

Tai Karaya Elder Council of the Caney Indigenous Spiritual Circle

This is a formal complaint and call for a change in leadership within the Caney Indigenous Spirit Circle

Greetings relatives, elders and guides, this is Behike-trainee (within the scope of the Caney) Guazabara Rivera. For a long time now I have been in observation of a number of critical symptoms of a very dangerous sickness (within the Caney) that have over-stepped into my home space and spirit.

I believe it is critically important for the Council to gather and address a series of grievances that I highlight below. Our job as students is to hold our educators/mentors/guides accountable and ensure sustainable practice and healthy equanimitous dialogue amongst all parties.

We are in a gestation period and this is not a surprise. There are a lot of things that are happening below the surface and within the womb of our organization. We have choices to make and words to share. Yokahu is gestating and anyone who has been an ally of a birthing process knows that we do not ask the mother to stop pushing, we push with her. This is not a Couvad syndrome or a mockery of birthing it is a critical time where we need to help each other heal. We cannot heal without things being brought to light.

As a Professor, I am certain that there are ways that we can all benefit from convening the council and addressing the points discussed below in a good way. Most importantly, the fast-track to behike initiation and arrival that has been weaponized in these recent months is a direct threat to the longevity and balance of a healing/medicine oriented organization such as the Caney. I utilize specific language like “weaponized” to illustrate the affect that certain mandates and sham contracts have on students and mentors alike. I suggest deep caution and introspection in regards to these kinds of thematics and practices that have deep roots in the political structure of this organization.

Each of the major points of grievance are summarized below and the later pages will elaborate on the purpose, impact and exploratory connotations surrounding the position. Dates and recordings are all on the record and can be requested from the very members that hold seats in the council via Zoom meetings, gathering recordings and published on the facebook page.

I stand prepared to defend my position in the face of warmongering dissolution, encouraging all voices (council, defunct members and students alike) to speak up/out and stand prepared to serve/support the healing that our organization so deeply needs.

As a medical practitioner for over 15 years (nationally and internationally) I overstand that failure to diagnose symptoms and dismissal of chronic conditions is the causation of terminal illness. Frankly, we as a community have been tolerant of conditions and actions for too long and as the Global-Pandemic has taught us all to take a proactive role to prevention, assessment and

action; in regards to health and I dare to extend our collective communal and indeed indigenous spirit.

Gratitude for your time, your patience and for affording me the opportunity to share my observations on the health of our community.

Respectfully,
Guazabara Rivera

Points of grievance

1. There have been no convening of the elders disclosed and discussed amongst the constituents; i.e. no information disseminated meeting minutes from critical meeting junctions in our process
2. The council "induction" ceremony was rushed and (in my opinion) violated a series of spiritual processes that are required to sanctify a spiritual council
3. The [mentee || mentor] dynamic that was created was not adhered to. Additionally the deliverables have been force fed upon students and mentors without consideration and acknowledgement of the humanism in all of us
4. The Mentor/Mentee meeting (Spring 2021) where students were publicly challenged to issue grievances at a moments notice, is violent, pompous and eurocentrically centered practice that is historically relevant.
5. Spirit speaks through people in different ways and the dismissal someone's gift is an act so egregious that it continues to perpetuate the hegemonic hyper patriarchal narrative
6. I do not believe in my heart that there was a proper spiritual passing and cleansing with the change of leadership from Behike-Bo Miguel to Guatu-Iri. I believe that this action was done under pressure, duress and was not appropriately handled with buy in from the entire community.
7. The education platform and the disorganized way of educating and forcing the education of students, was and is heinous, disrespectful, lacks true eldership and models the punitive judeo-catholic practices and implements..
8. There is no published, emailed, printed or communicated by-laws (nor constitution) for us students know our rights, capacities and in this climate of deep sickness; to protect ourselves
9. My first proposal is to reintroduce a gender balance in the council
10. I am calling for a removal of leadership and instilling a structure more akin to our indigenous form of governance which has been documented by both the french and spanish as sovereign villages/Yukayekes and no central head

Our genealogical and indeed innate natural stance of our people is not to shut up and follow. It is to resist and repair where repair is deemed viable. We do not need private whispers of consensus or silencing tactics, we need revolutionary change in the way we contribute to the furthering of all of our spiritual gifts and the longevity of our expanded yukayekes.

