

CHRONICLE D

A SHAMAN'S STORY

1. There are at least six myths in your life: the myth you compose and live every day, the myth you think you are living, the myth you speak of and tell others, the myth you desire and dream of, the myth you believe you lived, and the myth you could have lived.

2. With so many myths already in your life, maybe you should understand that a myth is a story or belief ...or an idea, usually of unknown origin, that relates to some historical event ...and is generally held to be true; ...and though a myth seems to have little factual basis ...it is usually offered to explain some practice, belief, natural occurrence, or experience.

3. Considering that myths offer these advantages, can you really say that myths are false or nonsense? ...that they are fantasies? ...or just made up nonsense? Stop and consider that though life seldom works out as you desired, as you planned and intended, or even as you hoped for, does that mean that life can't possibly make sense or isn't true? ...that life is a lie?

4. Have you ever really considered that problems, suffering, and adversities are not about punishment, enduring trials, passing tests, or teaching you lessons? ...but are about getting you to stop talking about your self and life ...and start living?

5. Are you willing to give up the current myths you are living and struggling with and against to live the real drama and majesty of your self and life with honor and prestige? ...and ongoing meaning and purpose without exalting yourself? If so, then, to begin, you must clearly understand the story that follows, for without that knowledge, you will continue your myths ...and entangle yourself in them.

Over 30 years ago, an elderly man named Joshua, declaring he was a Christian Shaman, attended our meetings in Alaska, ...this is his story!

His great-grandfather was a native shaman ...and his family had been shamans for generations, ...however, because his great-grandfather carried on the family tradition, he was

considered to be a lesser shaman, while those who were personally "called" to be shamans were considered to be greater shamans!

Though his great-grandfather was a lesser shaman, he was entrusted with the great shamanic task of guiding the sun on its long winter journey ...and recalling the sun at the end of winter, ...in addition, he had to perform the rituals that, during spring and summer and fall, would call the sun to rise every morning. This had been a family responsibility for a long time!

One day, many years ago, in early summer, strangers arrived at great-grandfather's village ...and the traditional "sittings" began. The natives have a process of sitting with one another, ...and while sittings occur primarily with village members, they also occur with strangers and visitors.

Villagers would frequently sit with each other and watch ...without saying a word, ...then, as each person felt the sitting was complete, he or she would stand up, thank the others for the wonderful conversation ...without saying a word, and quietly leave, ...and even tell the whole village about the grand conversation they had enjoyed!

On this summer morning, the strangers the villagers are sitting with the missionaries, ...and, after a while, the villagers thanked the missionaries for their wonderful information ...and without a word, the villagers quietly left one at a time ...and went around the village telling others about their conversation with the missionaries.

When the sitting was complete ...and only his great-grandfather was left, the missionaries asked him what his duties were in the village.

After his great-grandfather spoke of guiding the sun on its winter journey and directing its safe return ...and then calling it to rise every morning, the missionaries asked what would happen if tomorrow he didn't perform the rising sun rituals.

Great-grandfather assured the missionaries that if he didn't call the sun, it wouldn't rise in the morning, ...and, of course, the missionaries laughed heartily ...and promised that if he would stop called the sun for just one day, their God would raise the sun on time ...and in a spectacular way!

Great-grandfather decided that one day without sun in the summer wouldn't hurt anything, so he decided to test these men ...and their God, and stop calling the sun to rise the next morning. He would show them!

Great-grandfather planned to show these strangers to the powers his God had entrusted him with, ...so he didn't perform the sun-calling ritual the next morning.

The missionaries were delighted with great-grandfather's decision! ...because they wanted to show him the power of their God, ...and they had a surprise for him! ...for the missionaries knew of a forest fire east of the village where they had come from ...down river, ...and since the wind was blowing out of the west, the villagers didn't know about the fire.

The next morning, without great-grandfather's sun-calling ritual ...the sun rose as usual! ...well, not entirely as usual, for, because of the fire, the sun was bright red! ...which astounded everyone, ...and it was just as the missionaries had predicted!

"How do you know these things?" great-grandfather asked the missionaries, ...and their only reply was a smug little answer that their God was obviously more powerful than his God.

And when the bright-red sun rose again the next day ...and the next without great-grandfather performing the sun-calling-rituals, great-grandfather, a native shaman with

centuries of tradition behind him, seriously considered the missionaries' advise to "answer their call" and convert to Christianity.

"After all, great-grandfather," reasoned, "their God is truly more-powerful than ours in bringing back the sun without the ritual! ...besides," he considered, 'by answering the call', I will become a greater shaman ...of this greater God!"

"Well," you might say, "the deed was done!" ...the baptism was complete ...and Joshua's great-grandfather became a greater Christian Shaman, ...and though his family agreed to carry on this new tradition, in order to become greater shamans too, each one had to be personally called!

The man who came to our meetings had left the village to follow his Christian God, but he came to the meetings because our talks were a little like the "sitting conversations" he had in the village with his family and friends ...and with his old Gods, ...and he missed his old shaman ways.

He wanted to know how he could live his old shaman beliefs and behaviors in the city ...with people who didn't know of traditional native ways ...or understand them.

This was during the period following the settlement of the Native Claims Act ...and the beginning of the Transalaska Pipeline.

