

The Mystic



Mysticism is the art of union with Reality.

The mystic is a person who has attained that union
in a greater or lesser degree;

or

who aims at and believes in such attainment.

(Evelyn Underhill)



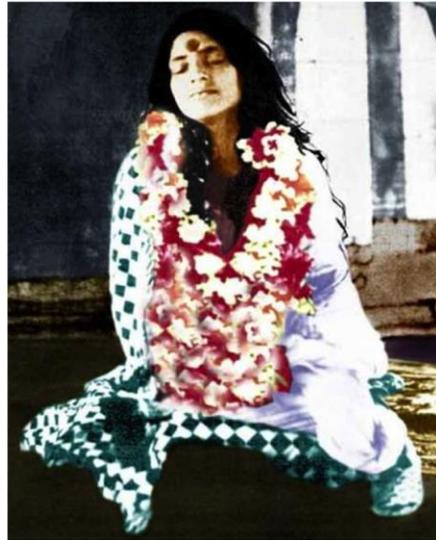
The Mystic

In the true mystic there is an extension of normal consciousness, a release of latent powers and a widening of vision, so that aspects of truth unplumbed by the rational intellect are revealed to him.

Both in feeling and thought he apprehends an immanence of the temporal in the eternal and the eternal in the temporal.

In the religious mystic there is a direct experience of the Presence of God. Though he may not be able to describe it in words, though he may not be able logically to demonstrate its validity, to the mystic his experience is fully and absolutely valid and is surrounded with complete certainty. He has been “there”, he has “seen”, he “knows”.

(F.C. Happold, *Mysticism A Study and an Anthology*)



Anandamayi Ma

No man who has lived through a temporary spiritual experience is ever likely to forget it.

His days will be haunted until he sets out to seek ways and means of repeating it.

(Paul Brunton)

Mystical experiences do not necessarily supply new ideas to the mind, rather, they transform what one believes into what one knows, converting abstract concepts, such as divine love, into vivid, personal, realities.

(R. M. Jones)

The business and method of mysticism is love.

(Evelyn Underhill)

Of all of the qualifications love is the most important,
for if it is strong enough in a man it forces him to acquire all the rest,
and all the rest without it would not be sufficient.

(Sant Kirpal Singh, ruhanisatsangusa.org/gemsq.htm)



The most highly developed branches of the human family have in common one peculiar characteristic. They tend to produce - sporadically it is true - a curious and definite type of personality; a type which refuses to be satisfied with that which other men call experience, and is inclined to deny the world in order that it may find Reality.

We meet these persons in the east and the west; in the ancient, mediaeval, and modern worlds. Their one passion appears to be the prosecution of a certain spiritual and intangible quest: the finding of a "way out" or a "way back" to some desirable state in which alone they can satisfy their craving for God. This quest, for them, has constituted the whole meaning of life.
(Evelyn Underhill)



Saint Teresa of Avila

There is within the all-comprehending ambit of animal instincts, some secret urge which drives the chosen few, called the elect, toward the transcending of animal impulses, leading to complete disinterestedness by total disregard of the animal-ego on the one hand and willing submission to a self-sought death on the other, in spite of the strong opposition of instincts, impulses and ego arrayed against an inspired soul.

(Sant Kirpal Singh, *Naam or Word, To the Honest Seeker*)

Musicians must make music, artists must paint, poets must write if they are to be ultimately at peace with themselves. What human beings can be, they must be. They must be true to their own nature. This need we may call self-actualization... It refers to man's desire for self-fulfillment, namely to the tendency for him to become actually in what he is potentially; to become everything one is capable of becoming.

(Abraham Maslow)

Just as in earthly life lovers long for the moment when they are able to breathe forth their love for each other, to let their souls blend in a soft whisper, so the mystic longs for the moment when in prayer he can, as it were, creep into God.

(Soren Kierkegaard)

Each creature God made must live in its own nature.
How could I resist my nature that lives for oneness with God?

(Mechthild of Magdeburg)



Here, then, stands the newly awakened self: aware, for the first time, of reality, responding to that reality by deep movements of love and of awe. She sees herself, however, not merely to be thrust into a new world, but set at the beginning of a new road.

