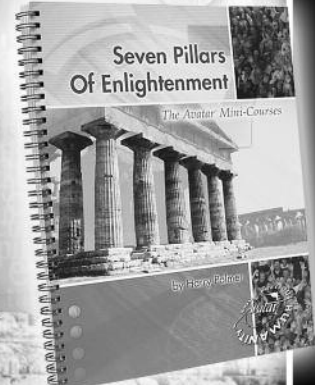




The First Pillar Of Enlightenment

Awareness

Basic Attention Management



A mini-course from The Seven Pillars of Enlightenment by Harry Palmer

AVATAR MINI-COURSES

The Avatar Mini-Courses are your opportunity to see and feel how empowering and easy the Avatar exercises really are. Take advantage of this chance to learn more about life and how you live it—experience a few of the Avatar exercises.

The Value Of A Debrief

Debriefing is an alignment technique. It is an oral or written response to three questions: 1) What did you start out to do? 2) What did you actually do? 3) What actually happened?

The value of a debrief is that, in clarifying your intentions and actions and their results, you are not relying on someone else's evaluation of your performance (job, project, task, etc.) and will realize whether or not the exercise is complete, correctly done, or appropriate for what you are attempting to accomplish. If your intention in doing the exercise is to remove an emotional block and what actually happens is that you are still blocked, then the exercise is either incomplete or done incorrectly or inappropriate for what you are trying to accomplish.

Attention Educators:

Star's Edge invites you to use this Avatar® Mini-Course as a teaching module for your students.



Mission Statement

The mission of Avatar in the world is to catalyze the integration of belief systems. When we perceive that the only difference between us is our beliefs and that beliefs can be created or discredited with ease, the right and wrong game will wind down, a co-create game will unfold, and world peace will ensue.

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Basic Attention Management Checklist

OBJECTIVE:

To increase the students' control over their own attention.

EXPECTED RESULTS:

An increase in free attention. A recovery of self-determinism.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Complete the checklist below.

- 1 Read: Introduction _____
- 2 Do Exercise 1: Marshalling Your Attention Troops _____
- 3 Do Exercise 2: Stick Around _____
- 4 Study Assignment: Behavior of Attention _____
- 5 Do Exercise 3: Two-way Street _____
- 6 Do Exercise 4: Baby Eyes _____
- 7 Study Assignment: Contemplation _____
- 8 Do Exercise 5: Controlling and Deciding _____
- 9 Study Assignment: Worry _____
- 10 Do Exercise 6: This Moment Is Different _____
- 11 Study Assignment: The Blimp Analogy _____
- 12 Study Assignment: Help For A Suffering Planet _____
- 13 Do Exercise 7: Getting The Message _____
- 14 Read: Afterword _____
- 15 Mini-Course Debrief _____
On a separate piece of paper answer the following:
 - a. What did you start out to do on this mini-course?
 - b. What did you actually do?
 - c. What actually happened?

We invite you to e-mail your debrief to avatar@avatarhq.com or fax it to 407-788-1052 or mail it to Star's Edge International, 237 N Westmonte Dr, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714

Mini-Course:

Basic Attention Management

This mini-course explores ways in which human attention, the most valuable of all commodities, can be preserved and even restored. The course will focus on experiential exercises that are self-instructive. The entire course can be repeated many times with a deeper unfolding occurring with each run through.

Introduction

Every being is endowed with a certain amount of attention. It appears that this amount varies from individual to individual and also varies in the same individual according to time and circumstances. Compare the condition of your attention after you have been up all night to when you have had a good night's sleep and feel fresh.

This variation in attention has been observed in religion, philosophy, mental health, and, of course, self-improvement courses. The concerns are always pretty much the same: How can someone acquire more free attention or better use what they have. These concerns have spawned hundreds of mental processes and meditative techniques, but few, if any, have been as effective as the exercises taught in *ReSurfacing*, Section I of The Avatar Course.

The word attention is derived from two Latin words, *ad* meaning toward and *tendere* meaning to stretch. When you put your attention on something, you stretch toward it. Once your curiosity is satisfied, your attention comes off whatever you were looking at, listening to, touching, tasting, feeling, thinking about, etc., and moves to something else. *Or at least it should. It used to.*

On the next page is the first exercise. Among other things, it should help you discover the role that attention plays in perception.

Peace of mind is not produced by pleas or supplication, but by achieving command of your own attention.



The Avatar Master Course,
Orlando, Florida, March 2006



EXERCISE 1: MARSHALLING YOUR ATTENTION TROOPS

1. Look at the front wall, and find something you haven't noticed before.
2. Look at the left wall, and find something you haven't noticed before.
3. Look at the right wall, and find something you haven't noticed before.
4. Look at the back wall, and find something you haven't noticed before.
5. Look at the ceiling, and find something you haven't noticed before.
6. Look at the floor, and find something you haven't noticed before.
7. Look at the front wall, but place your attention on the left wall.
8. Look at the left wall, but place your attention on a sound.
9. Listen to the sound while you wiggle your toes.

