

The background of the entire cover is a deep blue, starry night sky. In the center, there is a bright, multi-pointed starburst or nebula, with rays of light emanating from it, creating a sense of depth and wonder. The stars are of various sizes and colors, ranging from white to light blue.

BEYOND RELIGION

The personal search for truth

BARBARA MAYER

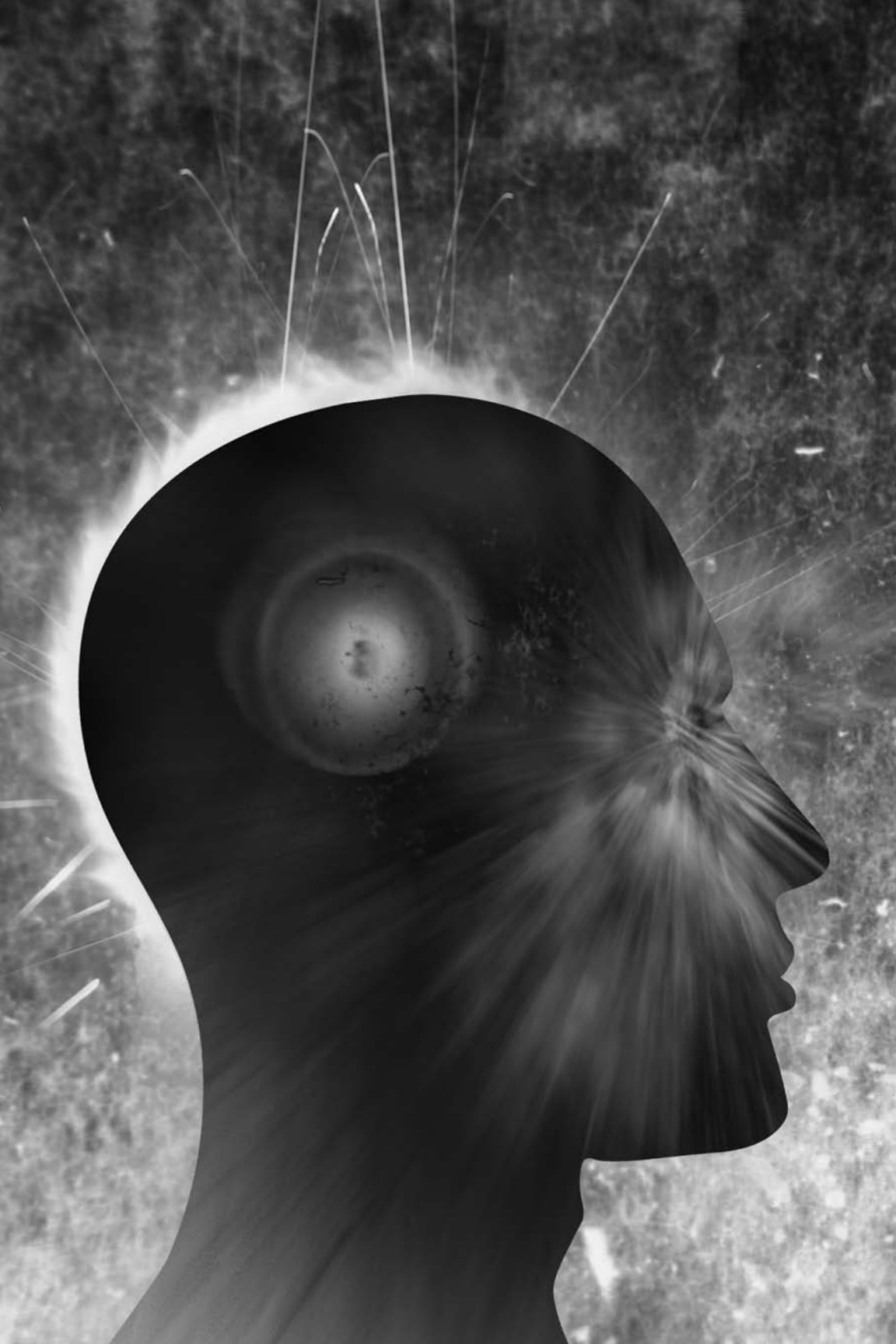
A Former Nun Speaks Out

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CHAPTER SIX

CREATING WITH NEW CONSCIOUSNESS

Undoing the Grip of the Mind

Man can only fully be said to be alive when he becomes plainly conscious of the real meaning of his own existence, when he experiences something of the fullness of intelligence, freedom and spirituality that are actualized within himself.

- Thomas Merton

Do you want to be staid, stymied, and stuck where you are? That's your choice. You can also be superbly sacred, and more delightfully sane in an entirely new experience of your own life and consciousness. It's up to you.