Under one symbol or another, the need of that long slow process of transcendence, of character building, whereby she is to attain freedom, become capable of living upon high levels of reality, is present in her consciousness.

Those in whom this growth is not set going are no mystics. (Evelyn Underhill)



To have one eye glued on the enchanting pleasures of the flesh
and with the other expect to see a spark of Eternal Bliss
is not only impossible but the height of hypocrisy.
(Meher Baba)

Overcoming and giving up outward tendencies, stilling the mind and dying while alive is not easy. The inner gate opens only when the outer gates are closed. There is no other way to get in. People wish to continue to run out through the outer gates and also wish to get into the inner. This is impossible. Two things cannot happen at the same time.

One is to be given up to achieve the other.
(Baba Sawan Singh, *The Dawn of Light*, 212)

It is not reasonable to expect to attain to the higher planes
without perfecting yourself to a great degree.
(Sant Kirpal Singh, *The Teachings of Kirpal Singh*, v. 2, 6)

The average man seldom pays enough attention to his slight mystical experiences to profit or learn from them. Yet his need for them is evidenced by his incessant seeking for the thrills, sensations, uplifts, and so on, which he organizes for himself in so many ways...
(Paul Brunton)

If you deliberately plan on being less than you are capable of being,
then I warn you that you'll be unhappy for the rest of your life.
(Abraham Maslow)



The School of Mysticism

An intending disciple said to Dhu-I-Nun, the Egyptian.

“Above everything in this world I wish to enroll in The Path of Truth.”

Dhu-I-Nun told him: “You can accompany our caravan only if you first accept two things.

One is that you will have to do things which you do not want to do.

The other is that you will not be permitted to do things which you desire to do.

It is “wanting” which stands between man and The Path of Truth.”



Dhu-I-Nun was asked, “What is the end of the mystic?”

He answered, “When he is as he was where he was before he was.”



It makes little difference whether a bird be held by a slender thread or by a rope; the bird is bound, and cannot fly until the cord that holds it is broken. It is true that a slender thread is more easily broken; still notwithstanding, if it is not broken the bird cannot fly. This is the state of a soul with particular attachments: it never can attain to the liberty of the divine union, whatever virtues it may possess. Desires and attachments affect the soul as the remora is said to affect a ship; that is but a little fish, yet when it clings to the vessel it effectually hinders its progress. (Saint John of the Cross)



Understand this if nothing else: spiritual freedom and oneness with the Tao are not randomly bestowed gifts, but the rewards of conscious self-transformation and self-evolution.

(Lao-tzu)

Enlightenment – that magnificent escape from anguish and ignorance – never happens by accident. It results from the brave and sometimes lonely battle of one person against his own weaknesses.

(Bhikkhu Nyanasobhano)

No one can be enlightened unless he be first cleansed or purified and stripped.

(Theologia Germanica)

These first steps upon the ladder of transcendence are very hard, and require greater courage and determination than all the rest.

Since the transcendental faculties are still young and weak, the senses not wholly mortified, it needs a stern determination, a willful choice, if we are to succeed in concentrating our attention upon the whispered messages from within, undistracted by the loud voices which besiege us from without.

In the preparative process the unruly mind is brought into subjection. The eager will is silenced, the wheel of imagination is stilled. (Evelyn Underhill)

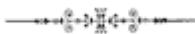


Don't be amazed at those murdered in the dust at the Friend's door.
Be amazed at how anyone can survive with soul intact!
(Tohfah of Syria)

Night, the beloved.
Night, when words fade and things come alive.
When the destructive analysis of day is done, and all that is truly important
becomes whole and sound again. When man reassembles his fragmentary self
and grows with the calm of a tree.
(Antoine de Saint-Exupery)

This mountain of release is such that the ascent's most painful at the start,
below; the more you rise, the milder it will be.
And when the slope feels gentle to the point that climbing up sheer rock is effortless as though
you were gliding downstream in a boat, then you will have arrived where this path ends.
(Dante)

