

## **Weave Nine: The Taking Off: The Future Wanting to Emerge**

---

### **Sustaining Quality, Lessons Learned, Embedding Learning and Making My Best Cloth**

---

In this living theory thesis I set out to improve my professional practice as an educator and to affirm the African Voice in that practice. I can say that this has been accomplished; however, the journey has not been how I would imagine it would be or had anticipated. Initially, I acted to improve my classroom performance (technology, logistics and tools), communicate more effectively the Sankofa Learning Centre curricula (design and organisation) and build my own leadership capacity and influence in the education of children of African origin. In this act I also wanted to ensure that my African Voice was present in my professional practice, and that through inquiring into the “makings and un-makings in the making” of me, I would give evidence of how I had arrived at my embrace of the African Voice and the nature of its influence in my life. I wanted to affirm the African Voice in my professional practice and secure that my “African shell was intact.”

Further, I anticipated that focus and improvement in my storytelling influence would be of import, both in improving my professional practice and affirming the African Voice that practice and indeed my life. Therefore, consideration of my storytelling both for inquiry into my lived experiences and for giving evidence of how I had lived would be integral. Additionally, my intention was that I would chart the events that influenced my growth and development and those that did not. I would find this to be no easy assignment, for in all events I found learning value, for I felt that I had some idea of what they might be. However, even in the briefest of inquiries I found this a futile task and it was abandoned. What I found was that all events, to some degree contributed to my growth and development.

What would help though at the early stage of my study was the reframe to assign events within a mental paradigm of what were the events that were valuing and which were devaluing of me. Even though this was no easy assignment, it proved a useful place to start. In this way I could recount my loving early life experiences in colonial Trinidad and Tobago, estranged schooling and community experiences in Mother England, feelings of exclusion in the academy and in work, aspects of my successful career development and my Jamaican sojourn. I can also now inform on what is a large part of the substance of this living theory thesis that is my experiences in the Sankofa Learning Centre, my evolving relationship with my father and family, the co-creation of Mandiani and my role as emergent consultant in BCL.

However, my study would become much more than events which were valuing and devaluing of me (although this remains integral), and in engagement with living theory methodology to improve my professional practice and affirm the African Voice in that practice, I would find inspiration to act for foundational/profound changes in my learning, living and working. In my own imagination T is a graduated process that both builds from the success of the Sankofa Learning Centre initiative in positively influencing children of African origin lives, and also the finding of “stuckness” in my learning, living and working.

The successes are the children’s academic, social and spiritual achievements, the building of loving relationships and the creation of a vibrant community of learning. “Stuckness” is characterised by the Sankofa Learning Centre’s learning weighted (as in the symbols of the Sankofa bird – treasures of our history and Maroon – resilience in adversity) in the past, its co-creators low levels of behavioural responses to change

and our inability to utilise tools for accessing deep levels of knowing to bring about change in our condition, valuing Scharmer. It is also in this way that I focused on my own “stuckness” and evidenced the nature of the “secret, sacred and cover stories influencing my practice, my limiting sense of community and compromised embrace of “inclusionalty.”

Theory U and “Presencing” is foundational in stimulating in my imagination thoughts and a willing readiness towards profound change in my life. Initially, it was with regard to appreciating “being and becoming” in my learning, living and working (finding a second source of learning, bringing the past into presence and the future into presence and commencing on the path in reach of my highest future potential “letting go and letting come).

It is in this way that I appraise anew a range of events across my storied landscape, including how I have studied, my evolving relationship with my father, my African birthing. In each of these spheres change is needed. However, it is the challenge extant in my African birthing to rediscover the African Voice that a link is made with Scharmer’s “Presencing”, the stuckness in my learning, living and working (weighted in the past of the symbols of the Sankofa bird and Maroon as expression of my embodied values, staleness of the relationship with my father, and a practice that increasingly appeared as outmoded lacking a comprehensive embrace of the widest community).

I would act for profound change to rediscover the African Voice and embrace the widest community, undergirded with the notions of “being and becoming” in my learning, living and working, bringing the past into presence and bringing the future

in presence, in reach of my highest future potential. It is in this way that I recommitted to the African Voice and found the Great Work (My Great Passion).

The use of audio-visual technology is another important development in my living theory thesis and provides new data with which to work. It is in this way that I see “live” my embodiment of the African Voice and My Great Passion in Turning Point in a storytelling workshop. It is appreciated as my “valuing social living pedagogy”, included with embodied expressions of my values of a unique purposeful recognition, and enhanced relational mutuality and an engaging dialogical praxis.

It is these values that are prototyped in co-creating and co-evolving of Mandiani’s heal, protect and create strategies for transforming the ways of being of black boys, the mainstreaming of the African Voice and being an influence in the learning, living and work of others and in social systems in the embrace of my Great Passion.

In Mandiani, I appraise the appreciative value of the African Voice in itself, in its communication and in its value for inspiring new learning (added-value for now, contemporary and modern times).

However, in the appreciative value of the African Voice, I find my own inspiration, to move out of from amongst the marginalised into the margins where real decisions are made. I seem as if compelled to make my move to BCL to tap a rich source of my experiences as an emergent consultant. In BCL although I have moved, I still feel that my work continues in the margins at the outset. However, there are opportunities to expand my experiences and my expertise into BCL’s core business

through involvement in coaching, assessment and development centres and leadership development programmes.

There are also opportunities for further inquiries into self and work through 360-degree feedback, appraisal meetings and learn and shares in BCL. Further, exposure to tools like the MBTI and Career Anchors encourages a deepening in my self-inquiries. Additionally, the Accelerate, now Accelerate To programme is foundational in opening my mind to new learning and in this way I find the Paut Neteru initially as a groping.

The Paut Neteru is an initiation system towards a Divine Self included and including the Divinity of Nature. It is enjoined with the Scharmer's field structure of attention in a vital bicultural complementation to afford a twin-sourced sound technology for change.

It is this development that floods my learning, living and working with optimism and I am able to resolve my contrariness with living contradictions, re-engage with Rayner's natural inclusion and embrace a new life position.

I am imagining the universe luminously, in reach of my highest future potential as I communicate My Emergent African Great Story, as in the weaving of a traditional Africa Cloth. Its aim is to communicate what I am doing to communicate the African Voice in ways that are authentic, African and the same time understandable to non-Africans and the academy.

What has been foundational is the need to be part of the picture (to be included in your own learning); to be part of an experience that has value/relevance to what I am doing; to be challenging and stretching; to be enable the surfacing/ knowing of your values and your influence; and environment in which to thrive.

Important for me was to appreciate being and becoming in learning, living and working (the prospect for change exists); awaken my willingness to embrace change and to be integrous in inquiry; inquire into interior condition – interrogate blind spots and field structure of attention; appreciate the African Voice in itself, in transaction and in inspiring new learning; appreciate being and becoming in African Voice in the symbol of the tree of life; enjoin tree of life and field structure of attention in a vital bicultural complementation that embraces re-engagement with living contradictions, progress natural inclusion in the space that cannot be cut (where self identity naturally includes neighbourhood) and the embrace of new life position of I'm OK – You're OK to imagine the universe luminously.