Congratulate yourself if you really did do this exercise. If you only read the exercise and thought about it, you need to intellectualize a bit less and experience a bit more.



EXERCISE 2: STICK AROUND

1. For several minutes, shift your attention around the room; notice how it sticks for a few moments here or slides by stuff there.
2. In a safe space, close your eyes and review the events of the last week. Notice that your attention still lingers on certain memories while other memories seem to have been filed away.

Behavior Of Attention

Some things have a Velcro quality, while others have a Teflon quality. Attention sticks to the Velcro and slides off the Teflon. Most people can feel a difference between looking at the floor and looking into a stranger's eyes, or between personal mail and junk mail. If you are in a location that is familiar to you, you may find that the stickiness or slide-by force is the same for everything. If so, redo the exercise in a space that is new to you. You may also discover that there is a difference in the behavior of your attention for different emotional states, attitudes, and physical conditions.

Every person has a finite allotment of attention at any given time. This can be demonstrated by giving a person more and more tasks until their allotment of attention runs out. For example, pat your head and rub your belly while counting backward from twenty by threes. Have you ever heard yourself say, "Don't bother me right now?" You are giving someone the signal that your allotment of attention is occupied.

For purposes of discussion, the allotment of attention can be divided into quantities called attention units. We can classify these attention units into several categories based on the way they behave. At one end of the scale we have attention units that are unbiased and that we can direct (self-directed). At the other end of the scale we have attention

People who misperceive, or who are unfairly critical, are operating through biased attention units.

units that stay fixed on something (unconsciously fixed). In between, in descending scale, we have biased attention units, other-directed attention units, and disoriented attention units. (See the Scale Of Attention Behavior below) Biased attention units have preferences. Other-directed attention units follow or rebel against orders. Disoriented attention units are confused.

Let's examine the attention units at the top end of the scale and how they affect your life. Self-directed attention units, which we could also call free attention units, always obey your conscious will. Biased attention units can be consciously directed, but they have a mind of their own. Minds and attention units behave similarly. Self-directed attention units are bright little minds that you send out through your sense organs to collect impressions from the world. Biased attention units are opinionated minds that, even when directed into the world, tend to see only what they want to see.

Your sensory organs aren't much good if you don't supply them with free attention units. If your parents or spouse ever tells you that you aren't listening, what they are really saying is that you aren't supplying any free attention units to your ears. Your supply of free attention units is reserved for the stuff you find interesting.

Scale of Attention Behavior

| | Free Attention Units | Biased Attention Units | Other-Directed Attention Units | Disoriented Attention Units | Fixed Attention Units |
|-------------------------|--|--|---|---|--|
| How they are directed → | Self-directed with very little effort | May be self-directed, but only with effort | Follow or fight another's intention | Conflicted by contradictory intentions | Frozen in past trauma and pain |
| How they observe → | Observe what is without judgment or bias | Evaluate according to bias | Look at what they've been directed (or directed not) to look at | Mix past and present perceptions | No present time perception |
| How they react → | Exhibit unattached interest | Exhibit desire and resistance | Exhibit indoctrination and/or blame | Exhibit anger, confusion, and overwhelm | Exhibit fear and/or grief (when queried) |
| How they are upgraded → | Self-restorative | Upgraded by confession and compassion | Upgraded by increasing personal responsibility | Upgraded by alignment with a worthwhile purpose | Upgraded by processing and effective therapy |

The value of practice is that it reduces the amount of free attention you need to do something. From your own experience you can probably think of actions that took your full attention the first few times you did them, like riding a bicycle or driving a car, but after practicing them, you could do them almost without thinking.

Mental exhaustion, irritation, and overwhelm are feelings that arise when the world demands more free attention from you than you have available.

The end result of this mini-course will be an increase in the amount of free attention that you have available.

If you send biased attention units to collect impressions for you, they don't bring back very much data. A biased attention unit's capacity to store impressions is already occupied by its assumptions, opinions, and preferences. So it collects only vague, low-resolution impressions that you have to think about in order for them to make sense. And guess what? The world ends up looking pretty much the way you thought it would look.