Your worshipper of old wanders ever longing for favor still refused.
Day passes by after day and You are not seen. If I call You not in my prayers,
if I keep You not in my heart, Your love for me still waits for my love.
If You speak not I will fill my heart with Your silence and endure it.
I will keep still and wait like the night with starry vigil and its head bent low with patience.
The morning will surely come, the darkness will vanish,
and Your voice pour down in golden streams breaking through the sky.
(Tagore)

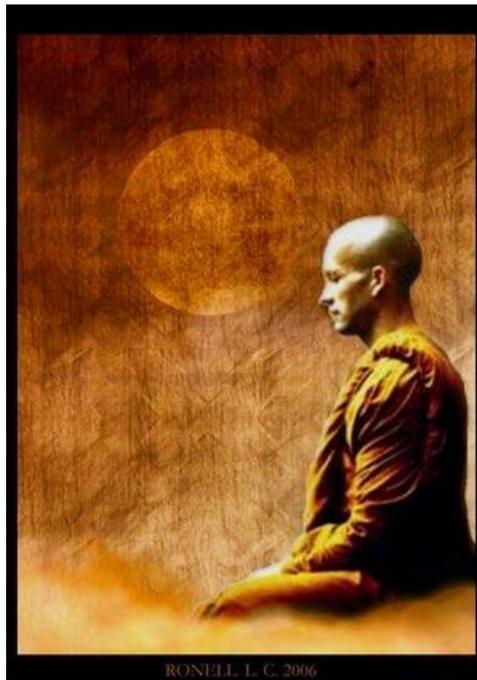


The first thing we notice about this composite portrait is that the typical mystic seems to move towards his goal through a series of strongly marked oscillations between “states of pleasure” and “states of pain.”...The soul, as it treads the ascending spiral of its road towards reality, experiences alternately the sunshine and the shade. These experiences are “constants” of the transcendental life. (Evelyn Underhill)

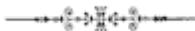


Two main types of experiences which appear again and again in the history of mysticism nearly always in connection with Illumination, rather than any other phase of mystical development are:

1. A joyous apprehension of the Absolute: that which many writers call "the practice of the Presence of God." This, however, is not to be confused with that unique consciousness of union with the divine which is peculiar to a later stage of mystical development. The self, though purified, still realizes itself as a separate entity over against God. It is not immersed in its Origin, but contemplates it. This is the "betrothal" rather than the "marriage" of the soul.
2. This clarity of vision may also be enjoyed in regard to the phenomenal world. The actual physical perceptions seem to be strangely heightened, so that the self perceives an added significance and reality in all natural things: is often convinced that it knows at last "the secret of the world." In Blake's words "the doors of perception are cleansed" so that "everything appears to man as it is, infinite." (Evelyn Underhill)



When the Light is seen shining within your heart and the Music of the Spheres becomes audible, you behold the Light in all that is outside, you see the one Light in all.
This is the Universal Vision that the One is in all and all are in One.
(Sant Kirpal Singh)



The mystics seem to assure us that its apparently symbolic name is really descriptive; that they do experience a kind of radiance, a flooding of the personality with new Light. A new sun rises above the horizon, and transfigures their world. Over and over again they return to light-imagery in this connection. Frequently, as in their first conversion, they report an actual and overpowering consciousness of radiant Light, ineffable in its splendor, as an accompaniment of their inward adjustment. (Evelyn Underhill)



The true gambling lies in sacrificing all other things - body and its environments –
for the purpose of enkindling the Light within.
(Sant Kirpal Singh, ruhanisatsangusa.org/dance.htm)

Your task?

To work with all the passion of your being to acquire an Inner Light,
so you escape and are safe from the fires of madness, illusion, and confusion
that are, and always will be, the world.
(Rumi)

True love, wisdom and power
are the greatest gifts that one gets
by basking in the sunshine of Heaven's Light.
(Sant Kirpal Singh, ruhanisatsangusa.org/naam/naam_shabd4.htm)