Joshua usually sat silently in our meetings ...and left quietly after thanking everyone for the delightful conversation ...though he had not said a word ...and no one had spoken to him, ...this was our weekly ritual with Joshua!

Some people in our group, not knowing he was a lesser shaman seeking his "calling" to become a greater shaman ...and not understanding native ways, laughed a little behind his back, ...until we explained about "sitting" ...and the ways of a greater and lesser shaman!

On the ways of a greater and lesser shaman, the lesser image of your self and life is the traditional image of "becoming" ...and the greater vision is your "answering the call" of your eternal self ...and stepping quietly away from the traditional beliefs designed to keep you in place as society or villagers and language dictate.

Language and beliefs have completely dominated and controlled your conversation with life, your manners and behaviors in life, and your relationships with everyone and everything!

It is time to get up from your "sitting with language", thank language for the interesting conversation, and answer your call to take up and follow greater ways! Have you ever considered that your motivation to become, your desire for acceptance and recognition by family and friends, your hope for true intimacy with lovers, and the appeal of acknowledgement and admiration through fame and success are all callings? ...callings to be a greater shaman? ...and live your everyday life as a greater shaman?

The man who came to our meetings was seeking his "personal calling" so he could move from being a traditional lesser shaman ...and be a greater shaman, ...are you willing to do the same?

If so, then it is important to realize that "seeking your calling" will not succeed, you must prepare yourself to recognize and "answer your calling" when it comes ...as it surely will, ...do not try to cause a calling!

The man who came to our meetings, a lesser Christian Shaman, had become so caught up in the Bible words to "seek first the kingdom of heaven ...and all things will be added unto you" that he was seeking his Greater Shamanself ...so all he desired would be added to him,

...don't make the same mistake and try to make your eternalself come alive ...allow it to come alive through everything you do!

Are you beginning to understand how, at this stage, trying to create or compose your desires ...or doing things to consequent what you desire, like Joshua ...a lesser shaman was doing, limits your being and living what you truly desire? ...which is being and living your eternalself as a greater shaman!

To be and live as a greater shaman, promise and offer the universe and everyone as you world promise and offer to yourself eternally!

In other words, show the universe ...and everyone in it what they can be! ...what they are truly living!

Are you willing to call the universe? ...and everyone in the universe to themselves?

You can prepare yourself to recognize and answer your calling to be a greater shaman by being the silent call, through offering, for others to their promised-greatness!

In language, you've heard to "do unto others as you would have others do unto you"! ...however, in shamanic offering you have as you promise and offer ...and do to yourself ...not as you do unto those you would have do unto you.

During our private conversations, Joshua told us more about his great-grandfather and the missionaries, ...and how, by carrying on the tradition of his great-grandfather's becoming a greater shaman ...he had become a lesser shaman ...and he wanted to be a greater shaman in his own right, ...and he was seeking his calling!

But, in following the Christian tradition, he had been told, "Wherever you go and whatever you do ...thank God! ...for all talents belong to God! The way of man is not within himself!" ...and finally, his most desperate words were, ...and they told me that, "The worst folly of a man is that he trusts his own resources!"

And he was terribly concerned about his priest telling him that "...your impressions and feelings are no sure evidence that you are being led by the Lord!" ...in this, he felt completely drained because, as a shaman, he had been taught to trust his impressions and feelings."

"What am I to do?" he wailed, ...then he added, "...and when I told them about being a shaman by tradition, people in the church declared that, 'many Christians never get beyond their sins!'" ...and he wanted to know if being a shaman was really a sin!

In response, we told him of another shaman who was told he would suffer eternal damnation if he didn't believe in the Lord ...and faithfully follow Him, ...and accept Jesus Christ as his personal savior, ...and when the shaman asked whether or not he would have suffered eternal damnation before the missionaries arrived, they replied that no ...of course he would not have been damned because he had not heard "the great news" of the Lord they were now bringing to him.

At which point, this greater shaman jumped up and shouted, "Then damn you! ...for what you've done to me!"

And when our friend asked about healing and spiritually restoring ...and laying on of hands, because the tradition he followed was as a healing shaman, we asked if he could see his healing as deliverance? ...as deliverance from their illness of a lesser life ...and deliverance to the wellbeing of living a greater self and life? ...he just smiled broadly, thanked us for the "sitting", and quietly left, ...so we didn't get the opportunity to ask...

In the past, kings and rulers proclaimed that their authority and privileges came from God! ...and, in one form or another, all beliefs follow this same pattern, "...are you willing to

prepare yourself for being called by knowing and revealing that your authority and privileges of deliverance came from the offerings of your greater shaman self?"

Now, back to great-grandfather shaman who took up the missionaries' challenge not to perform the sun ritual ...and when the sun rose as usual, the missionaries proclaimed their God "most powerful" ...for, among other things, their God promised to reward the faithful with life after death.

When you think about it, weren't the missionaries false? ...for they challenged great-grandfather's sun rituals, but they kept their God's promises hidden in the smoke of a forest fire! ...and their God's promise of "life after death" was certainly challengeable as a great offering ...simply because you have to die to collect!

As a lesser shaman, great-grandfather guided villagers to live their greater self! ...but, unfortunately, since he didn't challenge or test what the missionaries declared their God promised, it seemed he couldn't now stop praying and being faithful to "test" this new God ...to see if he did quit praying and being faithful, would his problems and illnesses ...and those of the villagers continue or just go away on their own.