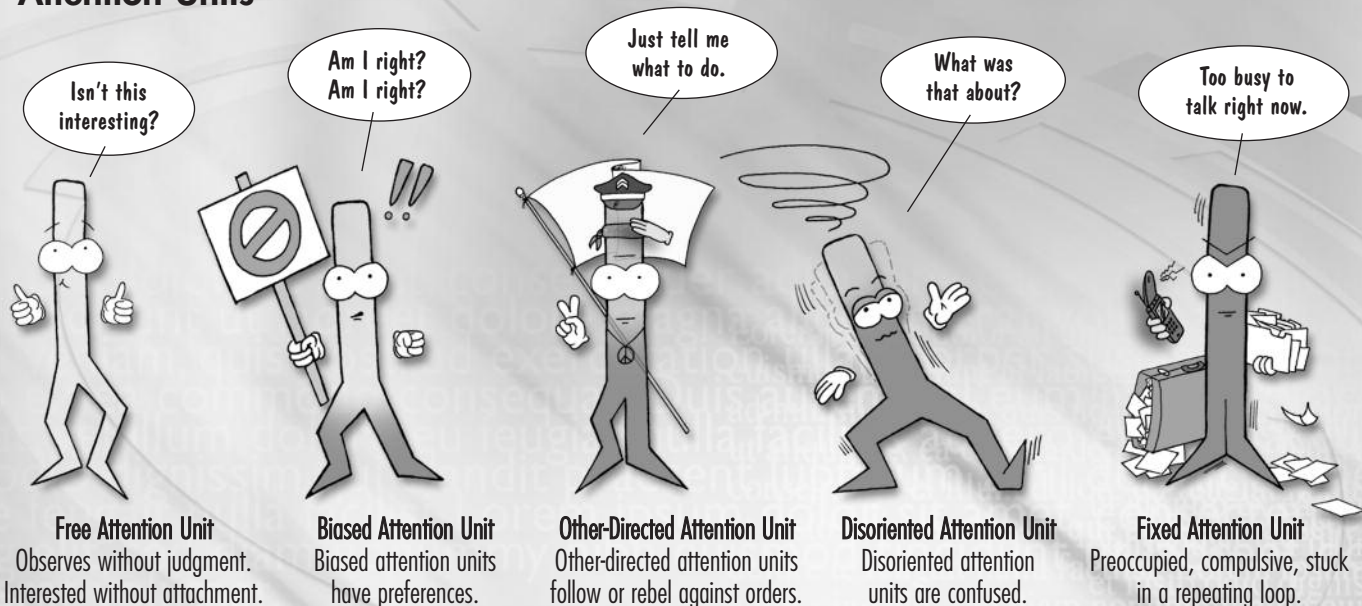
People who misperceive or who are unfairly critical are operating through biased attention units. There aren't many new discoveries made by biased attention units. People end up perceiving what was already in their mind. The problem with this is that it gives them a false sense of being right about something. If they took the time to really examine their observation, they would discover that they were being righteous rather than accurately perceiving fact.

If you send free attention units to collect impressions for you, they bring back clear, useable data. Free attention is rare. If you could suddenly give people a boost of free attention, they would be in utter amazement at how little they normally observe. Wow!

Free attention observes and returns accurate impressions without added emotion or reaction. (Think of the Spock or Data characters of *Star Trek*.) Some people, especially athletes, describe the experience of free attention as operating in "the zone."

If you did not experience free attention in Exercise 1, consider repeating it now. Otherwise, it's time to go on and explore the power of free attention.

Attention Units



EX EXERCISE 3: TWO-WAY STREET

So what happened in Exercise 2? Did your attention reflect the preferences of your mind, your likes and dislikes? That's what most people experience. The things that they have strong feeling about, either positive or negative, tend to influence the direction of their attention, while the things that they feel neutral about let their attention slide by. What could this mean? Could it mean that the things that you pay most attention to reflect what you think about most? That's pretty sensible, but have you ever thought it might be a two-way street? If you change what you think about, what you pay attention to changes, and if you change what you pay attention to, what you think about changes. Could we be on to something here?

1. Deliberately force yourself to smile, bigger and bigger, until you feel happy.
2. Deliberately think to yourself, "I am happy," until you smile.



EX EXERCISE 4: BABY EYES

If you have ever had the privilege of hanging out with a baby and sharing his or her discovery of the world, you probably know what we mean by free attention. In the innocent gaze of a child, there is no self-consciousness, no embarrassment, and no judgment. It is a here-now presence that has not yet become embroiled in the concerns or preferences of the world.

With a little practice, most people can recreate what it feels like to look at the world through baby eyes.

1. Looking through baby eyes, shift your attention around the room. Notice how your attention behaves.

Does the view seem a bit more panoramic? Is there more appreciation? Are you more attracted to motions rather than to objects? You may not want to look at the world this way all the time, but it offers a contrasting view to how you have grown to see things.

When you perceive through baby eyes, you see beyond the word labels.

2. Pick out something and describe it, without naming it, until another person knows what you are talking about. (Example: It walks on all fours, has hooves, and goes "oink.")



Contemplation

Contemplate means to study something carefully until its subtler qualities are revealed. You contemplate something by observing or imagining it from different angles and in ways that other people might see it. Contemplation works best as a two-step process. First you focus all the attention you can muster on the problem, question, or mystery being contemplated, and then you relax and shift your attention to something else. Shift back and forth as often as you like. Concentrating, relaxing, concentrating, relaxing, over and over. Possibilities form and reform, working toward a moment of clarity in which you experience insight and, perhaps, discover that million-dollar idea.