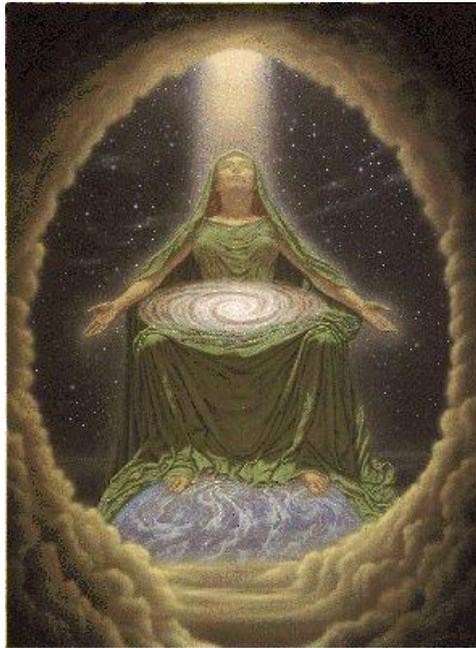
I entered into the secret closet of my soul, led by Thee; and this I could do because Thou was my helper. I entered, and beheld with the mysterious eye of my soul the Light that never changes, above the eye of my soul, above my intelligence. It was not the common light which all flesh can see, nor was it greater yet of the same kind, as if the light of day were to grow brighter and brighter and flood all space. It was not like this, but different: altogether different from all such things...He who knows the truth knows that Light:
and who knows It, knows eternity.
(Saint Augustine)

To have inner experiences of Godly Light and Sound is no small thing
and really only the fortunate few blessed from above receive them.
(Sant Kirpal Singh, *Spiritual Elixir*, 225)



This act of contemplation, this glad surrender to an overwhelming consciousness of the Presence of God, leaves no sharp image on the mind: only a knowledge that we have been lifted up, to a veritable gazing upon That which eye hath not seen.

In some of its degrees it is a placid, trustful waiting upon messages from without. In others, it is an inarticulate communion, a wordless rapture, a silent gazing upon God. The mystics have exhausted all the resources of all tongues in their efforts to tell us of the rewards which await those who will undertake this most sublime and difficult of arts. (Evelyn Underhill)



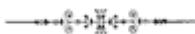
The point is that you are seeing something beyond nature, beyond the existential, beyond the psychic, beyond even cosmic identity. You are starting to see the hidden or esoteric dimension, the dimension that transcends nature.

You see the Light, and sometimes this Light literally shines like the light of a thousand suns. It overwhelms you, empowers you, energizes you, remakes you, drenches you. This is what scholars have called the "numinous" nature of subtle spirit. Numinous and luminous.

That is, no doubt, why saints are universally depicted with halos of light around their heads. That is actually what they see - Divine Light.
(Ken Wilber)

When you pierce the veil and go up, the pleasures of this world appear very low and coarse compared to the bliss you enjoy there; in fact, it is like a public latrine when compared to the inner bliss.
(Baba Sawan Singh, *Spiritual Gems*, 18)

Exalted, drawn, and absorbed into the uncreated Light,
I beheld that which cannot be related.
(Angela of Foligno)



Presently the subject of meditation begins to take on a new significance; to glow with life and Light. The contemplative suddenly feels that he knows it; in the complete, vital, but indescribable way in which one knows a friend.

More, through it hints are coming to him of mightier, nameless things. It ceases to be a picture, and becomes a window through which the mystic peers out into the spiritual universe, and apprehends to some extent--though how, he knows not--the veritable presence of God.



As Recollection becomes deeper, the self slides into a certain dim yet vivid consciousness of the Infinite. The door tight shut on the sensual world, it becomes aware that it is immersed in a more real world which it cannot define. It rests quietly in this awareness: quite silent, utterly at peace.

Presently, however, he becomes aware that something fills this emptiness; something omnipresent, intangible, like sunny air. Ceasing to attend to the messages from without, he begins to notice that which has always been within. His whole being is thrown open to its influence: it permeates his consciousness.

Here the self passes beyond the stage at which its perceptions are capable of being dealt with by thought. It can only surrender itself to the stream of an inflowing life, and to the direction of a larger will.

One glides, almost insensibly, on to a plane of perception for which human speech has few equivalents. It is a plane which is apparently characterized by an immense increase in the receptivity of the self and by an almost complete suspension of the reflective powers...

