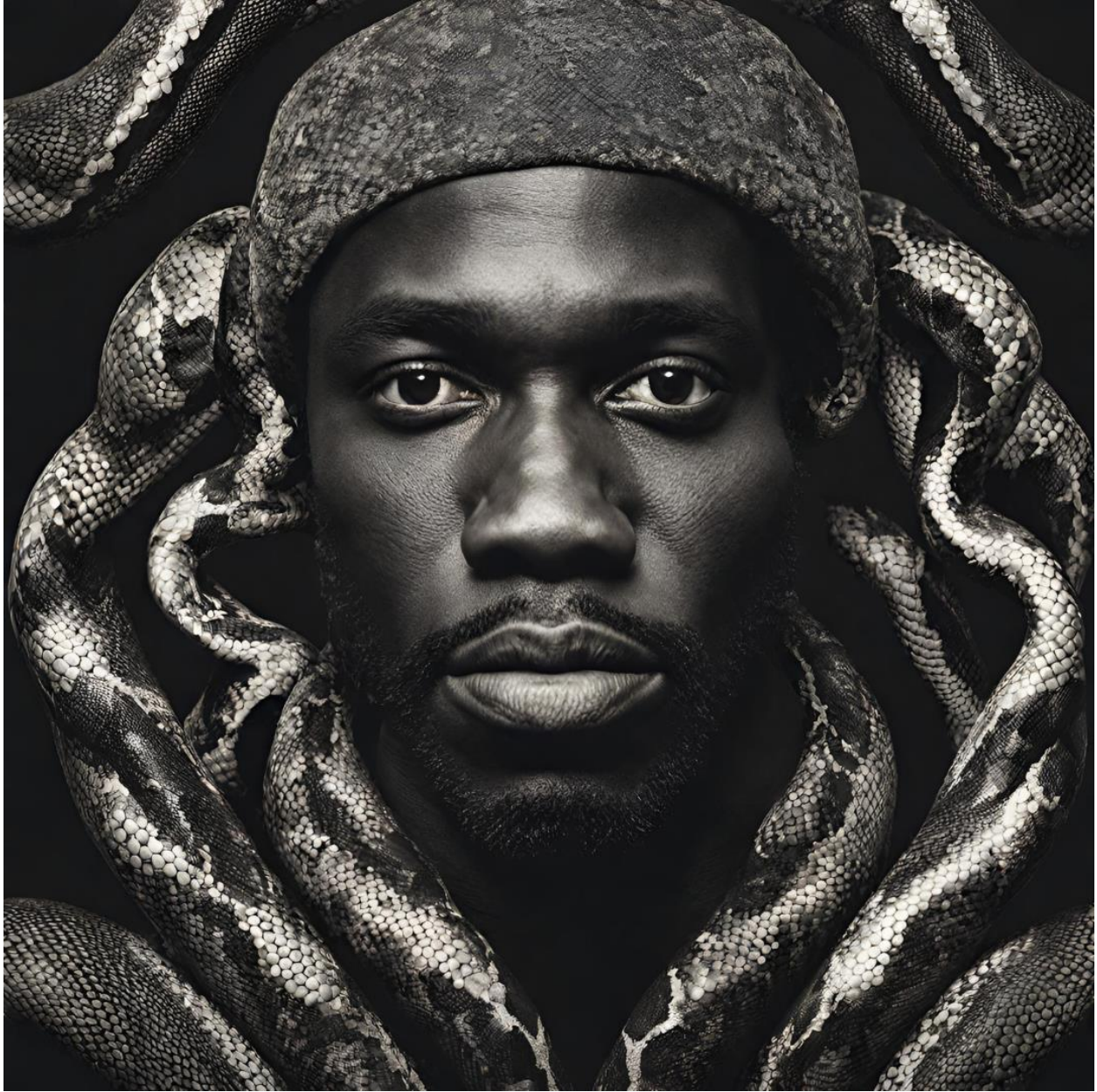


# **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**



## **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**

**BY THE SNAKE**

**DESMOND SMITH MBOYA**

# BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE

## Contents

1. INTRODUCTION-----	3
2. RECAP-----	4
1.1 NEW COURAGE Through Understanding Role Structure-----	4
3. THE SYMPTOM-----	6
4. THE CHILDHOOD DREAM-----	5
5. THE SNAKE, CR VS PROCESS WORK-----	7
6. A CULTURAL CONVERSATION-----	9
7. MY BODY WORK-----	11
8. FINDING THE VOICE-----	11
9. SMITH THE SNAKE-----	12
10. THE ESSENCE OF THE WORK-----	13
11. RECOMMENDATION-----	14
12. REFERENCES-----	16
13. DEFINITIONS-----	17
14. DISCLAIMER-----	19