The secret to contemplation is diligent control of your attention; take one more look.

If you concentrate your attention on something and keep it there, without the relax-and-shift step, your attention will move down the attention unit scale until it eventually becomes fixed, dull to the state of unconsciousness, and you will lose control of it. This is the short explanation of hypnosis.



EXERCISE 5: CONTROLLING AND DECIDING

In the following exercises, any time your attention wanders, bring it back.

1. Pick out two stationary objects, and direct your attention to one of them. Examine it for a minute or two. Then shift your attention to the second object, and examine it for a minute or two. Shift back and forth several times using the same two objects.
2. Create two mental images in your mind, and direct your attention to the first image for a minute or two. Then shift your attention to the second image for a minute or two. Shift back and forth several times using the same two mental images.

In steps 3 and 4, make sure you are deciding before, rather than after, you shift your attention.

3. While looking at the floor, decide in which direction you are going to look next. When you have decided, look in that direction.
(Repeat this step until it is easy.)
4. Close your eyes, and place your attention on a period of your life. With your eyes still closed, decide on which period of your life you are going to place your attention next. When you have decided, shift your attention. (Repeat this step until you can self-determinedly shift your attention to any period of your life.) End each session of this exercise by bringing your attention to the present moment and describing what you are feeling right now.

Worry

There is a folk story about a psychologist who calculated how many thoughts the average person has in a day. It was a huge number, in the tens of thousands.

The punch line to the story was the discovery that only about .1 percent of the thoughts that a person had were significantly different from the thoughts that the person had thought the day before. Worry is the repetitive analysis of the vague, low-resolution impressions returned by biased attention units.

Using the psychologist's calculation, you could conclude that 99.9 percent of the average person's attention may be made up of biased attention units. And you would probably be right.

There is more than a little truth to the idea that people use only a tiny fraction of their potential mental ability.



EXERCISE 6: THIS MOMENT IS DIFFERENT

1. Obtain two coins of the same denomination. Lay them side by side, and find at least five differences between them. Do the same exercise with two leaves from the same tree, two pieces of plain white paper, and two days in your life.
2. Make a list of the unfinished projects in which you currently have invested attention. Prioritize the projects by the number of times a week that you **involuntarily** think about them. Take the project that you worry about most, and break it down into ten or more doable steps.
3. Compose a song or a poem about your life's trials and tribulations. After each stanza add the chorus, "Okay, I'm done with that now." (Example: "She broke my heart and left me flat, stole my money and took the cat. Nobody will give me a break, my bills come to more than I make. Okay, I'm done with that now.")



The Blimp Analogy

Analogies, even silly ones, can sometimes make things easier to understand.

A free-attention-unit blimp is an imaginary balloon-shaped structure with a suction cup on the front, satellite antenna on the back, and disk drive in the middle. A person remotely steers the free-attention-unit blimp with intention – to send and steer the free-attention-unit, you intend the blimp to where you want it to go. The blimp attaches itself to something, loads the impression of what it is attached to onto its disk drive, and then transmits the data back to you.

At your end, you analyze the data and recognize an oak rocking chair, or a friend, or your favorite episode of a TV program.

It is a thoughtful moment when one considers that the chronic pain in his or her knee might really be the transmission of an undelivered message from a long-ago abandoned attention unit.

Sometimes there is so much data in the particular port of call that you intend two blimps or even a whole fleet of blimps to gather and transmit data back to you to analyze.

Some things are so loaded with interest and importance that they require every blimp you can send.

Finally, assuming that every data stream has an end, your interest is satisfied (you got the message), and you intend your free-attention-unit blimps somewhere else.

There are a couple of things that can go wrong in free-attention-unit blimp world. First, the incoming data can be more than you can analyze, so you ignore the message and leave it on the blimp's disk drive. Now the blimp can't load quite as much. It is a diminished capacity blimp. Not only does it perceive less, but also when it transmits back to you, it mixes the old data in its memory banks with new data that it just acquired. Past and present mix, and things start looking a little odd, delusional maybe.

But that's not the worst situation. The worst situation in the free-attention-unit blimp world is that the blimp tries to transmit some data that you want nothing to do with. Maybe it sends some sorrowful news about a friend, or a special bulletin about a personal traumatic event, or some gross-out-horror live shot from an accident scene. Your reaction to this transmission is that you ignore (go deliberately unaware) the data transmission from the blimp. The blimp is forgotten and abandoned, and you're not quite as observant as you used to be – your blimp fleet is diminished.

