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**When I am Gone**  
**by David M. Valadez**

Deshi: Sensei, why do you say that we will feel your presence more when you are gone - when we are no longer together?

Sensei: Our relationship is based greatly upon the mechanics of the ego. We in our training use those mechanics toward our own end - in our own way. As such, the ego "gets in the way" in precisely the way it is supposed to when we are together. However, as such, that part of the ego that is not being addressed at any given time still hinders what could be realized in total. For most, then, we only ever gain a limited insight at any one moment.

Deshi: And when you are gone?

Sensei: When I am gone the ego is not so challenged, and thus its will to reinforce itself is not so manifested. When I am gone, you will always find yourself calmer, more disciplined, wiser, more compassionate, more humble, and more courageous. You will always find your breath quicker, see more in your technique, and remain more centered. When I am gone, you will think back and find in this relationship the source of the benefits you feel you are able to enjoy. When I am gone, you will look back in gratitude and in recognition. This is how the ego works. And so, when I am there, when I am here, you will almost always resist more than you can accept.

Deshi: The contrast seems great - between you being present and you being gone. Is it real?

Sensei: All things of the ego are delusion - but it will feel real just the same.

Deshi: Then I can experience this gratitude and recognition here and now - right here before you - can I not?

Sensei: Why should it not be so?