# **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Hey there! Let's take a stroll through the chapters of my life story, where real moments, dreams, and my Kenyan identity meet up with a special guest—the snake. It's not just any story; we're adding a cool twist by looking at it through the eyes of Process Work, kind of like putting on magic glasses that reveal hidden connections.

Imagine being a Kenyan guy, juggling everyday moments, dreams, and stories from my culture. This adventure uses the magic of Process Work to shine a light on the places where reality and dreams high-five each other. And guess what? My childhood dream takes center stage, showing me the way back to my 'Voice.'

Life's a wild ride of losing and finding 'Voices,' like seasons changing. This journey, with its dreams and cultural tales, becomes a treasure map, guiding me to discover my true voice. So, buckle up – we're about to dive into a story where dreams and reality become best buds, all thanks to Process Work!

# BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE

## RECAP

In my certificate thesis, I managed to share deeply about my 'Rejuvenation Journey', a journey of reconnecting to myself. Various facets were covered and being able to get a reflection on that gave me the basis of this work.

### *NEW COURAGE Through Understanding Role Structure*

*I feel more courageous every day to take on each and every situation and challenge handed to me because I feel I am equipped and prepared in a way to handle them. Even if it gets tricky, I know there is a way to maneuver around it. Some of these tools I learned in group facilitation. In group processes that I experienced and participated in during seminars, we worked together as a group in particular topics that were relevant to the group members, often topics connected to current social issues. The purpose of these processes is to discover the various viewpoints, or roles, and get to know them in their depth by making space for interaction between conflicting viewpoints. I learned how to notice roles and open up to the various viewpoints. This has been especially helpful for me in the context of my daily life.*

*I leave the house at around 10am and I am headed to town for some errands so I walk to the bus stage and I wait for around 10 min before the bus arrives. The atmosphere is calm, the weather supportive and it all points to nothing but a good day. The "Makanga" (A tout for those who aren't conversant with the slang) of the "Nganya" (Also known as Matatu but popularly known around the world as Public Service Vehicles or Public Commuter Vehicles) shouts "Tao Chwani" (Fifty Shillings to town). People start boarding and afterwards I also board and go for the seats at the back of the Nganya. Music is playing in the background, not as loud as they normally do, so people can actually have a decent conversation and you can actually hear some of them speaking word by word. I sit at the back left, and stare out the window before the Nganya leaves the stage, in around two minutes or so we hit the highway and the Makanga starts walking around collecting the bus fare. I continue staring out the window before he reaches where I am sitting. I reach into my pocket and grab a 200 shilling note and pass it to him. He then hands me a 100 shilling note and starts walking away. I call him back and tell him I think you are forgetting something, you haven't returned all my change. He stares at me rudely and reply's "Tao ni Soo Moja Buda", meaning, "The fare to town is 100 shillings". I look at him and reply firmly that the fare is actually half what he collected from me, as he stated earlier while we were boarding the Nganya. He adamantly refuses and says that I must have heard voices in my head. Now I'm double offended, first because he called me "Buda", which is a Sheng name used to refer to mostly middle aged men (I get that a lot due to my serious outlook, bushy face and spectacles) and second and more importantly, he was implying that I'm crazy hearing voices in my head, although I simply quoted him and tried to hold him accountable for his own words. Here we were now engaging in a back and forth, cycling conversation. Then it dawned on me this was not simply a conversation between the two of us as individuals – we were playing out the roles of a larger group process, present within the whole of society. I was holding the ghost role of speaking out against this unjust act of taking more than is required, rather than just letting it happen as other passengers did. The role*