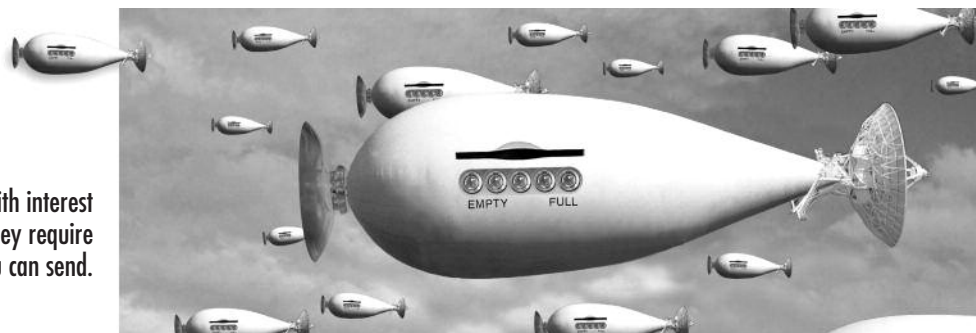
When all your blimps are lost, you will have to rely on the relay of post-analyzed data from associates who still have an operational blimp or two. "Tell me what you see." This is the beginning of indoctrination.

How many abandoned attention blimps are out there? Some quantum theorists would speculate, in effect, that the whole physical universe is nothing more than the garbled transmission of an astronomical number of abandoned attention blimps repeatedly transmitting their disregarded messages.

Perhaps more relevant, a growing body of evidence suggests that people maintain a subconscious connection with their abandoned attention units, and the message that their consciousness refuses to hear is broadcast over and over on subconscious wavelengths.

It is a thoughtful moment when one considers that the chronic pain in his or her knee might really be the transmission of an undelivered message from a long-ago abandoned attention unit.

Some things are so loaded with interest and importance that they require every blimp you can send.



Help for a Suffering Planet

The following article first appeared in Inside Avatar. It describes an application of the next exercise in the Basic Attention Management Course.

One of the positive effects of Avatar is that it awakens in a person a disposition to relieve the distress of fellow creatures.

Let me reconstruct a session that I ran for a man who knew nothing about Avatar. It is a good illustration of why CHP fails as an emergency assist, but Releasing Fixed Attention, from the *ReSurfacing* book works.

He was happy to let me help him, but was skeptical. His right knee hurt so badly that he couldn't sleep, yet his doctor could find no obvious fault with the knee. Exploratory surgery had been suggested. I suspected, rightly as it turned out, that it was a persistent mass.

I explained that I was going to have him focus attention on the knee and then on something else and that we were going to go back and forth at least ten times or until he felt some relief. I asked permission to take research notes for an article and assured him that his name wouldn't be used. He agreed.

• • • •

We settle into lounge chairs on a screened porch for the session. We start with attention on the knee. He moves it around a little, grimaces and says, "That's it. It hurts that way most of the time. Especially at night. Sort of a shooting pain that starts here," pointing at the inside of the knee, "and goes down the leg. Sometimes I can feel it all the way to the ankle, and it makes my right foot ache. It's hard to describe."

"Okay," I say and point to the bird feeder in the yard. "Look at that." One squirrel has climbed into the bird feeder and is throwing out sunflower seeds to a squirrel on the ground.

"She looks pregnant," he says. "I wonder if that's her mate in the feeder." And then after another minute of watching, he says, "It's sure easier than gathering acorns."

"How's the knee?"

"Oh, it hurts like always." He takes a few seconds to focus on the knee and moves it several times. "If I move it just right, it hurts." He tries to show me. Almost immediately he has his first realization. "Funny thing is, it's not always the same movement that causes it to hurt."

"That's interesting," I say, and he has another realization.

"Yes, it seems like it is caused by something other than movement. Movement just seems to aggravate it."

"Can you describe what that something is?"

Several minutes pass before he answers. "Boy, I just don't know."

I figure it's time to draw his attention out. "Where did the squirrels go?" I ask.

He opens his eyes. "I don't know. I guess maybe they saw a hawk."

"Do the hawks bother them?"

"No, I think they're just being cautious. Mostly the hawk eats lizards."

CHP: Creation Handling Procedure, an advanced exercise from The Avatar Materials that deliberately parallels the operation of awareness in the universe

persistent mass: any belief that you feel you have no control over, such as an obsession, a neurosis, a pain, or a fixed condition

I explained that I was going to have him focus attention on the knee and then on something else and that we were going to go back and forth at least ten times or until he felt some relief.

There's one hawk that comes sometimes and sits on the bird bath. I've actually seen the squirrels chase him away. I guess if he found a young squirrel, and found him alone, he'd probably be dinner."

"How's the knee doing?"

"Oh, it hurts. You know what's funny?"

"What?"

"It hurts worse when I try to take my attention off of it than it does when I put my attention on it." He rubs his knee thoughtfully. "I guess it wants attention and doesn't like it when it doesn't get it." He closes his eyes and seems to drift off.

"What are you thinking about?"

"Oh, just thinking about how kids sometimes hurt themselves to get attention. I was wondering if that's why my knee hurts."

"How does it feel?"

"Oh, it still hurts. It depresses me."

