

A Master Course Talk by Harry Palmer

This article is excerpted from the book *Inside Avatar* (see p. 18).

I want to welcome all the new Masters to the Avatar network. I understand that there are Masters from 25 countries here.

The Avatar network is an alliance of individuals contributing to the creation of an enlightened planetary civilization. We are allies in one of the most ambitious undertakings ever attempted. We are peaceably transforming competitive, national societies into an enlightened planetary civilization. It is a challenging task.

When you clean away the mental rubble from all the activities motivated by personal advantage or competitive struggles, you will find this as a collective goal of the human species—the creation of an enlightened planetary civilization. It calls forth the best motivation in all of us.

When you complete your course tomorrow, know that you take with you the support and love of everyone at Star's Edge. We are bonded in a powerful moral alliance.

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I say that I don't usually talk at Master Courses—what I really mean to say is that I don't plan to talk at Master Courses. So if it's okay with you, I'll address a question that has been asked at Wizards. How do you handle the losses and sadnesses of life?

There is an old saying, "Make the most of all that comes and the least of all that goes." Have you heard that? If you embrace just this idea, without understanding living deliberately, you are simply engaging in surrender. Surrender is not a bad thing when practiced at the right time, but surrendering all the time is not the way of an Avatar who has also mastered the art of steering his or her own life. Learning when to steer and when to surrender is the artistry of living.

So we reserve this advice, "Make the most of all that comes and the least of all

that goes" for those events that you cannot predict or alter and must to some degree surrender your lives to, for example, natural calamities, threats of violence, accidents. You can continue to live deliberately by surrendering deliberately to such events. Surrender is deliberately choosing not to resist. When you resist, events push you around and exhaust your energy. You experience overwhelm and discouragement. When you surrender, the events wash over you without wiping you out.

Life is comings and goings. Last week you came here. Tomorrow you go home. Tomorrow is coming. Today is going.

My mother used to express her frustration by saying, "I don't know whether I'm

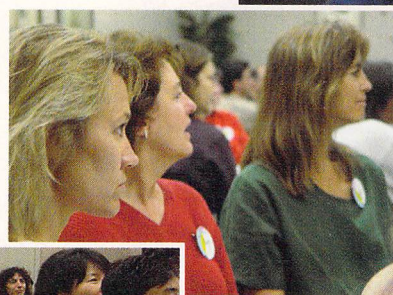
How do you handle the losses and sadnesses of life?

coming or going." That is the feeling of being in an event that is not running the way you would like it to run. It's often a signal to relax and gather yourself. Prioritize importance.

Is your life coming or going? There are thoughts coming into your mind. There are thoughts going out of your mind. There is air coming into your lungs. There is air going out of your lungs. Breathing is simply the coming and going of air. The breath carries many lessons. You have to let go of the air before you can have another coming of air.

When I first learned to scuba dive, I wasn't

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The Forgiveness Option

A Master Course Talk continued

so sure about letting go of that lung full of air. Would there be another lung full there when I needed it? Maybe the regulator wouldn't work. Maybe the air tank was empty. Maybe, maybe, maybe. Have you ever noticed how many maybes are attracted by fear?

You're fifty feet under water and you've got a lung full of air. If you had to, you

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could probably make it to the surface. It's called blow and go. But if you breathe out, you've got no lung full of air, nothing to blow and go with. Here's the lesson. You have to trust your own evaluation or someone else's evaluation of the workability of your equipment. You have to trust that after the letting go of your air, there will be another coming in of air.

Life is comings and goings.

Let's look at loss. Loss is making the most of what is going. That means placing the most importance on what is going.

That is the heart of sadness. If you always make the least of what is coming and the most of what is going, that is suffering.

Look closer at loss. What do you have to lose? What do you really own that you could lose?

What belongs to you that you could lose? Your money? Your health? Your life? Are these yours, or are they just temporarily on loan to you to appreciate between the moment of coming and the moment of going. Let's look at this very carefully.

What did you come into the world with? Were you born with a wallet full of money? So any money that came to you was destined to be followed by a going. Anything that is following its natural course, will you think of it as loss when it passes by you? Or will you just appreciate its coming and going? Loss follows gain as surely as night follows day.

Let's look even closer. The body that you are born with, is it really yours? It came from the elements of your mother—it was her carbon and phosphorous and calcium that came to you. It is on loan to you for your appreciation—just as it was on loan to her and her mother and all mothers before—the elements necessary for biological life, flowing in a stream, coming and going.