## **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**

*of the tout was that he could do what he wanted, because he had the rank in the situation, nobody would confront him because of a cultural status quo to leave things be and opt for peace. The majority of the passengers did not speak up because they were used to going along with this custom, "don't rock the boat". They were staring at me, I assumed they were wondering why was I even speaking out in the first place. In Kenya, the status quo in this type of situation is to follow the rules and not question the authority. And as this was going on it dawned on me that out of the many who actually knew what they were supposed to pay half the amount, they paid the full amount without even asking a question and went back to their zones as if nothing happen. I was the only noisy one. Wow, the way the system has conditioned so many people not to be heard but only to listen.*

*At the end of this I lost to the tout and he managed to keep the remaining half, but I felt I had won in my own way, because I managed to air out my concerns and speak out where I wasn't expected to. I also got to learn and get a deeper understanding of the roles in my society and where it all originated from, because as the journey continued, I was left thinking about all these roles. I realized that the reason I could come forward in this way was that I was able to see from an outside view the roles and the structure. I had learned in group process training that these roles are organizing our behavior. My understanding of the group process structure in the background allowed me to step in and speak out the ghost role! (In this case, I did not feel I was endangering myself physically by addressing the issue.) I was happy because through the many group processes I had participated in and witnessed, I had learned ways to interact and at times resolve conflicts. This gave me the courage to engage in this situation. As a result, I had managed to create impact in my own way! I even got some positive feedback! - as we reached our final destination, two guys smiled at me and nodded their heads in a way to indicate that yes, you did the right thing.*

The section above was covered in 'The Rejuvenation journey'. As I went through this one more time, I got into the experiences and appreciated the journey. But in the midst of it all, I encountered a bit of a challenge. I had an issue of clarity as I couldn't pinpoint what I was really drawn to in terms of my diploma thesis. But the portion above flirted with me somehow. It spoke to me in a way that I couldn't understand. I decided to ignore it and allow the world channel to direct me on what would be the right direction to take.

# **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**

## **THE SYMPTOM**

It was a Saturday morning and I was supposed to have my coaching session, however I had to cancel. I woke up voiceless. All I could do is whisper, call me the whisperer. I had a sore throat that was the trigger of it all. I tried to picture what could have the source been of it, but I couldn't get a bearing on the cause.

The weekend was spent indoors mostly regaining my voice, doing some inner work and also embracing my symptom. This symptom is the guiding light in a dark tunnel that guides this whole work, so thanks to the symptom maker for allowing me to experience this in totality.

## **THE CHILDHOOD DREAM**

I reflect on my childhood dream. I can't forget it as it was horrific, terrifying and consistent, more consistent than my workout sessions.

The setting is in a thick forest in the dark. Dark but visible to be able to distinguish figures in the setting and a bit of the colors. There is also a thunderstorm happening, as if being young in a dark forest isn't enough. This is definitely an ideal setting for any horror movie like Friday the 13th.

In the forest, I am afraid and I am running in the rain, I can feel my heart palpating even in my sleep. I am definitely running away from something, something terrifying enough to make me run for my life. Behind me is a huge snake pursuing. It's a huge python, the size of anaconda, maybe bigger, I don't know. Size is none of my concern in that moment, my life is.

I continue to run through the thick forest, taking abrupt corners, jumping over big roots and fell trees, passing through some water puddles, I can definitely feel the strain on myself to get as far as possible. But each time I turn back, it's like the gap is closing instead of widening. My mission is to escape but the mission of the snake is to catch me, you could see the determination in its eyes and how it moved.

As I continue to run away, I trip and fall into this pit, very dark inside, and it seems to be bottomless. I face to top of the pit as I drop. I am relieved as I notice the snake at the edge of the pit looking. I know I am not safe as I am still falling and the fall could have an adverse effect on me, but knowing that my death won't be from the snake is a relief. But the relief is short lived, as the snake decides to go after me. Things just got from bad to ugly.

I wake up at this point, with my heart pounding and sweating.

# **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**

## **THE SNAKE, CR VS PROCESS WORK**

The snake is a peculiar reptile that is collectively considered 'dangerous'. In consensus reality, different societies view snakes in different perception, but the most common consensus is fear of snakes and its affiliation to bad things.

