasn't working smart."

Man: I'm a hard-driving businessman. If I learn to meditate, won't it take the drive out of me?

Zen master: No, no. It will simply make you an easy-driving businessman. Who ever said the drive had to be hard?

To get more done by doing less is a credo and a key operating style of Corporate Mystics. They put a great deal of attention on learning to be in the present because they have found that this is the only place from which time can be expanded. If you are in the present—not caught up in regret about the past or anxiety about the future—time essentially becomes malleable. When you are in the grip of the past or the future, there is never enough time, because you are trying to be in two places at once. If you are standing in the present while your mind is somewhere else, there is a fundamental split that produces pressure and tension. Only by coming into the present can the mystic master time. Corporate Mystics study carefully how time feels to them. When time pressures begin to creep in, they use this as feedback that they are not centering themselves in the present.

*Move like a beam of light,  
Fly like lightning,  
Strike like thunder,  
Whirl in circles around a stable center.*

—MORIHEI UESHIBA

## THEY CALL FORTH THE BEST OF THEMSELVES AND OTHERS

Most mystical traditions speak of a clear space at the center of ourselves, whether it is called soul or spirit or essence. It is what some call the higher self and represents who we really are at the core. Corporate Mystics know how to stay focused on this essence in themselves and in their coworkers, and how to bring it forth reliably.

*At every moment you choose yourself, but do you choose your self? Body and soul contain a thousand possibilities out of which you may build many "I's." But in only one of them is there congruence between the elector and the elected, only one which you will never find until you have excluded all those superficial feelings and possibilities of being and doing with which you toy out of curiosity or wonder or fear and which hinder you from casting anchor in the experience in the mystery of life and the consciousness of the talent entrusted in you and the wonder of you which is truly your "I."*

—DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD

Essence is distinct from persona. Persona, coming from a word that means "mask," is the act we wear to survive in the world. You may have learned the persona of "appeaser" or "dominator" to survive in your particular family, and you may still run that act in your workplace today. Mystics know that we all have personas that are wrapped around our true essence, but they also know that we are not our personas. They know that underneath the blustery facade of the tough supersalesman may be a terrified little boy. But the boy, too, is a persona, and both may obscure the true self of the person beneath all the masks. The true self is often characterized by

wonder, curiosity, and openness to resonance with others, qualities that often become obscured in the growing-up process. Once we become fully identified with our essence, we feel at home wherever we are.

Corporate Mystics develop a kind of double vision, at once able to see the mask and the essential person inside.

This skill has a high payoff in confronting difficult people. Because Corporate Mystics see and honor the person's essence, they can say things like "You can be a total jerk sometimes, Harry," and have it meaningfully received. Without respect of the person's essence, the same comment triggers resistance. Kate recalls the breakthrough moment of an executive development session with Linda Smith, a senior vice-president of a multinational company: "With no malice intended, I referred to her as a 'political boob.' She got to laughing so hard at this description of her that tears poured down her face. I think I could get away with saying something like this because I could see her essence—her pure nature—so clearly, and because she knew her own essence-nature so deeply. Hearing this feedback from someone who saw her essence deeply triggered an important behavioral shift in her toward increased political astuteness."

It is as important to challenge people about their personas as it is to love and cherish their true essence. In the business world it is dangerous to ignore people's personas. Genuinely caring for people means seeing them as they are, not blithely overlooking possibly fatal flaws.

## OPENNESS TO CHANGE

Mystics have a respect and even a fondness for change that reaches down into their cells. They know that everything is change—that's the way life works in this part of the universe. As one Corporate Mystic put it: Everything in the universe is subject to change and everything is right on schedule. At times they may have unpleasant feelings about the direction of change, but they are careful not to let those feelings limit their ability to respond.

One of the major talents Corporate Mystics develop is the ability to let go of being right. Attachment to one's own point of view is a make-or-break problem for many people because it blinds them to the need for change. In the course of our work with over eight hundred executives, we have invited twelve thousand of their co-workers to fill out surveys rating their performance.

One survey item asks if the executive is willing to let go of no-win situations or goals. The responses indicate that this is a problem for about 50 percent of the executives.

