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## ***A Message from Those Who Came Before Us—The Traditional Knowledge Ph.D. Program***

*A Review by Apela, Busaba, Brian, and Chyna  
July 28 and 29, 1999, Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii  
Lunar Eclipse*


*Students before you, graduates of the Traditional Knowledge doctoral program, 1993-2000, took a few days to reflect on their experience in remembering Indigenous Mind. They recorded these thoughts as a gift for you.*

### ***How Two Dragons Dance Together: The Beauty of Opposition***


#### ***Process of Remembrance***

 *Paradoxical and frustrating if we try to direct it. If I want to scream, the scream doesn't come.*

 *I laugh and begin to cry.*

 *TKN (and RIM) died at the Shadows Residency Lodge during the student "evaluation." At that moment the Program began to live. Esther Pinola, the traditional California Miwok healer, acknowledged us students and said she would teach her songs to us. This was the first time she had ever shared such deep cultural ways with a group of multicultural outsiders! Was the "death," termination of our program, being released by the University administration? Termination didn't formally happen for nearly a year and we didn't stop until we graduated three years later. We did this with no program and no funds. We raised our own monies and the Elders and Apela kept working with us. We became real as initiates in tribal mind.*

#### ***Right Movement or Message of the Mask***

 *We have to die to begin. Walk through the darkness with new eyes to see through to the light. In my former, western, way of thinking, going back or into the darkness made me want to run away in fear. But the darkness has a message for us to learn. If we refuse to enter the darkness, the Shadow returns each time with more fear because we have lost to it, run away from it, before. Now we need to look back into it, to find the light, which is the starting point! As an individual this process applies. That's how students arrived. The darkness has to be through me, how I am. We feel the connection to self and others in the darkness and think beyond individualistic thinking. I perceive the whole (how opposites can integrate, the individual and whole of self/others).*

**🌀** *We live our lives in a separate way (from Ancestors, our motherland, etc.) because we don't want to embrace the darkness where everything is one. I see that center of peace in my screaming.*

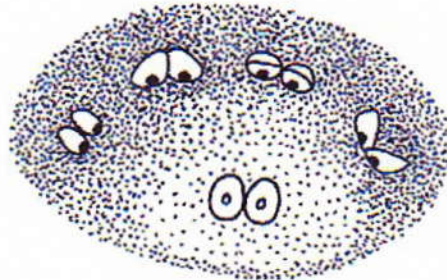
### **How Do We Know We Are in the Darkness?**

**🌀** *I never get my way, it feels like I am losing everything because I can't see! We must be prepared for the bucket dropping on our head! "I can't believe I'm having so much bad luck!"*

**🌀** *Admitting my darkness, i.e., I remember thinking, "I don't know if I would like to work with Apela," is what creates the opening.*

**🌀** *Each person is a mask and is a part of a greater mask being formed.*

**🌀** *There is tremendous fear and worry. Trying to see in the darkness we notice other sets of eyes looking back! That's what makes us want to run away in fear!*



### **How Do We Know When We Have Learned the Lesson of Darkness?**


**🌀** *Don't know when and how it changed but we are brought to a new consciousness through chaos. If you're not afraid you can come close to movement.*


**🌀** *We have to experience the opposite energies of day and night, dark and light. Western rational and religious thought stresses the Light and creates intolerance.*


**🌀** *Gays are born with the two dragons together. Slowly heterosexuals have to realize that being whole requires both qualities joined. Yet the boundary doesn't exist. It's a paradox. We don't know how to weave the two dragons together. TKN teaches us, i.e., at the beginning of our Program, we chased*




*away the white students but they kept following us. The more we ran the more they chased!*


 *A Mohawk student observed that we have to acknowledge the existence of the white world in us as individuals and communities.*


 *The Lua, Hawaiian martial arts, teaches movement in darkness, survival skills. Lua can be a starting point to help us explore in our own traditions.*

 *Going into the darkness we acquire a charge or energy that others can feel or see. Even talking about the process releases energy and vitalizes.\**


### ***Navigating Chaos***


 *The biggest mistake you can make is trying to fix it! It will blow up in your face if you fight it...RELAX!*


 *The losses cannot be curtailed; the process cannot be controlled. Kaulaity used to say, "Make yourself small. Even curl up in a little ball when it comes near. Don't run from it. You might be surprised at what you find out."*


 *If you admit your bad feelings, they lift.*

 *Saying it out loud helps...e.g., I hate him right now!*

 *Mr. Makua said that we often think so black and white but there is gray in between, a lot of shades.*

 *Knowing the stages of loss, grief; having them defined as you are going through them is paradoxical and ironic...it doesn't change anything except that you can name the stage you're in!*

 *Even if you can see it, you're not going to find a way out of it. Until you are out of it.*

 *It's funny how good you can see after! Friends' problems seem so obvious.*

🌀 *The scariest part was that I was taking on all of his emotions. He was trying to get me to do it so he didn't have to. He was trying to make me feel the hurt so he can run around and feel happy.*

🌀 *Can't use rational mind. Talking doesn't work. In the darkness, you feel and must open to and use other senses. The consequences of attempting to use the rational mind to manage chaos? The first year everyone got sick!*

🌀 *We have noticed that the dark journey is the power of money, sexuality, and transformation.*

🌀 *Silence is a key. Silence is where we meet, not language. The silence is the Mind of Indigenous People. It unites diverse cultures.*

### **Benefits and Gains of Walking Through the Underground**

🌀 *I'm more comfortable in the darkness.*

🌀 *Less likely to be controlled by fear, anger, etc.*

🌀 *We get an energetic charge to us; when we get together, ignition!*

🌀 *People can see this energy and are drawn towards it.*

🌀 *Walking through the darkness honors our ancestors because that's where they are, in the obscurity of the past, our history.*

🌀 *To go back to the past, to remember, Mr. Makua says, "We receive the greatest gift of the ancestors, which is the present. That's why they call it a present!"*

🌀 *We create with the pain; we bring life forward.*

🌀 *It's a paradox. In chaos, we laugh and cry at one moment. Before we didn't allow contradictions and ambiguities to coexist. Now we can, and it's why we can come back! (from the underworld)*

🌀 *I couldn't see the meaning or the creative process because it was in darkness! This is actually a protection.*



🌀 *It was meant to be that way or we wouldn't have the darkness to light message of the TKN process.*

🌀 *A Spirit coming to live in a body must experience the density and darkness of material form; it's the only way to arrive.*

🌀 *Embodiment of the whole is entering darkness; therefore, walk through it. Accept it.*

🌀 *This is the process to ground the Western Mind.*

🌀 *This trip through the darkness has been the curriculum; is the curriculum. When we live it, the curriculum becomes us! Now we can pass it on.*

### **Summary**

*How do we know this is an accurate representation of a creative process? There are traditional stories that pertain, such as, the Raven Breaks Light (Tlingit). In one version, told by Chief Danawak (circa 1982), the people living in darkness refuse to share with the Great Creator Raven who punishes them by breaking light on them. All the beings are frightened and run to hide. Those who jump into the water become sea creatures—whales, etc. Those who flee into the woods take on various animal forms. They all become separate beings who see their separateness.*



*Ignition of the Indigenous Mind*

*This is the mystery of the remembrance process—that life renews. It is a message of freedom, power, and peace.*



*Whole Mind*