Using process work theory to describe the general perception of a snake by people involves examining the dynamics of how individuals and groups perceive and interact with snakes over time. Process work theory, also known as process-oriented psychology, focuses on understanding and working with the unfolding processes of human experience. Here's a description of how this theory can be applied to the perception of snakes:

### **1. Initial Contact and Aversion:**

When people first encounter a snake, their perception is often shaped by cultural, societal, and personal factors. These factors can include folklore, media representations, and personal experiences.

Process work theory suggests that these initial perceptions are not fixed but are subject to change and evolution as individuals engage with the snake over time.

### **2. Triggering Events and Emotions:**

Interactions with snakes, whether through direct encounters or mediated experiences (e.g., seeing a snake on TV), can trigger various emotions and reactions. These might include fear, curiosity, fascination, or even indifference.

Process work theory emphasizes the importance of paying attention to one's emotional responses and exploring them as part of the ongoing process of perception.

### **3. Dreaming and Imagining:**

People often dream about snakes, which can be a reflection of their unconscious perceptions and fears. These dreams can provide valuable insights into how individuals process their snake-related experiences.

Process work theory encourages individuals to explore their dreams and fantasies to gain a deeper understanding of their evolving relationship with snakes.

# **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**

## **4. Group Dynamics and Social Constructs:**

The perception of snakes is also influenced by group dynamics and societal norms. Some cultures revere snakes as symbols of wisdom or transformation, while others associate them with evil or danger.

Process work theory suggests that individuals are embedded in social systems, and their perception of snakes can be influenced by the collective beliefs and attitudes of their cultural and social groups.

## **5. Integration and Transformation:**

As individuals engage with snakes more deeply, they may undergo a process of integration and transformation. This can involve learning about the ecological importance of snakes, dispelling myths, and developing a more balanced perspective.

Process work theory supports personal growth and transformation by encouraging individuals to explore and integrate their changing perceptions and emotions related to snakes.

## **6. Active Engagement and Advocacy:**

Some individuals may become advocates for snake conservation and education. This represents an active engagement with the process of perception, as people work to change both their own views and those of their communities.

Process work theory highlights the role of advocacy and social action as a way to influence and reshape collective perceptions of snakes.

In summary, process work theory provides a framework for understanding the ever-evolving perception of snakes by individuals and society. It emphasizes the fluidity and complexity of these perceptions, encouraging individuals to explore their emotions, dreams, and social contexts as part of the ongoing process of perception and interaction with snakes.

# **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**

## **A CULTURAL CONVERSATION**

Our identities are shaped not only at a personal level but also taking into perspective our surrounding among other things. I identify as a male child in a Kenyan family, that automatically makes me identify as a Kenyan but my various interactions over the years with various individuals and cultures also make me identify as a global citizen. Coming back to the Kenyan set up, we are a blessed nation with diverse language groups and cultures. Hailing from a country with 43 tribes, which are sectioned into 3 major language groups, I identify as a Luo, a tribal group categorized under the Nilotic group.

My people Occupy the Western part of Kenya, were primarily fish farmers but over time they delved into other areas of farming. Like any other setting, my people have their culture and beliefs which forms the basis of the consensus reality in terms of the dos and don'ts.

We are guided by our own set of laws, referred to as 'chik', so when referring to the laws and beliefs you will hear someone say, 'chik wacho ni...', which translates to 'our laws/ our beliefs state...'.

A keen outlook into various cultures shows some similarities in terms of beliefs. For example, the existence of a higher being, given various names and attached to a figure from culture to culture and even religion. Also, some birds have a significance imagery, like a dove symbolizes peace, purity, new beginnings and even luck. The same view is held for the snake, the snake is an X for many people and communities. In the general world, the snake is a venomous viper which can kill if an interaction goes south. In Christian religion, the snake is considered the charmer and deceiver that led to Eve and Adam eating from the tree of life, and so on.

