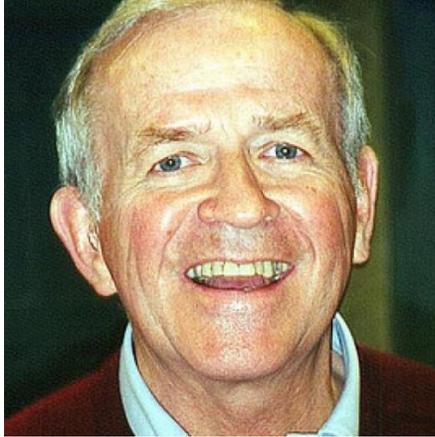




A Reflection from Bishop Swing

Dee Hock: A URI Originator



Dee died on July 16, 2022. URI bows in profound respect and gratitude. Why?

The year was 1997, three years before URI was born. A global group of folks yearning to create a URI met at Stanford University to write a charter for this new creation. We used words like “love,” “fellowship,” “unity,” but there was no gravity or comprehensiveness in our thinking. We needed serious help from someone who had experience in the real world of translating fundamental aspirations into tangible realities.

After the conference, a meeting was set up between myself and Dee Hock, who happened to be the founder and former CEO of the VISA card company. Three things drew me to Dee. First of all, I liked him right away with his challenging, playful, probing personality.

Second, he told me a story about a session he had, years ago, with one of the leading bank presidents of the world as Dee was trying to persuade the man about the virtues of the newly minted VISA card. The bank president beat his hand on the desk and announced that his bank would never have a VISA card. Dee’s response: “There will come a time when every bank in the world will have a VISA card. Why shouldn’t yours be the last bank? And why shouldn’t you be the last banker to have a VISA card?” Then Dee left. For a spiritual entrepreneur like me who had many such rejections, I cherished Dee’s spunk.

He went on to talk about how he founded the VISA card. He started by asking himself two questions: 1) what is a bank and 2) what is money?” And he dug deep until he answered these questions for himself. Guessing that URI, if it were ever to have gravity, would have to get down to the hard, basic questions!

Third, I hired him. Yes, I knew that it would cost me hundreds of thousands of dollars that I did not have in order to gain the services of Dee and his staff for several years. On faith, we began the long, hard process of coming up with URI’s Charter. The Charter that ultimately changed numerous lives and the interfaith world!

I carry a full volume of Dee Hock stories in my memory and heart. We kept in touch over the years, always with genuine affection and great delight in rehearsing “the good old days.” When his dear wife, Ferol, died in 2018, we touched base. And now he, too, is gone.

Here is how Dee summarized his journey: “I’ve had a wonderful life. How many people do you know who’ve had that kind of crazy dream, a seemingly impossible dream and yet lived to see it



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come into being, see it come to fruition, see it come to maturity, see it go beyond me, light years beyond me?"

Thank you, Dee, as well, for helping to make the crazy dream of URI come true.