*Depending on the circumstances,  
You should be hard as a diamond,  
Flexible as a willow,  
Smooth-flowing like water  
or as empty as space.*  
—MORIHEI UESHIBA

Gay has traded commodity and stock index futures for many years. He has learned the hard way about letting go. "If I buy a contract for a thousand barrels of oil at \$20 a barrel, I have reason to believe that it will go up. If it goes down to \$18 a barrel an hour after I buy it, I am faced with a dilemma. Sell out now and take a \$2,000 loss, or hold it and hope it comes back up? If I hold on, it could keep going on down. This nerve-wracking moment is the one that keeps most people out of the game, but I have learned to savor it. It comes down to admitting you're wrong. The winner will say: 'Okay, I'm wrong. It's going down. I'll get out, take my loss, and maybe sell a contract instead of buying one.' In other words, winners play it the way it's going. Losers say: 'I know I'm right, darn it, even though the market says otherwise. I'll just stay in a little longer and I'm sure I'll be proven right.' Some truly colossal disasters have come from thinking this way."

When Coca-Cola changed the formula of their flagship product some years ago, there was a large hue and cry from their loyal customers who liked the old formula. Apparently there was a faction of executives within the company who wanted to stick with the new formula and ride out the uproar. Another faction took the "go with the flow" approach and voted to bring back the old formula. The second group prevailed, indicating that the company would rather listen to the customer than be right. Corporate Mystics learn to flow with change and even thrive on it. The non-mystic gets seasick amid change by trying to pretend he's still on dry land.

## A SPECIAL SENSE OF HUMOR

Corporate Mystics laugh a lot. They are quick to point out the quirks of life and the human animal, and they are quick to include themselves in the joke. They can laugh at themselves and do because they have embodied a basic duality: the sacredness of life and the utter absurdity of it at times. Kate, who has observed dozens of corporate cultures, says, "The single best way to judge the health of a team or a company is by how much humor there is."

In our twenty-five years in the presence of corporate leaders, we have seldom heard jokes or remarks that relied upon cruelty, humiliation, or ridicule for their humor. This in itself is remarkable, but it gives an insight into the viewpoint of the mystic: We are all in this together—let's laugh ourselves out of this fix we're in.

## KEEN DISTANT VISION AND UP-CLOSE FOCUS

Corporate Mystics have a gift for engaging people in big dreams. They can stand in a future that does not exist and map out the details of how to get there. (We will tell you exactly how they do this in a later chapter.) At the same time they can look steadily at right-now reality. Many people have a grasp of the nuts-and-bolts reality of the moment. They can look at the way things are and not flinch. On the other end of the spectrum, there are also people who can see the possibilities on the horizon. But often these two skills—keen distant vision and equally keen up-close focus—do not come in the same package. In Corporate Mystics, they do. One of the striking characteristics of the mystics we've met is their comfort with this twofold vision.

Twofold vision also includes the ability to focus on the separateness and the way everything is woven together. People at the top of companies have a feeling for the wholeness of the organization, the people in it and the way it all fits together. Decisions made from this sense of wholeness tend to be sound and fair. One observation we have made is that there is more ecological awareness at the top of companies than the casual observer might suspect. News reports of, say, the logging industry tend to play up the "bottom-line" mentality of corporate leaders in contrast to the "natural" concerns of eco-activists. But, like most gross generalizations, these obscure the truth. Contrary to public opinion, business leaders tend to be quite mindful of the big

picture. It is just that the big picture for them includes the families of the people who work for the company in addition to the aspects of nature with which the company is in conflict.

The head of a Rocky Mountain communication company reminisced about the first time he saw this quality: "My high school football team was coached by a fine man named Coach Ford. Sometimes he would call me over to give me some bit of individual coaching. All the while he was talking to me, his eyes would be sweeping the field where the rest of the team was practicing. He had the skill of carrying out a detailed conversation with one person while covering the whole scene in his vision. I couldn't have put it in words at the time, but what I was learning from him was how to stay firmly in the present and in my vision of how the future could be, all at the same time."

During an interview over lunch for this book, Bob Galvin interrupted a visionary discourse about twenty-first-century business to point out something we hadn't noticed. The waiter was setting up for dinner in another section of the restaurant, and our (long overstayed) presence was getting in his way. This is an example of the twofold vision of the Corporate Mystic: to be concerned simultaneously about the visionary future and how to make someone's life easier right this minute.