Humbly
Guazabara

1. There have been no convening of the elders disclosed and discussed amongst the constituents; i.e. no information disseminated meeting minutes from critical meeting junctions in our process

In many forms of business and administrative capacities, board meetings are either recorded, transcribed and published for all members in all capacities to read. This is an accountability action that all administrations have to enact in order to maintain buy-in amongst members, workers and constituents. Additionally from a national perspective tax paying companies/organizations are supposed to exercise good book-keeping practices that ensure that the organization is functioning in accordance with the statements of purpose and scope of work.

I have served in the administrative capacity for universities, hospital systems and at the state level as a clinical bioethicist for the justice committee of New York state. These experiences have taught me that failure to communicate summaries, notes and transcriptions of important meetings amongst elected officials (or in this case appointed council members) seeds deep discord amongst the company. Additionally it conveys a lingering message that there is no consensus, nor collective participation in some or any of the practices coming from the board.

This expresses an entitled, "I rule over you" attitude and presents a deviance from accountability practices.

2. The council ceremony felt rushed and (in my opinion) violated a series of spiritual processes that are required to sanctify a spiritual council.

When we convened at the homestead of the current Behike-Bo, few if any attempts at inclusion were made. On the contrary, embarrassing and hazing tactics were used that literally crippled students and participants alike during the "initiation" of the council ceremony.

A pipe that was dormant for years was presented for "ooh's and ahh's" instead of creating an environment of empowerment. There was no smoking of a symbolic, cultural and ceremonial item. Knowing and appreciating the impact and relationship our people have with the realm of "Ku", how could we not bless and collectively initiate prayers to the future of a council of medicine men and women?

Furthermore, the lack of facilitation via audio or video platform to include all behikes (near and far) demonstrates the deep lack of inclusion in the organizing of critical ceremonies. It is not the job of a student to rush and seek to include people that they did not know or have knowledge of. And to see the communication in the chat box and later on the facebook platform shows keen eyes that there has been a strategic prevention in including the members at large.

This continues the point expressed in [Grievance #1] in ways that other voices are not necessary and if they're not here too bad. Is this really a collective of spirit if we are refusing the

opportunities for others to pray together, to initiate an elder council in a way that has dignity, reverence and respect?

The worst and more pressing matter is that behikes “in-training” were put on the spot and then snickered at when they studded or said they weren't prepared to conduct a piece of the ceremony when called upon. Again, I am not privy nor deemed worthy to receive information of the inner workings of the council nor the administrators of that convocation, but who said it was right to call students out in a milestone ceremony and then sneer at them for lack of preparation?

What consensus of persons agreed that this would be done prior to the gathering?

In our Western *bastard children of europe* government structure we live in, we see this attitude replicated in the form of “if you did your homework you'd be prepared” attitude. I challenge the council to review this and instead adopt a more matrilineal practice of nurturing your students to arrive at a capacity to contribute to momentous occasions and ceremonies. I feel for sister Julie who expressed surprise at being called out to do one of the purifications and later looked at with distain by elders when there was hesitation.

This ceremony was rushed and even the headdresses were not completed. People were being called on to do prayers in between prayers and the songs were butchered with rushed pace and mispronunciations. We cannot say the words just to say them, I am confident that the ancestors spirits do not appreciate being rushed along as if we were reading a recipe book.

It is unfortunate that the council was convened in this way. Although the prayers and songs of Elder Turey, Konuk and Uaian were beautiful and powerful, the shortcomings of this important gathering are not unfounded.

3. The [mentee || mentor] dynamic that was created was not adhered to. Additionally the deliverables have been force fed upon students and mentors without consideration and acknowledgement of the humanism in all of us

As an educator it should

In our current justice system it is illegal to force someone to sign a contract that they do not understand, agree with and especially with an arbitrary time imposition. More importantly, when administrators are tolerant of such actions (including but not limited the following reasons):

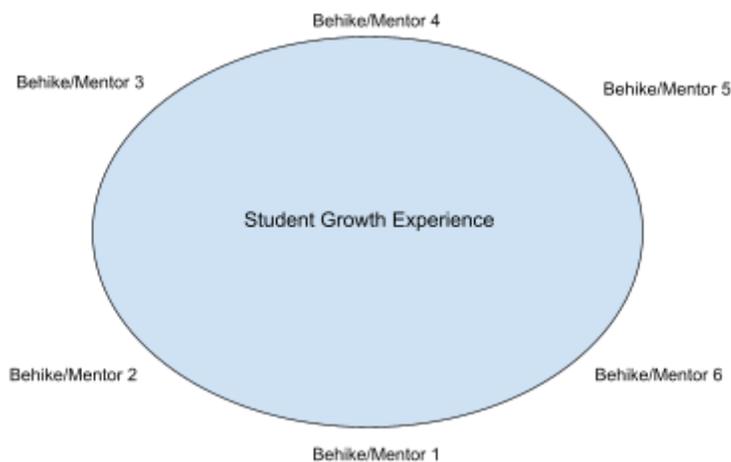
- Because they do not feel their opinion has weight
- Because in the past their recommendations/wisdoms has been swiftly disregarded
- Because they they feel overwhelmed in their personal affairs
- Because they feel ostracized by gender imbalances, power dynamics, past traumas and triggers