The same goes for the Luo tradition. The snake has been labeled evil, and it is an edge that many don't consider exploring. I would say most individuals are in the 2nd Phase as they understand there is a problem, and it's definitely the snake. The snake is pictured as a sign of a bad omen and it has been mostly linked with evil as a result of in the relationship with snake whisperers who are considered to be witches. It is rare to spot one, but when you do, then something terrible is in the offing. Crossing paths with a snake was considered way better than having found a snake at your place or your home. The thought was that the snake was sent out on a mission to your household, and its either you shall become the victim, or someone in your family will. Killing the snake required a certain approach otherwise even the death of the snake would have a retaliation on you and the family. The same belief is also attached to the owl. Spotting an owl in your homestead would mean the presence of the death spirit. If it doesn't hoot, you are safe, but if it does, someone within the homestead would die.

So already this lets you picture why the cultural identity considers the snake an X, and have a hard time crossing the edge. Even a discussion about snake is a hotspot by itself.

There has been only one exemption of a python which was referred to as 'Omieri'. Legend of Omieri is told as follows;

## **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**

*'In the village of Nyakach there lived a man and his wife. However, the wife was barren and couldn't have children. As chik stated, in a situation where a woman was barren, the man would be given/get a second wife who was already a mother. This showed that the woman was fertile and could reproduce. The man after many years had no other option other than to get another wife, and a wife he got. Her name was Omieri. She came with a child. By Luo customs, she couldn't in the same house with the first wife, so a house was built for her. Her role was that of a mother as she mostly gave birth for the family. The children would be born and taken to the first wife's house and they would be identified as the child of the first wife.*

*At one point the husband left to look for food and took some time before he came back. In the process, Omieri got critically ill. Some diseases were treatable as herbalists were present, but some were very intense and needed divine interventions through seers. In the case scenario that one was facing death, they would be left in a forest area to die. It was believed that death especially by some sicknesses in the homestead would bring about a curse to the whole homestead.*

*Omieri was sick, but not that critically ill, she only needed care and attention. But since the first wife was jealous, she carried her and left her near the shores of Lake Victoria. She went home and felt a bit guilty so the next day she decided to go and take a look at how she was doing, but on arriving by the shores, she found a giant python resting. She was scared and fled. She came back the next day and found the python again, and she decided to never go back again.*

*The Nyakach village and region around it experienced intense drought over the next years, and there was no farm produce, people died of hunger. One day the giant python came into the village, it was scary and people ran away. The first wife saw the snake and she noticed it. However, it did not harm anyone, it just went to a spot and it rested.*

*A funny thing happened, the heavens opened and it rained, and for the period when the snake was around, the region had a bumper harvest. In return they fed it and the children played with. People started speculating as information on what the first wife had done started spreading around. So they said that it's either the snake ate Omieri or Omieri evolved into a snake and that she was coming home to visit.*

*This phenomenon continued where whenever Omieri would disappear, the region faced a lot of drought, but whenever she would resurface, the region would get abundance in produce. This continued until Omieri the python died'.*

No other snake was viewed the same.

# **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**

## **MY BODY WORK**

I previously had a discussion about the symptom that I had, a sore throat, which I worked on in a coaching session. The X was not being able to speak for someone whose U is speaking, and trust you me, I know sometimes, if not most of the time, I speak a lot.

Working on the not being able to speak, gave a hand movement, in a slithering motion, which was suppressive. But in this suppressive slithering movement, I got an image of my childhood dream, me running away from the Python. I had previously worked on my childhood dream, and here I was again and I had to embody the snake, which was an edge for me, how can I be the python, there is nothing whatsoever about me that reflects the python. But what is something about the python reflects me. I had to open up to being the python, and embody it, be it and feel what in me is snake like.

I allowed myself to chase me in the woods, and see from the sight of the snake, I start realizing a few things about the snake that I like. I notice it's determination and persistence, its present as it chases me. I notice the boldness in the eyes of the snake to chase what it seeks. I notice the precision and the keenness of the snake before it makes its calculated moves.

And I smile, because in the essence of all these, I realized that I am not being chased by the snake, I am actually chasing myself, as I am the snake and the snake mirrors who I am. I notice the determined side of me that is very persistent, and how bold I can be at times, how precise and keen I can be when I want to do something. So I appreciate the body symptom because it gave me a clarity in terms of the work that I wanted to do for this diploma, it wasn't silence, it was a moment of withdrawal to keenly observe before I take my next step, which brings me here, in this work.