"How so?"

"Oh, it just makes me feel bad. I can't find a reason for it, and nothing seems to work. I just feel...helpless. I feel like some old beggar on a crutch. I hate it. I really hate it. I try not to let it get me down, but I really hate it." His voice is getting shaky. "Sometimes I think it must be some kind of punishment." His face is contorted behind his hands. He tries to hide that he is crying. "Sorry." He shakes it off. "I can't go on with this. It's not going anywhere."

"Feels like there's some strong emotions connected with that knee. How would you describe them?"

"Oh God. I just can't. It hurts so much. It's bigger than me. There's nothing I can do about it. I've tried. I've really tried. It has brought me to my knees." His mood suddenly shifts. "That's funny. It's brought me to my knees." He's laughing and crying at the same time. I wait for the emotion to work itself out.

Finally, looking back at the bird feeder, I ask, "Do you ever see any cardinals?"

"Oh, yes. There's a whole family that comes around 4 o'clock. It's still a little too early for them. There's also a little brown bird that has a top knot on its head like a cardinal. I don't know the name. They're real tame. Sometimes they sit on the window sill."

"How's the knee doing?"

"You know, it's better. It feels like it had a workout. I think it was the idea of being brought to my knees that made it feel better. I think I really fight the idea of being brought to my knees. I don't know who it was, maybe my dad, used to say, 'Get off your knees.'"



As if on cue, a bright red cardinal appears at the bird feeder. "There he is. You can tell by his color, he's a male. The females are more washed out."

We both watch the cardinal for a minute.

"What's the knee doing?" I ask.

"Not much. It actually feels pretty good right now. But it does go away sometimes and then comes back."

"When did it do that?"

"I don't remember. I really only think about it when it's hurting. If I've had a real hard day, it hurts all night. But then some nights – not many – I don't notice it at all. It reminds me of farmers that were suppose to predict the weather by the pain in their joints." He drifts off again.

"What are you thinking?"

"My grandfather had a big outdoor thermometer and just for the hell of it, I threw a stone at it, and it smashed all to pieces. Little shards of glass everywhere. Sometime my knee joint feels like it's filled with those shards of glass."

"What did your grandfather do?"

"I don't think he did anything, but I remember being real scared that he might."

"There's the little brown bird," I say pointing.

"That's him. See how he's got a thing on his head? He moves differently though, a lot quicker than the cardinals."

We watch for awhile, and then his attention drifts back to his knee.

"There's still something there," he says.

"What's it feel like?"

"Well, it feels like I got shot in the knee. I imagine this picture of a civil war soldier charging across a field and getting hit in the knee. Boy, with one of those old musket balls that must have really hurt. That would get your attention. Maybe my knee still hurts from a past life or something. Do you believe in that?"

"Yes, sometimes."

"I'll tell you, if you got hit in the knee with one of them musket balls, it would hurt bad enough that you wouldn't ever forget it." He's examining his knee. "Look at that. There's a red patch right here just the size of bullet. Or a tooth."

"A tooth?"

"Yeah, I was just imagining why my knee might hurt, and I thought about how much it hurts when something bites you and a tooth strikes bone. That makes my knee hurt just to think about it. Makes me want to get away. That's the fear again. Do you think pain and fear always go together?"

"I don't know."

"I think they do. That's that something that I couldn't see before. It's something scary. Boy, I can feel it. Look." He shows me he has given himself goose bumps on the arm.

"How's the knee?"

"So far so good. This really tires you out, doesn't it? I feel ready for a nap."

"Is the tired feeling coming from your knee?"

The truth that an Avatar Master teaches does not require a name, for it does not pass through the world, but is the loving model of a willingness to share consciousness.

—from ReSurfacing®

"I don't know."

"What's it feel like?"

"It feels like I just want to lay here and not move." He's slumped down in the lounge chair and is lying completely motionless. His eyes are open.

"What are you thinking?"

"I picture myself on that civil war battlefield again. And I'm just laying there – wait, that's not quite right. I'm laying outside a field hospital, and they've cut my leg off. They've cut my damn leg off! Oh, Jesus, help me. I just want to go to sleep. I don't want to think about anything. I just want to sleep. This is a very familiar feeling."

After a couple of minutes of silence, he thinks of something and starts laughing and shaking his head. "You want to know what I told the doctor the other day? I said if he couldn't do anything for the knee, he ought to saw the leg off."

"That is funny." We laugh together.

"You know what this is?" he asks pointing at the knee. And then answers his own question. "Have you ever heard of a phantom-limb pain?"

"What's that?"

"It's when an amputee has a pain in a limb that isn't there anymore. Like he can still feel his hand, but his whole arm is gone. He's remembering. That's what this is like. It's a phantom knee pain."

We sit quietly while the idea sinks in. It feels like something has changed.

"Well," he says, "I said I was never going to forget it and I didn't. You know, I feel fantastic. What did you do to me?"

