

A perfect day to Die The Grandfather's last day;

a talk and slide show on the passing of the Elder Tlakaelel by Bert Gunn

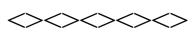
Bert 'says: "Why would I write or say so much about a death? What relevance does this have for you, or for our society? Is it not just a personal story? " Why did Tlakaelel insist that I document his transition in photographs, audio recordings and video. I believe that he wanted to show the world a different way to die, and a different way to see death, not as something wrong, but as a natural passing, leaving this world for the next one, just as we may leave one home for another.

In our current western society, it seems that we are very afraid of death, so much so that we try to deny it, to hide it, and to quickly hide the body of the one who has died, taking it from the place of passing to a funeral home, and later if there is a viewing, the physical remains of the person is made up like they are still alive and just sleeping. "How good he looks" many say, as if their loved one is just sleeping. They are not sleeping. When we leave this physical body, our spirit no longer animates this machine that we have occupied for our short time here on the planet. This machine will disintegrate and return to the universe. All our molecules will recycle and become molecules floating in the air or coming down as rain, or as parts of other bodies of trees, grass, spiders, or people.

In our bodies now, are atoms and molecules that once were part of Jesus, Einstein, Plato, and billions of other creatures over the aeons of time on this planet and others. So many times, Tlakaelel has said: "There is no death. In this universe, nothing is destroyed, everything is transformed."

In more indigenous societies, death is seen as completely natural. It is a part of everyday life. Everything is out in the open, from butchering an animal to eat to watching an Elder leave this world, and handling the remains of the body. Tlakaelel often said, "It is as natural to be born as it is to die".

In this talk, you will see how Tlakaelel's journey from this world progressed and was handled by his culture and those around him. Many who have attended this talk have been very moved and see a hope for a different way to understand and accept death.



Bert Gunn, MSW, ACSW, is a clinical social worker and handyman living in the United States in Chaplin, Connecticut. He assisted, traveled with, organized for, and interpreted for Tlakaelel, the Tolteka-Mexica Elder from Teotihuacan, Mexico for 22 years until his passage to the other side in July of 2012. He is the editor of Tlakaelel's book, Nahui Mitl (The Journey of the Four Arrows), and was the editor and publisher of over forty issues of Another Life Newsletter, which published for over 10 years. Bert is currently writing a book on the passing of Tlakaelel.

Bert says of the path he has chosen, “I suppose I have always been a seeker, exploring the essence of many traditions, and can remember at the age of about ten knowing that I had some mission, some message to bring to this world. I have been learning and following the “Red Road” (the path of indigenous spirituality) for over 25 years now.. It has been my honor and pleasure to aid Tlakaelel in bringing his message of the unity of all peoples, indeed all creatures on our tiny planet, our Mother Earth, as well as the value and gift of the indigenous traditions for our troubled modern world”.

Bert is the Zihuakoatl (administrative director) of In Kaltonal (In the House of the Sun) in the USA, a Mexica spiritual association, and the International Confederation of Kalpultin. He is the Tecutli (executive director) of Kalpulli Chaplin, a non-profit educational organization based in Chaplin, CT. He is the author of 20 years of periodic email reports on his travels with Tlakaelel, and the chronicler and curator of a vast archive of recordings of Tlakaelel’s teachings, in audio and video formats. He is also a Justice of the Peace for the town of Chaplin, CT.

Bert has been trained by Tlakaelel to conduct various traditional ceremonies, and among other ceremonies has been assisting in and conducting the Four Colors Ceremony around the world for twenty years. He has also conducted many weddings, and a number of funerals and burial ceremonies.

“On his last day in this world,” Bert recalls, “Tlakaelel directed me to continue traveling and bringing the message of peace, unity and hope that the indigenous peoples of the world offer to our modern society. He also insisted that I document his last day as an example of a different way to see death and dying, and I have been giving talks on this amazing experience to many communities both in the US and in Europe.”