## **FINDING THE VOICE**

Growing up I was one loud kid, I guess I identified as a vocal person. I spoke my mind, didn't care much whether it hurt your feelings or not as long as I spoke my piece. Age wasn't much of barrier to me, old or young I conversed with everyone the best way I knew how, and from what I recall, I think I got a 5-star rating for each and every conversation I had as no one complained.

But the general feeling of letting it out as it is and being able to speak and lighten people's mood wherever they were down just felt so good to me, I didn't know why.

Over time as I grew up, I became silent, couldn't even react to the most basic conversation, its like I lost my groove somehow. You can feel as it drains down on you and others noticing. I had the awareness of the transition built I couldn't pin point the reason, and till date I still don't know. I was present but not present, best description of you are only meant to be seen and not heard, I played that part way too well.

# BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE

But on starting to interact with process work and being able to work with myself, I got this spark back and I guess the moment I really felt that this is what was missing is when the incident in the matatu as described above happen, that was a redefining moment for me, getting my voice back, but this time more aware on how to use it not only for myself but others.

## SMITH THE SNAKE

Yeah, I know in your head just as it is in mine, 'Smith the Snake', is not the best label you'd want to be associated with, because in CR, a person being described as a snake is one evil person, so protect yourself at all cost.

But that's the issue, my work shows how I mirror the snake, but the concept of the snake can be considered as a city shadow.

*Arnold Mindell discusses the concept of "city shadow" in his book "City Shadows: Psychological Interventions in Psychiatry." Below is an excerpt from the book where Mindell elaborates on the idea of city shadow:*

*Excerpt from "City Shadows: Psychological Interventions in Psychiatry" by Arnold Mindell:*

*"In our urban environments, we often encounter what I refer to as the 'city shadow.' This is the collective unconscious of a city, a repository of suppressed emotions, unacknowledged conflicts, and unexpressed desires that linger beneath the surface of urban life. Just as individuals have personal shadows, cities too have their hidden aspects.*

*The city shadow can manifest in various ways: in social unrest, crime rates, inequality, and even in the architecture and layout of a city. It's the unspoken tension between different groups, the ignored history of a place, and the unmet needs of its inhabitants.*

*To address the city shadow, we must engage in a process of collective introspection and reconciliation. It involves acknowledging the wounds of the past, healing social divisions, and creating spaces where the city's inhabitants can express themselves and connect on a deeper level. By bringing the city shadow into the light, we can transform our urban environments into more compassionate and harmonious spaces."*

When we converse about city shadows, it's like two sides of the coin, on one side we want to own some things and identify with them, but on the other end there are nasty things that we don't want to be associated with that.

Exploring my work, I identified the beauty of being the snake which cuts across in various areas. Although these experiences are in my essence and might vary in my dreaming level, in some instances they be acceptable in the CR.

# **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**

But there is the other side of the snake, secondary to many and totally disliked. Which got me thinking, if I am getting the city, then I should be ready to receive its shadow, and own it all as a package. I allow myself to do some inner work and I the viper of the snake in me, after all I'm owning all of it.

I am determined and persistent, but mess with me and I'm definitely going to be determined and persistent in chasing, and trust you me I got the stamina. I am keen and precise, but cross me, I am going to be keen and precise on where to bite and make sure it hurts the most. And finally, I'm bold, dare me by pushing me and I am going to boldly crash your bones and swallow you whole.

That way it becomes apparent that you can get a very loving Smith the snake, who when handled the wrong way bites, and it is poisonous. That's me embracing the whole snake.

## **THE ESSENCE OF THE WORK**

It's intimate for me to share this work which traverses various aspects of my life and how its related to the snake in various settings. I think just embodied a taboo to be a better version of myself, but who cares, not me.

Through this work, I shown how I have been able to use my childhood dream to help me reconnect to my 'Voice'.

The 'Voice is a symbol of what may of us have lost in their various journeys in life. Losing your identity creates a new one, which might be one you are conversant with or would like to explore, or not, which tend to have many of us stuck in phase one and phase two, as they don't know how to move beyond and get to the essence.