The Corporate Mystic carries this respect into other dimensions. They cultivate an ability to live in multiple "time zones," with a respect for past, present, and future all at once. It is a kind of moving-average approach to life in which past, present, and future are all factored into the equation. Those who get far out in the future often underestimate the time and resources necessary to get there. Those who are stuck in the past cannot meet the present or the future effectively. It takes a keen grasp of the present situation, a respect for the past, and a sense of the future to work effectively in this current age of sweeping and rapid change.

Mystics can enroll and engage others in their vision of what is possible, even though these visions at first seem like "impossible dreams." John Kennedy, at his inauguration in 1961, not only described the impossible dream of putting a man on the moon. He seemed effortlessly to enroll everyone else in it as well. A few people said it was a kooky, expensive idea, but nearly everyone got on board. This feat was a classic example of the mystic at work.

## AN UNUSUAL SELF-DISCIPLINE

Corporate Mystics are fiercely disciplined, but it is a discipline born of passion. They generally do not rely on the kind of authoritarian discipline that is driven by fear. They motivate themselves through a clear sense of purpose, not with the shoulds and oughts of a fantasized ideal. This type of discipline makes them flexible and adaptable rather than rigid.

Corporate Mystics are passionate people. They play to win, of course, but more importantly, they play to play. We have had the opportunity to go from boardroom to golf course to family dinner with many mystics, and have been deeply impressed with their ability to be passionately present in each situation. Ken Casey, head of Professional Investors' Financial Services, is one of the most passionate participants in life we've met. Ken said: "I retired in my early forties with the vision of having plenty of time to run on the beach with my dog. After running on the beach with my dog for two or three days, I sat down to rest and wondered—"Is this it?" I realized I loved what I'd been doing, so I went back and stepped back into leadership again." But that's not all. As we got to know him, we found that he spends considerable time raising money for a home for abused children. Then we found out that he also sings in the chorus in an opera company. Then we discovered that he is one of the top whitewater rafters in the world. One of his latest exploits was to open up the Upper Zambezi to rafters for the first time, during which his team was attacked by crocodiles between sixty and seventy times! He is also a world-class soccer player. This is clearly a person who plays passionately in every area of life.

To play with passion requires discipline. There is no other way to generate the tireless source of energy that passion runs on. You set high standards and you hold to them. The act of making good on your commitments to yourself and others is what generates the high level of energy needed to run a successful life.

## BALANCE

Mystics keep a keen eye on balancing their lives in four main areas: intimacy (including marriage, family, and close friendship), work, spirituality, and community (including social and political life). The balance between work and intimacy is usually where problems occur. A

considerable amount of our consultation time has gone into helping extremely busy people achieve a harmonious balance between work and home.

*It is your work in life that is the ultimate seduction.*

—PABLO PICASSO

Corporate Mystics strive for balance in each of the key areas of life. Many people mess up by trying to get their home needs met at work, and vice versa. A person who is hurting because he does not know how to communicate with his kids becomes a blustery communication obstructor at work. Another person walks in the door at night so full of undigested work issues that no one in the family can get through to her. This problem, unless corrected, becomes a self-fulfilling spiral downward. He or she spends more time at work to get away from home problems, which creates more conflict at home, which causes them to withdraw into work more.

Stephen Covey is one of the few major voices emphasizing the need for balance in order to achieve genuine success. One of the reasons for the enthusiastic reception of his books and seminars is a deep hunger for balance in the corporate world. In our consulting work, we often must deal with the fallout from imbalanced lives: problems with children, marital strains, psychosomatic illnesses. Part of the problem is time management, but more fundamentally it is a matter of commitment to balance. Logic and emotion, home and work, future and now: all of these can be sources of deep division, splits within ourselves that can destroy us. But with the proper commitment and some practice, they can also be sources of unity in the healed wholeness of ourselves. This is the territory that the mystic walks, not unflinchingly, but with commitment and passion.

*"Master," said the student, "where do you get  
your spiritual power?"*

*"From being connected to the source," said the  
Master.*

*"You are connected to the source of Zen?"*

*"Beyond that," said the Master, "I am Zen.*

*The connection is complete."*

*"But isn't it arrogant to claim connection with  
the source?" asked the student.*

*"Far from it," said the Master. "It's arrogant  
not to claim connection with the source.*

*Everything is connected. If you think you are  
not connected to the source you are thumbing  
your nose at the universe itself."*