"Look, the squirrels are back."

(A follow-up a week later confirmed the knee was continuing to improve, and there was a strong interest in doing Avatar.)



EX EXERCISE 7: GETTING THE MESSAGE

The following exercise is from the workbook *ReSurfacing*, page 70. It makes use of much of what you have learned in the exercises 1-6.

Releasing Fixed Attention

Repeatedly extending attention into and retracting attention from an area where attention is fixed will eventually recover the fixed attention from that area. Usually the recovery happens abruptly and is accompanied by one or more of the following results:

- a sudden insight into the area
- the appearance of a solution
- the disappearance of the area altogether
- relief from pain
- discharge of an upset or an emotional release
- discharge of a past trauma
- a change in viewpoint (a reordering of importance)

Pick any sensitive area from your life. Alternate between the following:
a) describe the area in detail until your attention is focused on it, then
b) describe something in your surroundings in detail until your attention is off the area. Repeat this process back and forth until one or more of the above results occurs.

Note: Be prepared to run this process for extended lengths of time. It can open old wounds and should not be abandoned just because the going gets tough. You are tougher. See it through to conclusion.

Some areas may be so fixed or emotionally charged that you cannot immediately extend attention to them (unconscious memories) or retract attention from them (danger). These situations are addressed and remedied in the creation exercises of Section II Avatar materials.

Afterword

One of the positive values of having a reality paradigm is that it allows the creation of methods whereby the existing reality may be changed.

A reality paradigm is a set of assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that constitutes a way of viewing reality for the community that shares it. One of the positive values of having a reality paradigm is that it allows the creation of methods whereby the existing reality may be changed. This is what you have been doing in the Basic Attention Management Course, which is built upon a conventional attention behavior paradigm.

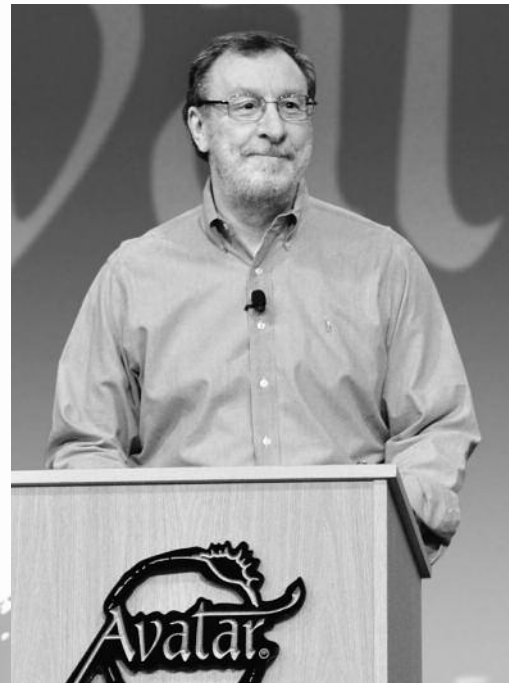
At some limit of mind changing, your reality may actually reconstruct itself into a new reality paradigm that will require the creation of new methods to continue your exploration. Some call this the path of spiritual maturation; we grow out of certain methodologies and are ready for more advanced ones.