Identity by itself comes from various aspects coming together, you can get your identity from a role, a rank, your everyday life among other things. The loss of identity creates a void that then needs to be filled by a new identity and if not filled in the right way, then a journey into an altered or extreme state is in the offing. I've had my fair share of altered states, and it sucked not knowing how to channel it to my advantage.

Losing the and gaining 'Voices', is part of the life cycle and even our identities change over time from set up to set up.

# **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**

However, most identities we maintain are in the CR, as we go for something acceptable by society, because the fear is if we go for an identity in the dreaming or essence, you will not belong, and we all strive to belong, belong to a family, a society, a culture, a profession, a partner, among other things. Why not enjoy the fluidity of exploring your identity in the various reality levels.

The work here gives a breakdown of working with an X for society as considered in the CR. Being able to cross that edge for me needed lots of patience, work and dedication, it doesn't just land on the first day. Though it is essential to say the journey varies, some may take a longer time while some take a shorter time, but time is not the issue, the issue is opening up to the approach that might include you facing your worse fears or working with your edges and allowing yourself to feel it.

My heart goes out to anyone who has lost their identity and it might be tied to a loss they encountered. I do hope that through this work you can get a chance to have the motivation and the roadmap to regain your identity and find your 'voice', and once you find it, that it might empower you and you might empower others.

Through constant learning and continuous evolution, if someone asks me then, what is process work, I will tell them that process work is a bridge that allows you to connect with self, both in terms of body, mind and spirit, and be aware of what's happening around you.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation for Rediscovering Lost Identity:**

Hey, if you're feeling a bit lost in the identity maze, I first of all want you to know that it okay to feel at loss, it's part of the journey to finding something beautiful. After all, treasures are meant to be hidden, searched and found, right?

Here's a roadmap that's more like a friendly guide than a GPS (I am not the annoying voice that will tell you turn left or right; you can count on that)

#### **1. Dive into Your Dreams and Memories:**

- Think of your dreams and childhood memories like treasure chests. They often hide golden nuggets of your true self.
- Let the stories and symbols from your dreams be your compass. They're like secret codes leading you back to the 'you' you might have forgotten.

#### **2. Take a Cultural Adventure:**

- Reconnect with your cultural roots. The stories and traditions you grew up with? They're like old friends who remember parts of you you might've left behind.

# **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**

- Explore the tales that shaped your identity – the good, the bad, and the quirky. Sometimes, your true self is hiding in these stories.

### **3. Let's Talk Feelings and Stuff:**

- Ever tried Process Work? It's like soul detective work without the magnifying glass. Take a deep dive into your emotions, body vibes, and conflicts.
- Embrace the idea that your identity isn't fixed – it's like a chameleon that changes colors in different situations. Process Work helps you make friends with all those colors.

This roadmap? It's not about speed; it's about enjoying the journey. Take detours, explore side streets, and be kind to yourself along the way. You'll rediscover your identity not as a checklist but as a story that keeps unfolding. Good luck, adventurer!

# **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**

## **REFERENCES**

1. Progoff, I. (1975). *At a Journal Workshop: Writing to Access the Power of the Unconscious and Evoke Creative Ability*. TarcherPerigee.
2. Mindell, A. (2010). *Process Mind: A User's Guide to Connecting with the Mind of God*. Quest Books.
3. Jung, C. G. (1964). *Man, and His Symbols*. Doubleday.
4. Krippner, S., & Welch, P. (1993). *Spiritual Dimensions of Healing: From Native Shamanism to Contemporary Health Care*. Irvington Publishers.
5. Mindell, A. (1992). *City Shadows: Psychological Interventions in Psychiatry*. Harville Press.
6. Smith, J. (2005). Omieri: A Cultural Perspective. *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 18(2), 145-163.
7. Nyakach Cultural Society. (1980). *The Mythical Python: Unraveling Cultural Narratives*. Nyakach Publications.
8. Odhiambo, R. (2012). *Echoes of the Past: Luo Cultural Practices in Modern Kenya*. African Heritage Press.

# BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE

## DEFINITIONS

### Process Work:

- **Definition:** Process Work, also known as Process-Oriented Psychology, is a holistic approach to understanding and working with human experiences, conflicts, and group dynamics. Developed by Arnold Mindell, it emphasizes the exploration of the unfolding processes within an individual or group to promote awareness, transformation, and integration.