Part of the benefits of living in this time of rising consciousness is the ability to become more aware of one of the greatest rascals anyone has had to face. Its identity? The ego mind, which has had its way of illusion and falsehood throughout history. Because we are now aware that we are aware of more, however, we also see more clearly the folly of

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staying stuck in self-serving, ego-centered lives. We can choose instead the beauty of rising into the fullness of what we are meant to become.

Today's rising consciousness gives us the ability to access deeper parts of the psyche, and move away from the continued prison of limited, linear ego thought. It exposes the narrow-minded world of illusion into which we, as a human species, have so totally bought. Rising consciousness considers the problems and the possibilities, then responds in sometimes unconventional manners. For example, when so-called leaders faltered in their attempts to alleviate the suffering caused by the hurricane Katrina, it was the rising consciousness of the masses which stepped into the role of honest, simple leadership. Church and civic groups, as well as many individuals, packed up trucks and vans to travel to New Orleans to offer help wherever it was needed. That was done by laying egos aside and following hearts instead. Ordinary people saw the problem in human terms, then responded to it in the higher consciousness of simply sharing as sisters and brothers in the family of humanity, united in One Source. That is rising consciousness in action! It is not looking to so-called leaders for answers. Rather, it is becoming a true leader yourself!

In the world of education, many are trying to revamp the outdated school process from within while others have begun new types of schools on their own. These new schools include the teaching of virtue and human values as part of their curricula. Politically, more people are turning away from allegiance to party and old, selfish mindsets. Instead, they look for leaders who can bring a higher level of humanity into the decisions they make in serving the people they represent. As always, the arts and the artists, the Cultural Creatives among us, have always shown the way by breaking old molds and risking ridicule as they thrust new concepts of creativity into the world of staid, linear thinking. Many within religions have also begun to question the limited dogmatic teachings of their predecessors. Instead, they are seeking

Creating with New Consciousness

new ways to create community and allow space for individual experience of the God Source as any one person may best connect with it.

Instead of the old way of thinking that wisdom comes with grey hair, we have begun to include the wisdom of our youth, especially in this time of indigo children who seem to have been born with “their lights on.” There is also wisdom in the earth which we are now beginning to recognize, as elders who have gone before us have known since ancient times. In this era of global warming and dire predictions of environmentalists and scientists, we have seen more positive thinking about how products of this earth are used and consumed.

We are moving toward an era of new abundance, working in new paradigms and considering new answers which the process of linear thinking could never address.

Some may think this is all happening much too slowly, but the miracle is that it is happening at all! And we are part of it! *The Course In Miracles*, which now can be found in any bookstore, tells us that the real miracle is not any razzle dazzle show of healing. The true miracle is using the rising consciousness within us to change our minds, and literally to begin changing our world. It is showing us new ways to manifest the Energy of Love and Awareness in this world, making this a new age of compassion and volunteerism. It is a time when the urge to criticize is turning into a much stronger need to care, and care for.

These indeed are exciting times and it is important to realize we are the ones who will make the new world order happen. It will not be those who rightly or fraudulently assume positions of power. We ourselves will become the leaders in our own lives and in our small groups to move the world forward. And that higher consciousness which is now accessible to us will be the key to our greater fulfillment as human beings. It will shine the radiance of truth and honest reality within us, and reach out among the stars, as well as through the streets of our own home towns.

“An Empowering Source of Joy!”

- Barbara Litrell, Former Publisher, *Working Woman*

As more people find themselves questioning or actually leaving religions of their youth and adult life, *Beyond Religion* provides answers and guidance for moving ahead on one's own more personal spiritual path – either still within institutionalized religion or beyond any singular religious belief.

In a reader-friendly style, former nun Barbara Mayer reaches beyond simplistic doctrines, offering hope and meaning for moving beyond patriarchal religious dictates. Topics include the current rise of feminine spiritual energy, understanding one's religious roots, new perspectives on the historical Jesus and the Christ Mind, greater understanding of world religions, the quantum factor and non-linear thought, as well as meditation, healing and wholeness. With rising consciousness demanding more answers in today's chaotic world, this book offers clear ideas for attaining a more meaningful life. *Beyond Religion* is the perfect guide for those ready to move beyond blind faith and religion by rote.

“Mayer puts her finger on the pulse of American spirituality and its needs today, providing genuine, realistic help to spiritual seekers of our time.”

- Kathleen McGrory, Ph.D., President Emerita, Hartford College For Women



From early days as a singing nun through years as a teacher, then editor of a Midwestern newspaper, Barbara Mayer has followed a lifelong spiritual path. After thirteen years in the convent, she has remained dedicated to finding truth beyond teachings of patriarchal hierarchies and self-styled religious pundits. Considering many universal beliefs of world religions and rising consciousness in today's

Axial Age, she promotes personal encounter with the God Source beyond staid religious concepts. Barbara Mayer is a spiritual facilitator, meditation guide, Reiki Master and poet who resides and writes in Sedona, Arizona.

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