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To this day, that impression of Ihaleakala symbolizes that cleaning with every experience is my first priority.  The night before the class, Ihaleakala asked me to set the alarm clock. I told him I would set it for 7:00 AM because the class would start at 10:00 AM and I wanted him to be well-rested for the class. He asked me to set the alarm for 4:00 AM. I was surprised, but did so.  The next morning I woke up and went to the living room to find Ihaleakala sitting on the couch with the Basic 1 and Basic 2 manuals in his hands. If I had to describe the situation in words, it would be that it was peaceful.  Peace was embodied there, simply because Ihaleakala was there cleaning himself. It was filled with a peace that I had never experienced myself, even though it was undeniably a room in my home. I could feel the peace spreading to the chair, to the couch, to the entire space. The stillness is there, of course, but there is no room for thoughts to enter into that stillness. It was probably there at 4:00 in the morning that Ihaleakala began preparing, or cleaning, for the day's classes. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | I flew from Boston to Seattle in 2003 to take the Basic 2 class. That year I was diagnosed with cancer, which was not expected to be cured. In the process of taking the class, I had the opportunity to speak with Ihaleakala and I told him what I was going through.  Ihaleakala said, "This is a problem that is inside of me," and a few minutes went by as if he was quietly cleaning.  And then Ihaleakala said to me,   "You can come out of this experience like a submarine when it rises to the surface.  When he said that, I felt a deep sense of relief. I had been diagnosed with two years to live, and I was mentally depressed, but at that moment, my whole body felt light, as if a light had been shined on me.  But Ihaleakala continued,  "You have to do the cleaning yourself.  Then I was able to start cleaning in the true sense of the word. That day I began to take responsibility for every moment, every event, every thought, and to practice cleaning.  Then, during the Basic 1 class in New York, Ihaleakala asked me to tell the class what I was going through.  I have been cleaning since that day and have practiced all my treatments through cleaning. I have continued to clean during the various medications and chemical treatments that were supposed to be toxic to my body, and I have carefully cleaned each drug, treatment, doctor, and hospital. I also cleaned with my own feelings and fears about the drugs as my own problem. The results were astonishing to the doctors. It is not often that a treatment through the bloodstream is so effective. It is a miracle. They said, "I don't know what you are doing at the same time, but you should continue to do it. It was undeniably cleaning.  When I told this story in class, I was met with applause and I was filled with inner gratitude. At the same time, Ihaleakala, who had been standing in front of me, suddenly turned to me as he left, pointed at me, and said,  "JP, don't forget to clean even when you drive. Otherwise, you will lose your life on the highway.  Naturally, I was surprised by his words, but I took them seriously. Since then, I always clean myself and my car before I get in the car. And it was months after receiving such advice from Ihaleakala. I was driving on the highway towards my destination with a colleague to visit a client. Once, just past the exit of the highway, there was a big intersection with a stop sign, which was always a pain to get through.  But then I noticed that the stop sign that used to be there was gone. I simply thought, "This is a lot easier," so I made sure the light was green and stepped on the accelerator. But then I casually looked to my left and saw a pickup truck coming at me at a high rate of speed, and I braked. Everything seemed to be moving in an instant. Just in time, I brought the car to a stop, and the next thing I knew, it was passing right in front of me. I felt safe and at the same time I thanked Ihaleakala in my heart.  After that, whenever we met in class, Ihaleakala would ask about my health, and each time we would do the cleaning together. One time, during a break in class, he sat down next to me and said,  "Well, what do you need to clean now?  I felt grateful and apologetic that he continued to care about me, despite the fact that many of the participants were constantly asking Ihaleakala for advice, but at the same time I was reeling from the re-discovery of a cancer that had once been gone. At that time, Ihaleakala said to me,   **"Divinity is not your concierge.**  I knew that it was, and I was grateful to Divinity. As I tried to find out what on earth Ihaleakala saw in me that made that statement, and to find out the truth, he continued.  **"Cleaning did this job and the clarity came in.**  The clarity necessary to receive the wisdom that is always supposed to be given to us by Divinity can be obtained through cleaning. When he said that, it became clear to me once again that I am not cleaning to fulfill my expectations. It became clear to me that all we can do through cleaning is to repent for our past mistakes through what is happening.  I realized that instead of "just cleaning," I was out of rhythm with expectations.  **"Cleaning is a full time job. Memory is never at rest.**  Ihaleakala used to stop me and remind me not to fall out of rhythm. Ihaleakala has spoken to me this way so casually and so humbly over the years that I have always been able to remember the basic principle that everything is my own problem. Ihaleakala was reminding me to remember that every moment can be cleaned. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | One time during a class, I was sitting in my chair during a lunch break, cleaning with the room.  I was meditating and saying thank you for allowing the class to be held here, and thanking Divinity that this place was properly protected, when I heard a whisper of "thank you" around my neck and turned around to see Ihaleakala smiling at me. I still remember his humble appearance, his slightly mischievous and self-loving smile.  I was struck by the way Ihaleakala would often stop, walk, and clean in places and situations that seemed ordinary to me.  One time when all the staff went out for dinner, we decided to walk home for digestion. As we were about to walk home, he quietly said, "Let's clean just to be safe before we go any further.  Then I suddenly realized that Ihaleakala was seeing and feeling things at that moment that I could not see. I once asked Ihaleakala, while standing in the living room, out of curiosity, "I wish I could see what you see.  At that time, he looked serious and said, "JP, you will never wish for that.  I still don't know what he saw every day, but I do know that Ihaleakala received from Divinity the gift of his talent, and how sincerely and earnestly he spent his life cleaning every moment and every day.  One fine Sunday afternoon, Ihaleakala and I went for a walk on the beach. All that existed between us was silence, and I simply cleaned my every thought as it appeared in that peacefulness.  In the midst of all this, Ihaleakala said to me,   **"You know the ocean reflecting cleaning.**  As I followed Ihaleakala's thoughts of cleaning through the ebb and flow of the waves, it was a precious experience to feel the rhythm of his constant cleaning.  I still remember Ihaleakala's pure cleaning attitude whenever I see his favorite maples, oaks, and pines.  He touched and looked up to them as infinitely precious, and I feel as if he gave me the highest wisdom to go beyond healing illness, to surrender my life to Divinity, and to live my true self.  I offer my gratitude to Ihaleakala beyond comprehension. | | | |