These contemplatives tell us of their attainment of That which Is, as the closest and most joyous of all communions; a coming of the Bridegroom; a rapturous immersion in the Uncreated Light.

Utter peace and wild delight, every pleasure-state known to man's normal consciousness, are inadequate to the description of her joy. She has participated for an instant in the Divine Life; knows all, and knows nothing. She has learnt the world's secret, not by knowing, but by being: the only way of really knowing anything.

When, under the spur of mystic love, the whole personality of man comes into contact with that Reality, it enters a plane of experience to which none of the categories of the intellect apply.

The mystic has opened up new paths for the inflow of that Triumphant Power which is the very substance of the Real; has remade his consciousness, and in virtue of this total regeneration is transplanted into that Universal Life, which is yet not alien but our own.

The mystic would say that his long-sought correspondence with Transcendental Reality, his union with God, has now been finally established: that his self, though intact, is wholly penetrated--as a sponge by the sea--by the Ocean of Life and Love to which he has attained. "I live, yet not I but God in me." He is conscious that he is now at length cleansed of the last stains of separation, and has become, in a mysterious manner, that which he beholds.

He has entered the Eternal Order, attained here and now the state to which the Magnet of the Universe draws every living thing. (Evelyn Underhill)



One of the many miraculous functions of meditation is that it is a portal to a different dimension. When you go deeply into the meditative state, your awareness detaches itself from the thought-stream. Then your identification with emotion, memory, time and body begins to fall away. You become aware of something very mysterious.

Imagine that you had been fast asleep in a small dark chamber and then you suddenly awakened to find yourself floating in the infinite depth of a vast, peaceful ocean. You literally become aware of a new dimension, when moments before you had experienced yourself as being trapped, a prisoner of your body, mind and emotions. When you awaken to this new dimension, all sense of confinement disappears.

You feel that you have access to the whole universe and also to that which the universe exists within. You're aware of body, mind, time, and space, but there's another dimension that extends in all directions, unlimited by any of it.

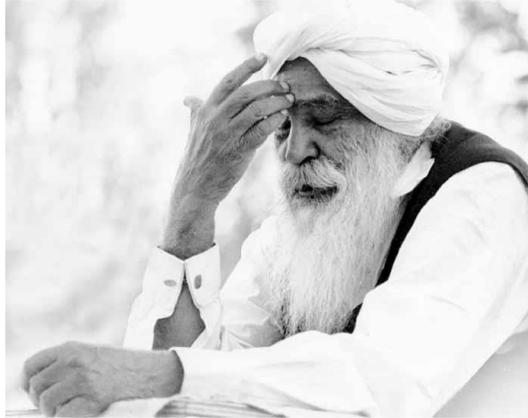
Meditation is the portal to this dimension, a door to the realization of limitlessness.
(Andrew Cohen)



Surrendering yourself to God is giving up what you can't keep
in order to realize what you can't lose.
(Shantideva)

The beginning of the mystic life introduced into the personal life of the subject a group of states which are distinguished by certain characteristics, and which form, so to speak, a special psychological system. At its term, it has, as it were, suppressed the ordinary self, and by the development of this system has established a new personality with a new method of feeling and of action. Its growth results in the transformation of personality: it abolishes the primitive consciousness of selfhood, and substitutes for it a wider consciousness, the total disappearance of selfhood in the divine, the substitution of a Divine Self for the primitive self.

(Delacroix)



Param Sant Kirpal Singh Ji

As the crust of our outer nature cracks, as the walls of inner separation break down, the inner Light gets through, the inner fire burns in the heart, the substance of the nature and the stuff of consciousness refine to a greater subtlety and purity, and the deeper psychic experiences become possible in this subtler, purer, finer substance; the soul begins to unveil itself, the psychic personality reaches its full stature.

(Sri Aurobindo)

To fall in love with God is the greatest of all romances;
To seek Him, the greatest adventure;
To find Him, the greatest human achievement.
(Saint Augustine)

An eternity of wisdom and life lies waiting for discovery by those who are willing to embark on the mystical adventure. All of our resources are within us. All we need is our heart, our mind and the will to be something better than we are.

(Kim Chestney)



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