How can you lose something when nothing was yours to begin with? It's all comings and goings. Smiles and tears parade for your appreciation.

Is your attention on what is coming or what is going?

Between coming and going is a scale of temporary ownership. At the top of this scale are appreciation and gratitude. At the other end of the scale are resistance and protection, clinging.

How easy do the comings and goings of life pass through you? The answer is determined by how much the flow of life is obstructed by your self-definition and your beliefs. The more solid you are, the bumpier the ride. Some people fail to appreciate, because their attention is exhausted in the desperation to hold on and protect. They extend the period of their temporary ownership. But since they are more worried than appreciative, what have they extended? Their own suffering.

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A Master Course Talk *continued*

Are you reluctant to let go of that breath of air? Will the next one be coming? If you are not enjoying the one you have, why would you want another? Hold your breath for awhile. Determine if you are growing happier or more desperate.

How do you make the most of what comes and the least of what goes?

The first step is by being yourself. When you are being yourself, what arrives is exactly the right thing, and what departs is the right thing. When you grieve too long for a loved one, you are probably being the loved one, not yourself. True self, regardless of how it fragments or what shell or mind it occupies, is ever present. It observes the comings and goings from a perspective that is motionless and eternally present.

When you try to be like someone else, you are not respecting your own uniqueness. To be like someone else, you would have to occupy their standpoint in life to experience their comings and goings—in which case you have disregarded the purpose of your own life. You lose the purpose for why you were being you in the first place. When you are being someone else, what comes to you is not what came to them—so you are disappointed before you even begin.

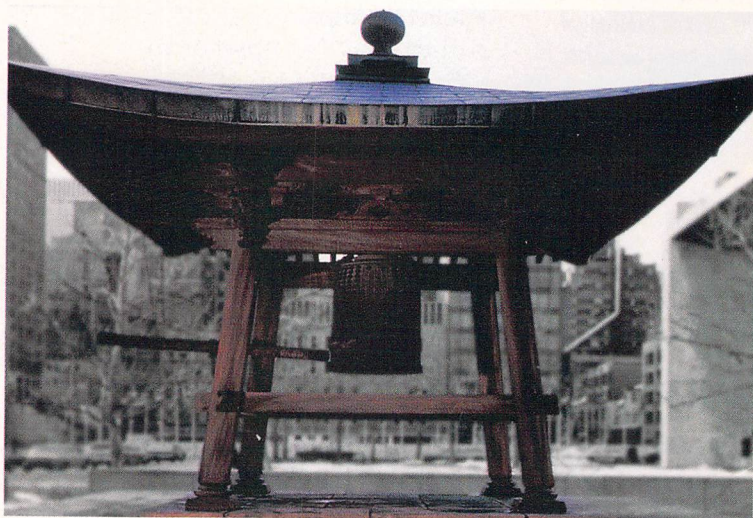
God, source of sources—whatever you want to call it—created everyone and everything unique. God didn't make any copies. It is amazing. We are each absolutely unique. That God, or whatever, didn't create five billion exact copies says something about the intention behind creation. To explore diversity. Comings and goings.

If you don't completely understand this, come to Wizards.

I want to share a neat piece of technology from Buddhism. Some Buddhists believe that they can clear themselves of definition and restore awareness and appreciation of their own comings and goings by sincerely sending a blessing into the world. The solidity of who and what they were defining themselves as is transformed into a blessing.

Would you like to try? The traditional Buddhist blessing is, "May you be free of pain and sorrow and find peace and enlightenment."

Send this blessing out to the world once for each of your fingers. Each time you utter it, see if you can send it with more sincerity and be more reflective of your own uniqueness. Send it out in whatever language is comfortable for you.



*Each time the bell is rung, all who hear it receive the blessing:
"May you be free of pain and sorrow and find peace and enlightenment."*

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Is there purpose, reason, to this fevered coming and going of life?

The Wizard folds his hands and looks thoughtful. "Perhaps."

"What? Tell me, Wizard."

"I cannot say exactly, for the purposes vary. But in each of your individual moments of coming and going, there is a connection that you make with others, a relationship of trust, a nod to something undefined and shared. That something knows. It is nourished by the flickering of your life. It grows toward the moment of its own birth."

May you travel the paths of life swiftly, honestly, and valiantly. Live boldly.