Great-grandfather had been taught ...and he taught the villagers that they could test their greater self! ...and this is what he told them to do, "live the greater shaman you are through offering the fullness of yourself to every situation ...and let that feeling and impression fill every aspect and corner of your self and life!

"Then, one day, like getting up from a sitting, stop relating to being and living as the greater shaman you are ...and stop offering, ...continue your old self and life! ...if you don't immediately feel lessened, then being and living your calling as a greater shaman is not for you ...return to your old ways!" ...great-grandfather always dramatized these last words.

And then he continued quietly ...almost reverently, "...if you do feel lessened, then you immediately know *just the beginning* of what living your greater promised self through offering is all about, ...and you will be able to *test* this promised self and life ...and know whether it is for you. If you feel the need to challenge these things, do so in this way until you have no further need or desire to challenge."

As we tell this Shaman's Tale, are you sitting with me? ...are we having a wondrous conversation with words not spoken ...or written?

You have frequently been advised "not to listen just to the words spoken ...but to the meaning behind the words", ...if you do that, you will not be sitting, you will be listening only to yourself ...and to your own conclusions and assumptions, ...and listening to your own beliefs and words ...as you have always done!

It is time to listen to these words! ...if only so we can have a spoken conversation of unspoken words! Do not just sit there ...sit there in conversation!

When great-grandfather had a great image of himself guiding and directing the sun, he was called a lesser shaman, ...then, in answering the missionaries' challenge ...and maybe even to "prove" his greatness, great-grandfather lost his true greatness of directing and guiding ...and gave that over to a new God, ...is that what you want to continue in your life?

Great-grandfather hoped that being called great would be his calling, ...are you willing to trade the true greatness of yourself just to be called great?

Before answering the missionaries' challenge ...and losing his true greatness, great-grandfather had always declared, "Do not claim any specialness or greatness in your life

...and never give up everything you truly desire just for a name ...and recognition, for you are ordinary, as all things are ordinary, offering extraordinary things in extraordinary ways!"

And then he always added, "Your extraordinariness is in offering! ...what are you truly offering?" It seems that in an instant, just to show off, great-grandfather ignored his own teachings!

Remember, the greater the trueimage you have of your self and life ...the smaller your problems and illnesses will be; and the smaller your trueimage is ...especially if it is based on a name ...the greater your lack of wellbeing and difficulties will be, ...and the greater your grief, sadness, losses, and disappointment will also be.

After many years, great-grandfather learned about offering ...not causing, ...or "offering to the Gods!" ...as he called it, ...of course, this understanding grew out of his "not causing the sun to rise", ...and, in this, his life changed and he truly became a great shaman ...not just a great shaman by name.

As a result, great-grandfather shaman and his powers, which were not his powers ...but were his powers, became known throughout the interior villages of Alaska.

Great-grandfather was frequently called to a village to increase or extend the salmon run, to bring the moose and caribou, to heal villagers, or to stop the rains, and calm the river, ...but what he liked most of all was teaching others how to guide their inner sun ...and offer that to everyone ...and to the Gods!

Whenever he was called to a village, he always answered, for every action of great-grandfather was an answering, an acknowledgment, and an affirmation of his greatness as a shaman.

When great-grandfather answered a call from a village, he never asked about their problem, he only asked for a little place where he could be alone, ...and though others watched and waited ...and declared, "But he never really does anything!" ...after a few days, the unspoken problem was relieved, ...the fish were plentiful in the fishwheels, the moose and caribou returned, villagers were better, and the rains stopped ...such that the rivers calmed down!

And people who followed great-grandfather's example and learned to offer extraordinary things in unnoticed ways were frequently relieved of unspoken problems and difficulties ...and advanced in unusual ways.

The villagers declared that the greater great-grandfather was, the lesser were his actions! ...yet, the greater were his doings!

And the villagers marveled at great-grandfather shaman's teaching that awakening a child to see and experience his empoweredself in dreams ...and helping that child grow up in the realization of that empoweredself would yield an adult of superior intelligence and fineness of extraordinary distinction ...with great physical endurance ...and a tremendous vitality of spirit.

Unfortunately, abandoning their old ways, too many villagers did not "sit" with great-grandfather shaman, ...the tried to create great tasks and dramas in life to "prove" they were worthy of being called "great," but in struggling to be "called great" ...those villagers gave away their greatness.

Like great-grandfather, as you live your empoweredself through offering, others will certainly marvel that you are able to accomplish extraordinary things in inconspicuous ways ...through ordinary efforts.

If even one word of what we've said or left unspoken for you to sit with finds a place within you, is it not reasonable to assume there may be a dormant empowered self waiting for you ...as well?

Besides, you are a practical person, ...aren't you? ...then consider this guarantee ...that is greater than a money back promise: *If you are not satisfied with your empowered self, you can have your old self and life back ...along with your old problems and illnesses, ...so what do you have to lose?*

Also, if you are unhappy with offering as a greater shaman, you can forsake everything and continue struggling to cause what you desire ...and see all of that become meaningless in the end!

However, a word of caution, living your greater self through offering does not make you supernatural! ...for you will not be able to move mountains, create world peace, banish evil, or heal all illnesses, ...however, living your greater self through offering empowers you to be the self you really are, ...and that is truly miraculous in resurrecting the dead!