The executor of such low actions not only forces people into submission but forces everyone to be an accomplice.

We are all wrong for allowing this happen for decades. These types of practices are not new, they are very old strategies that have been used to seed discord and lurk in the shadows. To be a master of these instruments is to adopt one stream of our origin (The Colonizer, the Slave or the Native).

We have to do better and as a family when one person does wrong, we are all responsible to help administer the appropriate medicine for the magnitude of the action.

It was my impression (and I may be completely wrong) that the program that we were all in support of was structured in this way:



In this structure discussed at the last gathering at the Taino Cultural Center we discussed the issue of education and grooming in this way. There were no formal proposals issued to students before the very unprofessional dictation of dates and itemized duties.

I want to be clear that this was not a syllabus. This was a strategic move to usurp power and undermine the lives of the mentors and mentees alike.

I make this claim with surefootedness because my mentor was never consulted and additionally was already experiencing his own form of distress during this time. This type of process requires meetings and discussions on what work in peoples lives. Not what was sent out to the brotherhood. Please see the level of invasiveness of the published mandate.

Again there was a contract that accompanied this process that I did not sign, however I had received multiple messages and calls being told to sign this illegal contract;

Please see the contract and “syllabus” attached to this very same email.

Fortunately for me, Guatu Iri chose me to mentor first, so I have first hand knowledge of the way that he works and chooses not to work. This leadership style is not unfounded, it is something very familiar for all of us who have suffered under the systems of capitalism.

I was dropped from my “mentor” via social media and was not given the respect to have a phone call or in person meeting.

On 9/20/2021 at 9:24 pm I was dropped from my mentor and thrown at Elder Edgar Konuk Ceiba via facebook message.

“

There has been a shift of students. Elder Edgar will be working with you going forward. Please reach out to him.

I was then sent the “Student Timeline” without being consulted or asked if I can commit to the invasiveness of the lackluster program.

Is this how our leadership is allowed to operate? Even when you are fired from a job you are cited reasons and given opportunity to speak in confidence with an advocate before you clear your desk and go home.

I receive this exactly as it was said and take this as an insult!

I continued to receive badgering messages about taking tests and posted communications with exam links. This was the only correspondence between me and my previous “Mentor”, this is the kind of forced dialogue that I was forced to digest. When specifically the uploaded timeline says:

“Either Mentor/student discuss test results and/or Start...”

Next teaching/wisdom

Again, I have followed the divine and righteous path that has been groomed into my person, from 2 previous initiations, I have never seen such deplorable leadership practice.

Now I did not sit idle, instead I have patiently waited, surveyed both students and mentors within and outside the council and even learned more about the history that was hidden from students and Behikes alike. Smoke and mirror tactics are like a church filled with pretty stained glass windows, fragile and with little merit. It does not mean that the “house of worship” preaches the good word or that they do right by community. The Corpses of all the little boys and girls being found across Turtle Island stand proofs of my statement. So I encourage everyone to truly weigh their position and if they want to continue to utilize cloaks and daggers to ostracize fellow humans. No one is above justice.

I responded [4/12/21 @14:08] and received a pity party answer (30 minutes later) and a deflection of action.

Guazabara

Peace elder,

After a year of cold directive oriented messages, and a lack of spirit heart and presents in your messages, I am absolutely confused as to why you are sending me a test?

Oh did I insult or offend you in anyway that you are acting in this cold hyper objective manner?

Guatu Iri

I'm sorry if you were taking it in that manner since test number three need to be sent out to all the students then that's exactly what I did it again apologies if you feel that I'm being cold. At times it is easy to make assumptions and we know little of what is happening in the other individuals lives

I have never been treated this way in any of the medicine ways of our ancestors and relatives. I encourage all the council to re-listen to the recordings that were recorded by Elder Nelson Kaumarix where we spoke about Behike's capacity.