### X:

- **Definition:** In Process Work, "X" represents an issue, symptom, or challenge that an individual or group is facing. It symbolizes an area of focus within the exploration of processes. X is often the starting point for delving into the underlying dynamics and meanings associated with a particular situation or conflict. It is that part of us that is not conformed to our everyday identity. It can also be mentioned in other ways like secondary, non-identity, not me etc.

### U:

- **Definition:** "U" represents the unconscious aspects of an individual or group's experience. In Process Work, there is an acknowledgment that much of our thoughts, emotions, and behaviors are influenced by unconscious factors. Exploring the "U" involves bringing these hidden aspects into awareness, allowing for a deeper understanding of the dynamics at play. This is a part of us that we identify with and can also be referred to as primary, identity, me etc.

### Edge:

- **Definition:** The "edge" in Process Work refers to the boundary or threshold of an individual's or group's comfort zone. It is the point at which one encounters resistance, discomfort, or unfamiliar territory. Exploring the edge is considered crucial for personal and collective growth, as it involves working with areas that are often avoided or overlooked.

### The 3 Levels of Reality (Consensus Reality, Dreaming Level, Essence):

- **Consensus Reality:** This level represents the everyday, shared reality that is widely accepted within a particular culture or society. It includes commonly agreed-upon facts, norms, and expectations.

# **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**

- **Dreaming Level:** The dreaming level involves the exploration of the unconscious, symbolic, and metaphorical aspects of experience. It includes dreams, fantasies, and other non-literal expressions that provide insights into deeper meanings.
- **Essence:** The essence level represents the core, authentic self or the fundamental nature of a person or group. It transcends societal conditioning and personal history, reflecting a deeper, more essential aspect of identity.

## **Phases of Conflict (Phase 1, Phase 2, Phase 3, Phase 4):**

- **Phase 1:** This phase involves the initial awareness of a conflict or issue. It is the recognition that something is happening but may not be fully understood or articulated. Can also be looked at the 'okay' phase, where an individual feels everything is okay regardless of what's transpiring.
- **Phase 2:** In this phase, there is a deepening of the conflict, and emotions and tensions may escalate. Different perspectives and positions become more apparent, leading to increased polarization. There is identification of an issue, but in most cases the issue is from the other side and not me.
- **Phase 3:** The focus in this phase is on exploring and understanding the underlying dynamics and meanings associated with the conflict. It involves delving into the unconscious and addressing the root causes. You can also say there is flow of information in this phase, hence communication on both sides is achieved
- **Phase 4:** The resolution phase, where individuals or groups work towards integrating the insights gained from the exploration, leading to transformation, reconciliation, or a new way forward. Some sort of an essence is achieved here, might be a permanent one, a temporary one, or even just a few seconds, where both sides get to feel and explore the other side.

## **Quantum Flirt:**

- **Definition:** In a metaphorical sense, it could be understood as the exploration of subtle and nuanced aspects of a situation or conflict, much like the unpredictability and interconnectedness observed in quantum physics. It may involve a playful and flexible approach to understanding the intricate dynamics within a process.

## **Body Symptom:**

- **Definition:** A body symptom in the context of Process Work refers to physical sensations, discomfort, or ailments that are considered as expressions of the unconscious or as carriers of meaningful information about an individual's psychological and emotional state. Process Work recognizes that the body is interconnected with the mind, and disturbances in the

# **BECOMING THE PYTHON: A DREAMER'S TALE**

body can be reflective of underlying conflicts, unmet needs, or unresolved issues at a psychological or emotional level. Exploring body symptoms involves paying attention to bodily sensations, movements, and gestures as a means of accessing and understanding the deeper processes and messages within an individual's experience. Process Work practitioners work with clients to bring awareness to these body symptoms, aiming for integration and holistic well-being.

## **DISCLAIMER**

This work indicates my personal views and my own learning as I have been able to derive them over time. I do understand that the dreaming process for everyone varies and, in the dreaming, there might be difference in opinion, so you might not share in my thoughts towards my own derivation of learning or my own understanding of process work in relation to this work. However, I do hope that this piece will serve as a learning for you and I and from it you might be able to follow your dreaming process and be the best out of it.