If you believe what we've said is all a myth, then you must decide whether this myth, as you call it, of offering your greater self and life will help you accommodate yourself to a life of cold darkness without the warmth and comfort of an illuminating sun ...and to many more years of unknowing, ...or will it serve as a steppingstone to the self-awareness and realization of who you truly are? ...and what your life is all about?

Before the missionaries arrived in his village and things got confusing ...and seemingly backwards, great-grandfather shaman tried creating his greatness directly ...and in that was lesser; ...only when he lived his seemingly lesser self in inconspicuous offering ways did he truly become the great-grandfather shaman.

Your empowered privilegedself is not a mystic or divine spirit calling you ...or coming to you, you are the divine mystical spirit!

Do not try to rush these things in your life ...or struggle to cause them or meet challenges, ...or continue matters essentially "as usual," ...try to become greater if you must! ...but carry your feelings ...and these awarenesses with you until you call yourself to your empowerment ...through offering.

As you can imagine, great-grandfather shaman taught his sons ...and his son's sons how to be great shaman, ...but he also taught them to actively wait upon their calling through constant offering ...not to go on a Quest or search for a sign or calling.

He told them that when their calling comes, "it might be as simple as not doing what you normally do", ...and he always reminded them of the day he *stopped calling the sun*, ...or, as he frequently declared, "...it might occur while you are doing something that is truly unnatural for you to do, such as setting beaver free from your trap ...or releasing salmon from your fishwheel."

Great-grandfather reminded his sons of the custom of giving gifts to departing guests, ...and he reminded them that all people and living things are departing guests from this world ...and he declared that the only true gift is what the giver wants for himself!

Great-Grandfather insisted that great men give the precious gift of an awareness the guests had not realized about themselves before, because that awareness just might be the guest's calling ...and that would be a grand present! ...then he cautioned his sons against denying their own defects ...and offering criticism as a gift.

And, of course, great-grandfather shaman frequently repeated the story of his own calling after "freeing the sun to go its own way"...as he was freeing his sons to go their own way.

"When I had my calling," he declared, "I felt free of time ...and other limitations of this world, and I wanted to jump around and shout ...for I was in a fit of joy at the expansion of my mind and body, ...then, the next moment, everything contracted to a single point ...and that point was me.

"Then it seemed my bones no longer supported me ...and my mind started to reach out, as in a dream, for something solid to hold onto.

"Relax! ...I told myself, ...and I let everything pass through me! ...it was as though I was seeing everything that had ever happened to our people, and I felt completely alone on the river ice ...shivering violently, ...but I knew that no matter what happened, I was completely safe ...and I knew I had access to all things in the universe, ...it was as though, at that moment, I was standing at the center and source of the universe!

"Then, all of this stopped! ...as quickly as it had started ...and I was being pulled through the darkness, ...but, strangely, I could clearly see everything around me ...even in the darkness.

"And when it was over, I felt as though I wasn't in my body correctly! ...and I watched as I walked around beside myself, ...it was as though there were two of me ...and my body!"

Great-grandfather's sons listened carefully to every word ...and though they had heard the story many times, they always acted properly surprised ...and begged to hear more.

"Ohh, it was just a dream!" ...one boy declared every time, ...and great-grandfather always assured them it wasn't a dream! ...because dreams happen quickly ...but this took several hours ...and he could see in the dark for several days after the event.

Great-grandfather shaman loved telling the story of his "calling" over and over ...and he reminded his sons that if they have similar experiences, they must remain calm ...because he wouldn't be there to help them.

Of course, great-grandfather didn't tell the small boys about the terrifying beaver who gnawed his bones ...as he watched, and about being buried alive in ice, ...instead, he assured his sons that though every one of these happenings will seem to be happening to their body, they are to remember that these events are occurring in the darkness of their mind ...to free their spirit from the grasp of events and body sensations ...and old memories.

Great-grandfather shaman reminded his sons that their people survived in this harsh land by understanding Nature ...and following traditional knowings, ...and by always being "practical"!

Great-grandfather always spit out the word "practical" ...as though it was a piece of spoiled salmon, ...for though he was always practical ...he also had a greater sense beyond practical, ...as though he could see through the darkness of practical and what is, to the sun beyond ...which he called forth to enlighten others to an even greater awareness of practical.

Great-grandfather admitted the missionaries had tricked him out of calling the sun, but after his own calling, he found he had a greater sun to call forth ...and rely upon, ..."Those missionaries took away my sun ...and gave me an even finer sun in life!" ...he declared, ...and he promised to reach through the darkness and recall each person's sun.

Great-grandfather cautioned his sons that when they begin following their own mind ...and their own sun along its personal journey throughout the darkness of the universe

...instead of living by village and family traditions as he had done for so many years just repeating the rituals of "calling the sun" over and over, they run the risk of sensing and living ...and surely experiencing their own forces ...rather than responding to the world around them as others feel is right and practical.

Then he would pause thoughtfully and look far away ...and declare quietly, "...but isn't that the point!?"

"After all," he reminded them, "this is your life and your calling, ...and if you live and experience yourself and the world around you in ways that others do not sense or agree with ...yet it is empowering and fulfilling for you, ...do you really care if others agree?"