"Behikes are not made, they are born".

Just because someone has a title does not mean that they deserve it. More pressing, it does not mean that they have the faculties to lead in accordance to the bylaws of the people.

Most importantly, this is not only a Guatu issue, we who have been silent are also responsible. This brother needed help and may not have received the support he had needed. For this reason I am writing. This disease is not acute, in the medical jargon this means this is not something that happened recently. This is a chronic issue and if the council is truly a council it has to move in the direction of progress and healing and address all these grievances in public.

For too long have things been skirted under the rug. For too long the house has been left disheveled and no one person can clean up alone.

4. The Mentor/Mentee meeting (Spring 2021) where students were publicly challenged to issue grievances at a moments notice, is violent, pompous and eurocentrically centered. when we were in the Spring 2021 and the do you have a problem?

This was yet another example of the tactics of failing leadership and one that we as historians know very well. Similar to how monarchs ask "If anyone has an issue with my leadership, step forward". What happens to the person who steps forward?

However, in the face of a war monger who had taken the opportunity to call out any and all people to "put up or shut up",

I was the first person to respond and did so with class and poise. Knowing full well that the guillotine could have been directed at any one of us; Mentor and Student alike.

My response in summation was that this is not the time nor the place to state grievances and the work being done is not representative of the summation of the contributions of all people.

I stand with my statement and continue to move toward resolution. It is clear that no one else was going to take this position and I have the will to see any and all challenges to completion; in this cycle or the next solar pass.

Please see and review the statement and the attitude recorded in the zoom conference recording within the Caney.

5. Spirit speaks through people in different ways and to dismiss someone's gift is an act so egregious that it continues to perpetuate the hegemonic hyper patriarchal narrative

I was not physically present at the most recent ceremony, however that is because of a series of administrative “hiccups” with location, zoom, audio or any of the technology methodologies promised. We who were not there excluded for a multitude of reasons and it is rooted in lack of preparation and lack of trust in ones cabinet/council/administration.

Most importantly the ceremony that elders spent months praying for, scrying in the ethers for and laboring with their hearts was dismembered and rushed through. I know this in my heart and did my diligence as a brother of Taino Lineage to investigate this matter and I am ashamed to know how things went.

I am glad that I was not present and that it was not aired in the internet, because anyone would have seen and felt the level of discord that the Caney has tolerated for too long.

This type of dismissal of the ways spirit speaks through people is not unfounded, nor is this a rare occasion. In prayer there is proof and if something doesn't feel right, we do not have to follow.

I will not write more about this because it does not need to be written, everyone who talks to each other knows in their hearts the details of all the things that occurred.

Gratefully, Spirit presented and the ceremonies continued and culminated in a way that was pleasing to participants in conclusion.

However, I caution you that the ends does not justify the means.

6. I do not believe in my heart that there was a proper spiritual passing and cleansing with the change of leadership. I believe that this action was done under pressure, duress and was not appropriately handled with buy in from the entire community.

I came into the Caney almost 4 solar cycles ago and the administration was still being ran (under my understanding) by Behike-Bo Miguel Sobaoko Koromo. There was a lingering doubt

in my being that has resonated around the passing of leadership and there was no formal presentation or iteration of the process of leadership transfers. Too many questions surround the why.

However what we do know is the statement from the last 2 convocations at the Taino cultural center and the statements are on recorded record via multiple elders on the council.

Guatu Iri stated at the beginning of one of the recordings

“Miguel asked me 6 times and I refused....
Until I finally gave in”

If this is truly the case, who were the other candidates and why did they decline? Why are we choosing a sole leader and not decentralizing our leadership.

Our Yukayuekes never had Presidents, never had Czars nor Monarchs and we were mutually interdependent. So why have we chosen a sole figure head?

Why haven't the Council members stepped in, if they've known that these challenges were in the background?

Frequently, when I ask Mentors and council members why something is done or written in a certain way the most popular answer is:

“because thats the way Miguel wants it/wrote it or says it has to be done”

This is a very dangerous position to be in as a “Mentee/trainee/student”. It does not edify a person to receive blanket approval when (in conversation) other elders have other nuances and positions.

Why is there no formal discussion nor dialogue occurring in a private way? Furthermore, why are there no meeting notes or dispositions shared with students/mentees?

We are told to seek and told to pray, but when we ask questions we are hit with walls and a “it is what it is” answer.