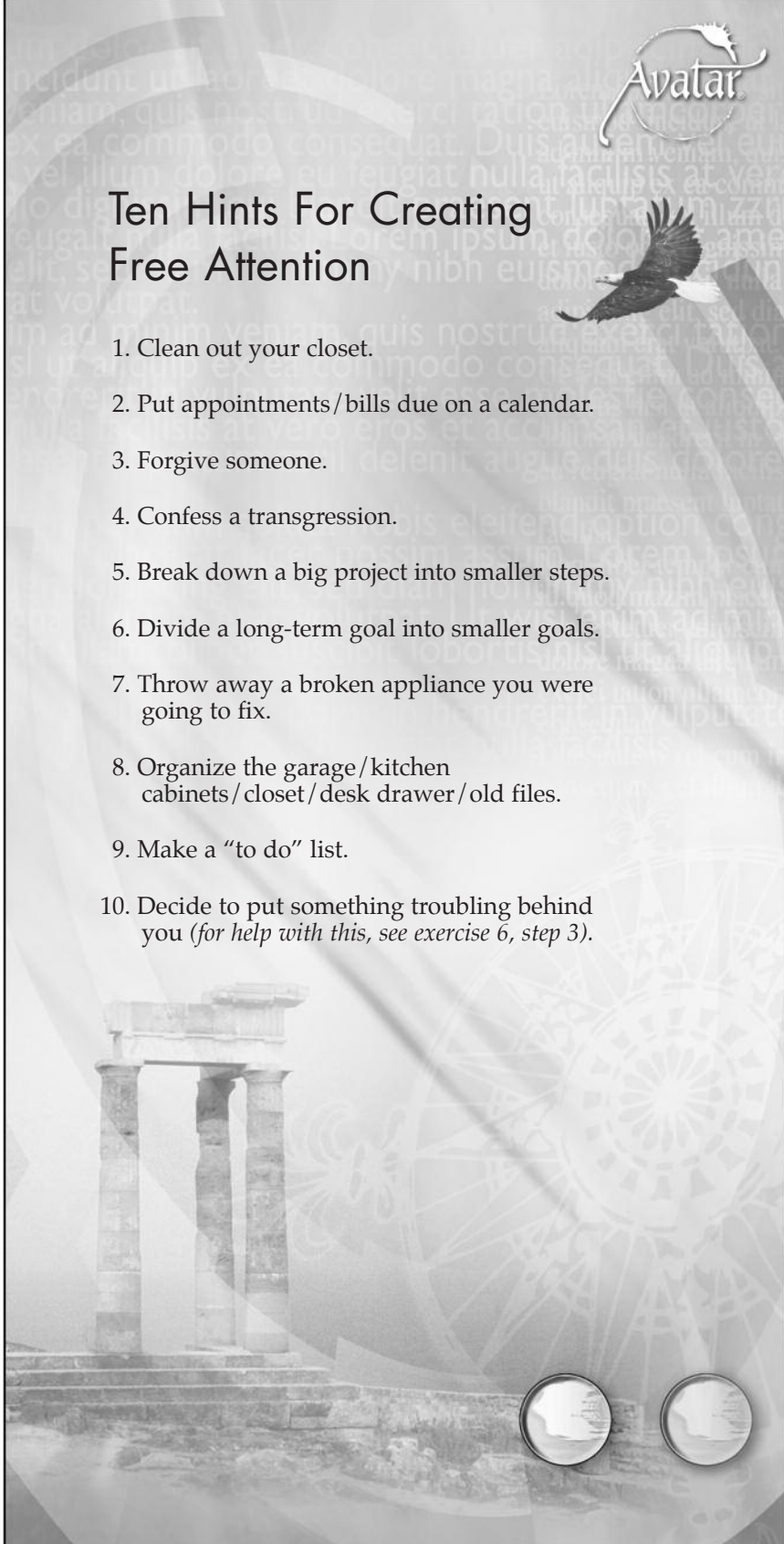


There are more advanced attention behavior paradigms employed in The Avatar Course, even more advanced in The Avatar Wizard Course, and probably even more advanced in reality paradigms yet to be constructed. If, in working with this course, you sense a stable opening into one of these higher attention behavior paradigms, conclude your use of the methods presented here and move on. The goal of Avatar training is to assist you in traversing reality paradigms rather than any final settlement into, or assertion of, this is how it is.

For a fuller understanding of how attention functions, your next step is to enroll on a weekend ReSurfacing Course.

If you have any suggestions or comments about this, or any other Avatar mini-course, I would like to hear them.


Love, Harry Palmer,
2003





Ten Hints For Creating Free Attention

1. Clean out your closet.
2. Put appointments/bills due on a calendar.
3. Forgive someone.
4. Confess a transgression.
5. Break down a big project into smaller steps.
6. Divide a long-term goal into smaller goals.
7. Throw away a broken appliance you were going to fix.
8. Organize the garage/kitchen cabinets/closet/desk drawer/old files.
9. Make a "to do" list.
10. Decide to put something troubling behind you (*for help with this, see exercise 6, step 3*).



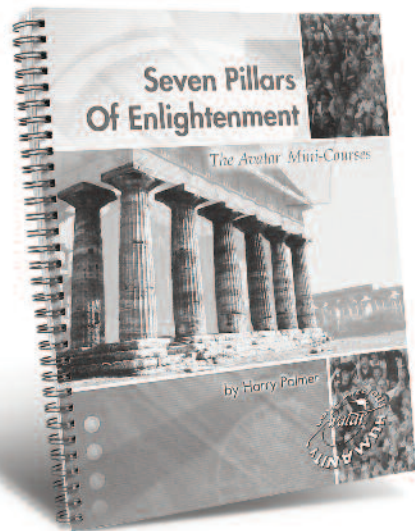
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WHO IS HARRY PALMER?

Writer, teacher, lecturer, scientist, programmer, environmentalist, businessman, spiritual leader, explorer – Harry Palmer is truly a Renaissance man. For more than 30 years, Harry has played a prominent role in the consciousness-evolution field. His bestseller, *Living Deliberately* (currently available in 19 languages), describing his personal discovery of enlightenment, launched the highly regarded worldwide workshop called *The Avatar Course*. His lofty aim, to contribute to the creation of an enlightened planetary civilization, has been adopted by tens of thousands.

Palmer's underlying purpose is to teach people effective techniques for improving their lives according to their own self-generated blueprint.

Today, few who fair-mindedly study Harry Palmer's work can doubt the profound effect that his writings are having on the collective consciousness of the world.

English



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