Then he would add, "...but be practical! ...above all be practical, for all of Nature ...and the animals in the forest and streams follow the sun cycles, ...but, of course, you can always carry your own sun within you!"

And he always cautioned them that greater shamans never attempt to trick others or force their "knowings and sun" on others ...as the missionaries did to me.

"But, I was much younger then," he reminded them, "...and I didn't have anyone to guide me!"

Then, he always added, "Be certain you don't judge others for not agreeing with you ...even if they accuse you ...or blame you!"

Great-grandfather said to his sons, "When you are empowered and guided by your own Shaman-awareness ...and the sun within you, you are a full participant in your 'personal Shaman-world' ...and no longer a separate observer and reactor to the world around you!"

So, be aware!" he cautioned, "...your ways will not suit the traditional ways of others around you who faithfully follow and continually experience only those beliefs and ways ...and they will speak out and act against you!"

Great-grandfather was always dramatic and forceful in declaring that though the desires and doings of your body arising from previous knowings and experiences and reactions will help you survive, as the fox survives, ...in this, though you survive, you are not truly alive!

"Ohh, traditional beliefs and rituals can even, enhance your survival somewhat, but only the Shaman's Way that arises from future knowings will bring you and others alive!"

And though his sons constantly asked to be told about their future ...and when their calling would come, and how they would recognize their calling, great-grandfather always remained silent ...and never answered these questions. Do you suppose he was testing them?

Great-grandfather constantly reminded his sons that though they had much to tell others about his teachings, they also had much to remain silent about! ...and following the native custom of "sitting", great-grandfather encouraged his sons to sit together in silence ...and have a shaman's conversation.

You see? ... great-grandfather always answered his son's urgent questions about their calling ...and their pathway as a shaman ...even when they asked again and again, but he answered in "sittings" ...and in the meaningful silence between the words ...and the things not spoken of, ...but they never listened!

Great-grandfather constantly asked his sons, "Will you leave this shaman's lodge to continue living traditional beliefs and ways ...and the sun cycles? ...or will you fill yourself with the light of my teachings and your personal sun to follow the shaman's pathway?" ...then he reminded them that a true calling to greatness beyond being called great only comes along the shaman's way.

"In other words," he declared, "you must travel the shaman's way in order to be called to the shaman's way." ...then he frequently added ...to make sure his sons were listening, "You have to call yourself to be called!"

Great-grandfather always reminded his sons that when he "called himself" to end the tradition of a lesser shaman calling the sun, as great as that was, he called himself to be a greater shaman living an even greater calling, ...though he remained silent about this calling.

"Those of you," he cautioned, "who go on a quest or seek a sign to the shaman's trail on a moose or bear hunt, or those of you who passionately desire shaman experiences and a shaman's calling, no matter how open and sincere you are, you will merely confirm and strengthen your traditional beliefs and ways which you are seeking to overcome ...or rise above! ...and in that, you will be weakened and emptied!"

Great-grandfather asked his sons to promise they would honor their traditional beliefs and ways ...and never struggle against them, but would instead come alive living their greater shaman ways and calling, ...and then, strangely, he asked, "Are you willing to raise the dead?"

Great-grandfather told his sons not to forget that while their physical survival depends upon everything that walks on the land and swims in the great river ...and even upon the sun that circles the land ...and travels far away in the winter, their being truly alive depends upon their calling and the greater shaman within them ...and even the greater realities and spirit in the mind of that greater shaman.

One day, maybe to test his sons, great-grandfather asked, "Where does the sun go on its winter journey?"

Remembering his previous duty of "calling the sun", his sons were certain great-grandfather knew the answer ...and would tell them, so they made foolish guesses, like "Behind the mountain", "Back with the missionaries!" "Beyond the stars" ...and even "To the dark side of the sky!" One boy solemnly suggested that the sun visited the great shaman-spirit!

After a lot of giggling ...and serious frowns, the boys pleaded with great-grandfather to give them the answer so they could show off their great wisdom, ...instead, great-grandfather told them to "...discover the answer for yourself and come to me, one at a time, over the next seven suns ...and give me your answer.

"Each of you must discover your own answer! ...without speaking to the others, ...I also want you to tell me how many stars are in the sky."

Well, there were a lot of worried looks and frantic actions during the week ...including drumming and chanting, dancing, "sitting" and asking, private rituals, and moose-trailing! ...and though it was summer, the sweat lodge was kept active ...so the boys could "read the smoke".

During the week, two of the boys went to great-grandfather and gave their answer ...and went away sadly disappointed ...to continue searching for an answer. One boy continued drumming for an answer, while the other took long walks under the stars at night ...and in the sun during the day ...hoping to get in harmony with the sun and stars ...and hear an answer.

Each boy was certain this was a special trial ...or test, and whoever got the call ...and answered correctly would be the next Great Shaman.

While this frenzy of activity was going on, one son checked his trap line ...and cleaned and stretched a beaver skin; he helped the women dry salmon; and he cut firewood ...and stacked great amounts of wood near the door to the lodge.

He seemed completely disinterested in the questions, "...or maybe he already knows the answers", his brothers decided, ...which only discouraged them ...and made their life more-worrisome! ...and they were frantic each evening as the sun went away and the stars came out, ...and as the clouds moved on, even more stars appeared.

