

# THE PATH TO Happiness

by Harry Palmer

*The following is an edited transcript of a talk by Harry Palmer at the 1995 Wizard Course held in Orlando, Florida.*

Would you like to be happy?

Think about that goal—I *want to be happy*. It's a common goal that many people share.

The question I want to ask you is why?

Why do you want to be happy?

Let's look at it logically. You walk by a candy store, and suddenly you desire to go in the candy store and have a piece of candy. Why? Because you know it tastes good. You've had it. You know what candy tastes like.

Now go back to *I want to be happy*. Why? Because it feels good, and you know it feels good because you've been there before.

So why did you leave?

You'll probably say, "Well, I made some bad decisions. I did some things I shouldn't have done and acted in ways I shouldn't have acted, and here I am."

For a moment, imagine yourself as the divine "I" holding the world in your hand and looking at it. Think, "It's OK. It's really OK." Then you're happy. This is the natural state. You're outside the world, the world is OK, and you're happy. When the world's not OK, you're not happy.

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any "thing" to make you happy doesn't work...  
Seek happiness where you lost it.***

Then something happens in the world. You enter the world and go in to see what's going on. "How can I make it OK?"

"I?"

Not the same "I" anymore. Not the happy "I." Now it's the questing "I." Do you think

God meant to confuse us by experiencing every creation as "I"?

You enter the world as "I." You start to define yourself: "I am a white male. I'm an American. I'm a blonde. I'm a college graduate. I raise dogs. I drive a Corvette." More and more definitions. The more definitions, the further you sink into the world.

One day you say, "I want to be happy." In a way it's saying, "I want to be whole," but we don't usually understand that so we say, "I want to be happy."

Someplace you seem to remember that trust is part of being happy. So you begin to trust, and the first thing you see is an advertisement in a magazine that says: "Be Successful, Be Happy! Drive a Rolls Royce!"

"Be happy." That was what you wanted, right? You're trusting. That was what you wanted too.

So a Rolls Royce, that's the secret. Then you really lock it in. You define your lack of a Rolls Royce as unhappiness. You begin to create, "I really need a Rolls Royce! I need a Rolls Royce to be happy." You labor for a few years—quite a few years—all the time defining yourself as "unhappily lacking a Rolls Royce" and thinking, "When I get a Rolls Royce, I'll be happy."

Finally you have enough money to go to the Rolls Royce dealer. Again you practice your spiritual path—you trust the salesman. You turn over your money, and you get into your Rolls Royce. It's a moment of bliss. "So this is what it means to be happy."

You drive out of the showroom and immediately notice that there are other cars on the street that could really mess up your Rolls Royce. You want to protect it. What you need is a garage. If you had a garage, that would make you happy. Oh, and a guard to protect the garage. And maybe another guard to watch the first guard. Somehow you don't

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remember happiness taking this much work.

Worry. What has happened to your happiness? You collect it, and then you protect it. Those go together—collect, protect. When you're protecting, you're not happy. Maybe you took bad advice. Maybe you've been seeking happiness in the wrong direction.

You know what will make you happy in the world?

Nothing. Pursuing, possessing or protecting any "thing" to make you happy doesn't work. You're unhappy until you get it, and then after you get it you're unhappy when you think you might lose it. Are you sure you want to be happy? Are you sure you won't settle for being rich and famous? I know what you're thinking: "Well, if I'm going to be unhappy anyway..." No, no. Seek happiness first. Being rich might be bearable once you're happy, but if you're rich and still unhappy—what unbearable suffering.

Happiness requires that you restore inner peace. You can't be happy without inner peace. There's no joy without inner peace. If you have any kind of upset or any lack of inner peace, you can't be happy. Attachments eat away at your inner peace. Expectations disturb your inner peace.

You expect something to happen, and it doesn't happen. You experience disappointment. You're disturbed, and you lose inner peace. You're swept away in the swirl of the world. Some people, instead of realizing they created the expectation that led to the disappointment, blame someone else for disturbing their inner peace. "You didn't do what I expected you to do. Shame on you."

After enough suffering—lifetimes, in most cases—you finally decide, "Maybe I should look for happiness where I lost it." Light bulb! What a brilliant idea! Seek happiness where you lost it.

So you start dropping the definitions: "I'm not a Corvette driver. I'm not a dog raiser." These are just definitions. "I'm not an American. I'm not a white male." These are definitions. "I don't need a Rolls Royce to be happy." No expectations. Nothing has to happen or not happen to make you happy. You get back to the viewpoint where you look at the world and it's OK.

This is **ReSurfacing**. Little "I's" quest for happiness is really a longing to return to the viewpoint of divine "I." (Isn't it curious? Marketing and advertising work, because they appeal to an unrecognized spiritual longing.)

***No expectations. Nothing has to happen or not happen to make you happy. You get back to the viewpoint where you look at the world and it's OK. This is ReSurfacing.***

This is pretty traditional spiritual path teaching. The inner circle teachings go another step beyond this. They say that if you have enough wisdom and skill to manage your desires and fears, you can participate in the world and make it better without becoming entrapped or unhappy.

Now, that is Avatar. You can start by not defining yourself so much that you sink.