

a few thoughts on Death and Fear

my friends,

Today, I want to talk about something people are reluctant to talk about these days: Death. All the reports give the totals of cases, recoveries, and deaths - just numbers, and give many ways to protect ourselves. We all want to protect ourselves and survive. It is the most basic instinct of all species. Survival and the raising of the next generation.

We also need to look at the basis of all the fear so many are feeling now, bordering on panic for many as well: the fear of death. Of course we all have some fear of death, some more than others. It is natural and helps our species to survive and propagate. Unfortunately, this fear can be crippling for many, and also when it is strong, makes us weaker and actually increases our chances of getting seriously ill.

Why are we so afraid of death? I think it is mostly due to the unknown factor. What happens when we leave of this body we have inhabited for so many years? Is there anything after? Is there a Heaven or a Hell? Is there just nothingness like turning off a light switch? Do we come back, and have we been here before? Is there another world, another existence?

Last week, I was in Portugal visiting Felix and Elke Woscheck, and we were talking about the current crisis. We all said, almost at the same time, that we were not afraid of death. If it is time for us to leave the planet and make room for the next generations, so be it. We have had good lives and still look forward to more beautiful times and love of friends and family, but if it is time to go, it is time to go. We should not have fear, but embrace and deal with what ever comes our way. Of course, that is easier to say then to feel.

From my various seeking, training, experiencing and pondering of life, I have come to have a basic trust in life, and the Great Mystery (the Universe, God, the omnipresent mind, the Creator, Yaweh, the Great Spirit, Teotl, Gitche Manitou, or whatever one believes and calls that mystery). I don't know how this trust, this faith came about. Perhaps it was my Sundance experience. At one point during my first Dance in 1994, I went briefly into a state of complete peace and bliss. Maybe I passed out? Who knows? However, the brief glimpse into the other world has given me a kind of basic overriding internal peace, despite the usual human anxiety, etc. I still feel the usual emotions, but there is a knowing under it all that gives a kind of peace and trust that all will be as is should be.

Since childhood, I somehow have had a wide perspective of life. Tlakaheel calls it the "Eye of the White Eagle" who flies so high above that it sees the whole panorama of life down below. Perhaps that is why I still love flying and always get a window seat to see all the life down below. We are just a tiny speck in this vast universe. We are finding out all the time how vast the universe (or multiverse) is. What seems so important and strong in our own lives is just a speck when seen from above. If we could only remember that perspective when we are in the middle of something emotional, it would not seem so strong.

Well, back to death. We all know our time here is limited. We have to go, but we try not to think about it. This current crisis of this virus, such a tiny little organism that has affected the whole world, has given us the opportunity to think about and confront life and death.

A number of years ago, the news came out about the telomeres, the little elements in our dna that affect our lifespan. Scientists discovered that they could change the length of telomeres in

some little worm and it would live a lot longer. Tlakaebel was saying that some day we may figure out how humans can live forever. I brought up the idea that there would be no more room on the planet if we did not die. We would all suffer. Also, do we really want to live forever? As we get older, we get tired. Maybe one "normal" life at a time is enough and time to rest after until our next mission. He agreed. A couple of years later, he passed from the world in a beautiful way. I was so lucky and grateful to be there. When he told me he was leaving that day, he said he was so happy to be able to see his mother again, and all his old friends who went before him. He said he had no pain and no fear. An hour or so later, he left, on his most important day of the year for him (July 26). We all were sad of course, but also celebrated his freedom. He would sometimes say that we were spirits imprisoned in the body, and death was freedom from that prison. For me, I don't feel we are imprisoned, but choose to be here for many reasons- learning, challenge, love, and the chance to enjoy the beauty of the planet with all it's problems too. Never the less, often at the end of life, living is not easy, so to be released from the pain and suffering can bring joy.

Well, I could go on a long time and may continue later, but now my fingers are tired and I am making a lot of typing mistakes (thank you to backspace!).

I just want to remind you that there is no need to fear. There is no need to fear. There is no need to fear. This is a loving universe, and we are truly loved, even in the hardest of times. We do not know why there is pain, but there is always the love to see us through, even when we feel most alone. The love is there holding us up and we carry on. Please spread some of this love to those around you, and to all your loved ones, and all you come across in life.

Much love and peace to you all..

Bert