And each day, the final moment for answering great-grandfather's questions ...and receiving his judgment drew nearer ...and nearer.

Everyone in the lodge was in a panic ...which affected everything outside! ...the wolves howled at night ...and the ravens screamed during the day!

But, of course, one son was not in a panic ...or even in a hurry, ...in fact, he kept doing his chores "as usual", ...well, maybe not as usual, for he seemed to do much more than usual.

On the seventh day, the first two sons went to great-grandfather shaman with little hope in their eyes and heart about the answers they had derived or listened for ...or drummed up, ...and each boy returned with a look of grief and disappointment, while great-grandfather sadly shook his head from side to side.

Finally, the last son was summoned from the fishwheel to give his answer ...which he whispered to great-grandfather shaman, ...and this is what the boy whispered.

"Sir, the sun doesn't go anywhere during the winter ...it goes out! ...just as the fire in the stove goes out if not properly tended ...and has to be relit.

"I've brought you this grand match so you can relight the sun ...just as you relight the stove when it goes out, ...and since the sun appears to be larger than the stove, I have cut and stacked lots of firewood for you to use keeping the sun's fires burning brightly."

Great-grandfather smiled pleasantly and accepted the match! ...and then asked gravely, "But how many stars are in the sky?"

Again, the boy leaned close and whispered, "There are as many stars in the sky as there are salmon in the Big River! I have counted both! ...and the number is 10 million, ...not one more ...not one less! ...and in case you don't believe me, I have brought you this cleaned beaver skin so you can tally your own count!" ...and with those words, the boy held out his beaver skin ...he had trapped, cleaned, and stretched during the previous week.

Great-grandfather smiled brightly ...but said nothing.

Did you "sit" and converse with his unspoken words? ...if so, then you can certainly answer this question, "Who was the next Greater Shaman in the interior of Alaska?"

Joshua came to our meetings because, despite the name he was given at birth, he was slowly losing awareness and realization of his true identity, ...and he was seeking his greater calling.

Of course, we reminded him of great-grandfather's words not to go on a quest or seek a calling, ...that he must call himself in order to have a calling; ...at which point, he told us about his great-grandmother.

"She wasn't really native!" ...he began this story slowly, "...she was born in France! ...somewhere in France. She wasn't pretty ...just cute, ...well, from the pictures I've seen, she was just barely cute! ...yet, from the beginning, great-grandmother always proclaimed ...without any doubt in her voice, "I am the cutest little thing ever!" ...and as she repeated this over and over ...and told everyone around her, others began believing she was truly the cutest little girl ever ...and they told her so!

"And every time they told her, she smiled brightly ...and flashed her straight teeth. Her eyes sparkled at their words ...which only reinforced her knowing that she was the cutest little girl ever!

"Great-grandmother said she was giving herself an understanding that if what she truly believed was so ...and she fully acted upon that belief, then others, no matter what, could not see her in any other way than that."

When Joshua paused thoughtfully ...I said that was exactly what great-grandfather's son had done in saying the sun goes out in winter ...and he acted fully upon that by cutting and stacking wood, ...and had stretched and dried a beaver skin for great-grandfather to count and tally ten million stars in the sky ...and salmon in the Yukon river.

Then I asked Joshua, "haven't you considered calling yourself? ...actually, "I added, "I suspect you have already been called by name ...but you weren't listening! ...and you've been called every day since ...in everything you do, ...but you haven't listened even to yourself! ...but more about that later, ...let's return to Joshua's great-grandmother.

Joshua continued, "...and from her own actions as a child, great-grandmother said she learned ...and taught others that they too could be just as they truly desired ...and were willing to act fully upon!"

In listening to Joshua, I wondered what ever brought her to a native village in the interior of Alaska.

"Gold!" ...Joshua declared suddenly. "She came to our village as a child ...with her father looking for gold, ...then, even as a child, great-grandmother said she got her calling to show the people of our village, and in other villages, that whatever they felt themselves to be ...however they saw and felt on the inside, that was good enough! ...and when they repeated that and showed others it was true because they lived it ...then other people would quickly declare, 'They are just as they declare they are!'"

"But why?" ...I asked, "That sounds like a weird calling to bring here, ...what was going on?"

"Alcohol!" ...Joshua declared sadly, "Miners brought alcohol with them, but when they left, the alcohol stayed ...and it was destroying whole villages. People needed a greater image of themselves ...not an alcohol haze! ...and great-grandmother knew she could help, ...but there was also a greater calling she never talked about!"

"Soo, that's what great-grandmother taught! ...and it was a harsh teaching at times, because many villagers disagreed with her ...and some became violent. Some of my best friends even cursed her! ...and shouted, 'That's not so! ...I've often told others that I am this! ...or that! ...and they didn't agree.'

"And great-grandmother would declare, 'That's because you didn't even believe your own words! ...you were just bragging ...and you hoped that if you said it enough in one drunk after another, others would believe you ...but you didn't believe it either because you never lived your own words! ...you just said them and hoped others would accept that.'

"Soo, that's what great-grandmother taught! ...but I suspect there was an ever greater calling in all of this!

