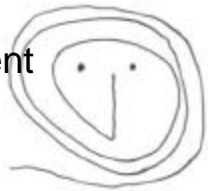


Scott Trent



# Orbiting the Giant Hairball

A Corporate Fool's Guide to Surviving with Grace  
Gordon MacKenzie, Penguin Putnam Inc., New York, 1998

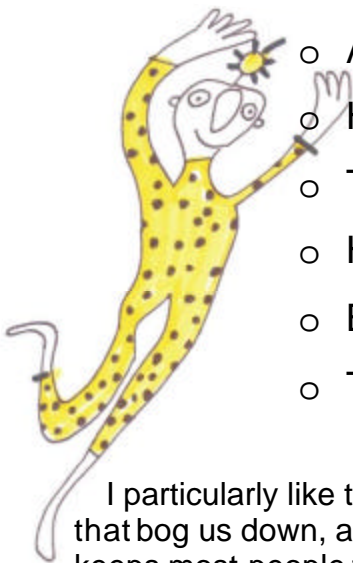


From the title to the size and feel, and mix of fonts and graphics throughout, you realize this book is different. The visual of a hairball would pull any creative type towards this book and then the word, "corporate" in the sub-title pushes this same person away. This is exactly the world

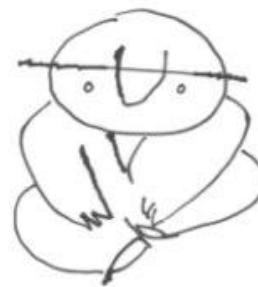


Gordon MacKenzie lived for 30 years at Hallmark and he artistically describes in his book, *Orbiting the Giant Hairball*. MacKenzie died in 1999, but his book, originally self-published, has gained "cult-classic" status as a business management book. The author tells a story that taps into creativity and borders on the edge of genius. He weaves entertaining stories with insightful observations that gives the reader a rich experience.

MacKenzie illustrates the limits of convention and the freedom of creativity. He explores all artists' challenges when sloshing color behind them as they navigate through a black and white world. Gordon Mackenzie was a metal sculptor, author, artist, and poet. His job title at Hallmark was Creative Paradox and his ability to capture a common human occurrences and then offer uncommon solutions is the magic of this book. My favorite phrase which summarizes MacKenzie's approach to everything is, "Orville Wright did not have a pilot's license." Powerful and poignant points are interspersed amongst the colorful anecdotes and fanciful graphics. Highlighted points for me include:



- A measure of creativity
- How to avoid Hairballs
- The idea of suicide freedom
- How to pursue originality
- Buddha's gentle push into orbit
- The power of paradox



I particularly like the author's references to our masterpiece and how he defines the traps that bog us down, and saps our creative juices. He poetically articulates the distractions that keeps most people from painting our masterpiece.

MacKenzie ends scripting a dialogue with God and drawing the metaphor how we can express ourselves on the canvass of life. Gordon MacKenzie has created a user's manual for the renegade, tells stories for the masses, and lists life lessons for those seeking freedom from their own hairball.

This is a book where you'll savor every page and buy multiple copies to give to those special people in your life. *Orbiting the Giant Hairball* is a must read for anyone interested in a creative approach to life.