This is disheartening and very concerning. We live alongside the same Axis Mundi and we are all children of the supreme consciousness and if we are not discussing what spirit is sharing with each of us, we are crippling the birthing of new gifts and confirmations; that are meant to be shared and not kept behind glass cases.

This is like a house that is so dirty that it's hard to see what needs to be cleaned because we have to dig through all the minutiae of years of chronic symptoms.

7. The education platform and the disorganized way of educating and forcing the education of students

An education system that does not lean in on the conversation about student lives is not a education system, it is an assembly line.

If this is the direction of this organization and elders do not agree with conditions but just carry on as if there is a consensus about the process then I will not stand for such practices.

More importantly, if the mentors are not considered on a human level, then the administration of such a overbearing, hyper-didactic and undermining scheduling should be halted immediately and restructured. We need to brainstorm the pedagogical practices and create dialogue between students and administrators. There is a deep lack in this structure and it has progressed at lightning speed. This process lacks spirit, lacks water and resources.

Where are the students? I have knowledge of 2 who have been dismissed. Was this action approved by all the council of elders? Who was consulted? What investigation into the students health, livelihood and human responsibilities were done? Where are those notes?

We are spiritual beings living human lives, yes?

Then why are we respecting the human realm of things. And are we truly respecting the spiritual things if all the above points truly have merit?

There are many questions on my heart and this is very alarming that we are continuing with a "business as usual attitude".

8. There are no published no communicated by-laws, constitution or document for us all to protect ourselves.

If we are not equipped with measures, protocols and regimens to hold our elders accountable to their positions how can we progress? And in times of conflict how can we prevent our voices from being silenced.

I receive a forced contract and a student timeline before receiving my rites?

This sickness is not shrouded, it is loud, present and ugly.

9. My first proposal is to reintroduce a gender balance in the council

To my knowledge there has never been a female figure head and instead there is a metaphor that I would like to introduce.

The one black person in an all white classroom and the organization is claiming to be culturally inclusive.

Because I was raised by a single mother and helped raise my younger sister, I am keenly aware of the strategic omission of the presence of the female energy. More importantly I see through the facade and fake inclusion that have been implemented, perpetuated and this is not healthy.

Where are all the female elders of the Caney? Why did they leave? Where did they go? I call for a review of their dismissal and wish to hear their voices and receive from the truth and not the architected story of perpetuated "his-tories". My generation will not stand for the manipulations of the past and there is a wave of energy around us that ought to be channeled towards healing the past wounds.

When I ran the Peace and Dignity Journey in the islands of Boriken and Yemayeka I consulted with the eldest on the island and had recorded conversations at length about this chronic condition within all of our yukayueke's. But this has even impacted our spirit community (The Caney).

For whatever reasons, we have chosen not to include the divine matriarchs and that is a movement so deeply wounding that Attabey ought to be consulted by women and not further oppressed by the ambitions of men.

Just because any of us claim two-spiritedness does not give us privileges above those of the divine female and I want to speak to women about Attabey, I want to consult leadership to learn from the behikes of old and the deep wisdom that they have on a cellular level.

There is a disproportionate ratio in our council, in our voices and in our practices. This must be considered. Where is the facilitation and communication within and outside the students. Where are the mothers.

Say their names...

These female elders exist, they are still living and yet we are prevented from contacting them and their very mention triggers an eerie response.

Remember the songs we sing every ceremony

Guariche Guakia baba, areyto guaturey!

10. I am calling for a removal of leadership and instilling a structure more akin to our indigenous form of governance which has been documented by both the french and spanish as sovereign villages/Yukayekes and no central head

I suggest that we should experience seasons of leadership with each leader and continue to cycle with the processions in the sky. Not everyone is prepared for a cold winter, nor a scorching summer.

I propose a leader for each season and a communication of cycles of leadership.

This looks like:

Fall Leadership who resonates most with the times of the Fall Equinox

Winter Leadership who resonates most with the meanings of the Winter Solstice

Spring Leadership who resonates most with the meanings of the Spring Equinox

Summer Leadership who resonates most with the meanings of the Summer Solstice

This structure would prevent burnout and ensure a balance of perspectives, directives and visions. It will also allow us all to move with our strengths and not hide our weaknesses.

In conclusion, this letter is an invitation for dialogue and an amalgam of years of observation. I stand before you humbly and with fire in my heart to do the work that is needed to bring balance and healing.

I accept any and all challenges that are coming.

I pray we all have the fortitude to grow in a good way, alongside our elders and ancestors.

Respectfully

Guazabara