"Great-grandmother married a villager, had children, and was happy in the interior traveling between villages ...and teaching these things to everyone who would listen! ...and great-grandmother respected those who disagreed with her, ...but even those individuals, after they met her ...and came under her attitude ...and experienced how she truly felt about them

...and about their ability to actually be and live as they truly desire ...and believe themselves to be, they would frequently declare, 'She says this ...and I disagree with her, but she shows in every action that she feels it deeply, ...and when I sit with her ...I sense it's true! ...for she shows it is true!'

"And when she asks what attitude you carry deep inside ...you knew she cared deeply, ...and when great-grandmother tells you that whatever you want yourself to be, if you genuinely believe that and act upon it ...you will be that... NO! Wait! ...she actually said you will find you are that! ...and that's what I find difficult to believe, ...how can I already be what I want to become?"

Joshua stopped suddenly, "Do you think great-grandmother was right? ...that we already are what we want to become? How's that possible?"

"Well Joshua," I asked, "What do you really want? ...or want to become? What is your greatest desire?"

"Now you sound just like great-grandmother! Okay, I want my calling! I want to be a greater shaman with a calling! ...can you show me that I already have a calling ...and I'm already a greater shaman?"

"Well, Joshua, would you be willing to continue great-grandmother's teachings?"

"Sure, but that would be carrying on a tradition ...so, in that, I'd be a lesser shaman ...and there's no calling in that!"

"Then tell me this, ...who named you!"

"Funny you should ask that, ...I was told that great-grandmother asked my mother if she would call me Joshua ...after great-grandmother's father, ...why're you asking?"

"You're a Christian Shaman, ...right?"

"Certainly!"

"Would you like to be like Jesus? ...he was a great shaman ...wouldn't you agree?"

"Of course he was! ...but, though I've never heard of his moving mountains ...he did heal people! ...and he raised Lazarus! ...and I don't think I can do those things, ...besides, I don't have a calling to be like Jesus!"

"Then, let's look closely at all of these things, ...did you know that the Joshua in fact means *savior* and *deliverer*? ...and that in Hebrew the name Joshua is identical with the name Jesus? The only difference..."

"Wait! Stop!" ...Joshua interrupted. "What does this really have to do with me? Do you really think that's my calling? ...to be like Jesus?"

"Well, ...yes! Especially since great-grandmother named you Joshua after her father, ...and in that didn't she call you by name?! ...and haven't others called you by name every time they called you Joshua? ...and you call yourself every time you call yourself Joshua in mind."

"How'd you know I speak to myself as Joshua, ...I never told anyone that! How'd you know" ...oh, never mind! ...that doesn't really matter because I can't *raise the dead!*"

"Don't be too certain about that either! Do you remember when great-grandfather told you the story of his life, he reminded his sons of the custom of giving gifts to departing guests ...and he insisted that great men give the precious gift of an awareness the guests had not realized about themselves before, because that awareness just might be the guest's calling ...and that would be a grand present! ...do you remember that?"

"Of course! ...and that's what great-grandmother was doing, ...wasn't it? ...but what about Lazarus?"

"Do you remember when great-grandfather asked his sons to promise they would honor their traditional ways ...and never struggle against them, but would instead come alive living their greater shaman ways and calling, ...and then, you said, he asked, 'Are you willing to raise the dead?' ...do you remember that?"

"And you're saying that introducing people to their calling ...and showing them how to live that, is raising the dead to a greater self and life, ...aren't you?"

"Well, wouldn't that be true?"

"Okay ...so, I might be able to raise the dead by calling them to their calling, ...but I can't heal! ..Jesus healed, ...I can't, so I'm no Jesus!"

"Are you willing to consider that healing is really deliverance?"

"I guess so, ...sure! ...deliverance from illness!"

"Yes, and a lot more, for an ancient Chinese text says that the finest healer treats sickness before it occurs ...instead of after it appears! With that in mind, can you see that Jesus healed after sickness appeared, while you can treat sickness before it occurs by delivering others to their calling ...and greater shaman self."

"I'm beginning to see that, ...sure! ...but if I carry on great-grandfather's ways and great-grandmother's calling and actions in the bush, that would be tradition ...not a calling, ...so I would be a lesser shaman ...not a Greater Shaman; ...you said you'd show me that I'm already a Greater Shaman, ...that's what I want! ...and what I want to become, ...which you said I already am!"

"Yes, there is sort of a tradition in that, ...isn't there? However! Well, great-grandfather told you these things ..but you didn't listen or call yourself. Then great-grandmother called you by name ...but you didn't listen. Everyone who ever called you Joshua called you by name ..but you didn't listen or respond! And since you always speak to yourself by name, you constantly call yourself ..but you didn't listen or respond even to calling yourself.

"Joshua of the Bible commanded others to hear the words or calling of their God, which is what great-grandmother did in teaching others to be themselves and live their greatest shaman self they already are, ...and she called you by name to carry on, ...so, are you willing to answer your call to be and live the greatness of who you already are?"

After our words, Joshua stood up, smiled brightly, thanked us profusely for the wonderful conversation without saying a word, and left quietly ...taking our gift with him, ...and, unfortunately, we've never seen him since ...or heard about him, ...I wonder if he still exists ...or ever existed!

Do you suppose Joshua came to call us? ...or that we created Joshua as a way to call ourselves?

6. In the Bible, it is recorded that when seeing what had been created on each day, God declared it is good! ...this is an expression of contentment ...not an expression of love, joy, beauty ..or judgment! ...and the living universe, though it seems to express

violence and extremes, is also content! ...in knowing this, are you willing to live an eternalself that only offers contentment ...not happiness or higher spirits?

7. Contentment (Book 23) is the only emotion that is not composed! (Book 11) ...formed but not composed. Acceptance is not contentment! Any feeling of contentment is false! ...and will mislead you, for all such feelings are composed. True contentment is a lack of discontent ...in any form, ...and a lack of discontent cannot be composed.

8. Everything physical, whether visible or invisible ...or just unseen, is composed and temporary! ...however, every physical thing reveals what exists and is promised ...which is eternal and "formed" but not composed.

9. You see change and infer time and motion, yet, neither occur! (Book 23 and 38) If you see a star a billion light years distant ...and that star explodes, are you seeing what happened in the past ...or what will happen in the future? ...and whatever your answer might be, ...how do you know that's true?

10. Does the past create the future? ...or is it possible that the future creates a past to substantiate itself? ...well, obviously, the universe lets you create a past to substantiate the future you desire! Your pastlives are yours (Book 34), but they are not you ...and you did not live them! ...therefore, is it possible that in each lifetime you are creating a past to establish and verify who you are? ...but, who are you ...really? Isn't it probable that you dream (Book 29) and visualize yourself ...and then live, in form or mind, the self and life that creates that image?

11. If you set a picture or goal (Book 41) to become or attain to, what do you do to become that? ...and how do you know your doings will fulfill that? ...and how do you know your doings will fulfill that? ...or bring it about? ...and if you bring it about ...haven't you composed that? ...and won't you lose that when it all decomposes? ...yet, if you dream or imagine yourself, that self is not composed! ...and if you create a past to realize and substantiate that vision, your past does not compose that ...does it?!

12. Each day, as an eternalbeing, you leapfrog forward then substantiate with a past! ...such that personalbeing (Book 4) is essentially as privilegedbeing (Book 5) visualizes for personalbeing to substantiate and make real. Composing follows memories, while leapfrogging follows memory ...and then composes experiences and memories to make those images real, ...are you living your memories? ...or giving memories to memory to make memory real?

13. Make it up ...and make it real! (3E) ...this means to create a past that fully substantiates and makes real the image you have of yourself that you want to become! ...for, at death, the uncomposed image of self continues, while the composed past self decomposes.

14. Things held in mind produce after their own kind ...is more-appropriately stated that things held in mind produce their own past! ...and death, which returns you to your eternalself, offers you a greater, more-expansive selfimage to past ...and make real, ...so which will you choose for your future, cause and effect to become ...or image and create the past to substantiate who you are?

15. Though you don't realize it, you are constantly and fully realizing, as in "making real", who and what you are! ...actually, you are always catching up to yourself! Are you willing to create a past for your dreams? Privilegedbeings dream and visualize ...while personalbeings make those images real by giving them a past, ...remember, you do not create your future, you create more past ...and that pushes you into the future!

16. But you still don't believe you create your past to substantiate your future, ...do you? ...then listen carefully!

17. Just what do you think a work résumé is all about? ...it is a chronicle of the past you created to substantiate you and your abilities today, ...yet, all the time you were creating a résumé, you believed you were preparing yourself for your position today ...and you struggled to do that, ...didn't you? ...because you didn't see and experience yourself as you are today, ...so you worked hard to become what you already were! The question is, ...did you make it real for yourself ...or seek affirmation from others and depend upon them to justify you?

18. For a personalbeing, the composed past is real and the uncomposed future is unreal, ...while, to a privilegedbeing, the uncomposed future is real and the composed past is not! You are as real as you realize yourself to be! ...to a personalbeing, what you do to compose is real, ...to a privilegedbeing, what you do and compose are non-issues, for real is not composed!

19. What inspires you limits you! ...what you inspire truly creates you!

20. Consider Joshua ...who wanted a calling! ...and was constantly composing matters to attain a calling ...to become a greater-shaman, ...yet, all along, Joshua already had his calling, from birth to be like Jesus, which was completely clear when he was shown that his past already composed and confirmed that, ...which he didn't realize because he was too focused on creating and becoming!

21. Do you see contentment in all of this?! You are what you visualize yourself to be, ...creating or composing a past does not compose you, ...that past is for others ...to "explain" yourself in a composed world, ...and it is a non-issue to you!

22. Discontent rests in trying to compose, create, and become what you already are!

23. *Meaning (Book 14) is in what you visualize and live ...not in what you compose and become! Meaning is in auctioning your visualization ...not in doing to become as you visualize! Being inspired to become holds you back ...and eventually defeats you!*

24. *To truly know yourself, or anyone, you have to discard most of what you believe about yourself ...and what you believe you want to become! ...actually, you have to discard most of what you believe about life and the universe, what you've heard and believed, and what you've experienced ...for most of that is a weak ...and frequently distorted image of you and life as they really are! ...your old concepts must change! ...well, they must be expanded tremendously, for life ...and your life in particular isn't limited to being as you believe ...and have struggled with for so long, ...you and life are far-greater than you have ever imagined!*

25. *Are you willing to be content in being who you really are ...and realize that? ...not be discontent with who you think you are ...and seek and struggle to become other? Well, let's see...!*

You can raise the dead to themselves!