

**Me, the world and my process of coming out  
and creating my own uncharted way of life**

*My journey of love, thrill, fear, pain, hurt, death loss and grief, learning, unlearning and relearning*



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**EVERLYNE DAISY NDUKU**

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## COMING OUT

I am an African woman from Kenya, my amazing parents came from two different worlds. My father came from Uganda and my mother was Kenyan. I was born at night and in my Kamba culture people born at night are called “Nduku”. My mother came from a beautiful culture called Kamba/Akamba. Kambas are known for their long-distance trading and are jovial people in general. In my journey of life, I have always felt a deep sense to follow what is in my heart in the feeling way, although I am also a rational individual and can be rigid. The journey I have experienced in this world has brought so many aspects of me that have been supported by my community, by different individuals and my culture. My journey in Deep Democracy has supported the different personalities (identities) and phases that I experience in life and instead of being bitter and hopeless with the world I have learnt to carry my victories and scars with me and share the experience with the world by being myself unapologetically and authentic in my own journey.

In these pages I will try to show you my process of “coming out”. It’s about my personal experiences, and my people allowing me in their lives to experience them in different levels, and in different phases of their lives. And that is truly amazing for me. My indigenous and first language is my mother tongue - Swahili. I hope you enjoy my style of written English, which is similar to my way of speaking English that I learned growing up in Kenya. Asante.

## MY BLACK STALLION



I was like a wild horse, all over the place, I want to talk about this, I want to talk about that, about everything and I was everywhere. I remember seeing a movie, where the horse was just running around before it was tamed. I loved how this horse was running across the beach. It was so beautiful. I told myself, *Wow, I love this. This horse the way it's just running.* And then I watched another series where the horse ran away from the owner. And the owner said, "It's okay, I will find it later. Let it just run". And then after a while I saw the horse got tired and was just there, waiting. And the owner went and took it back to the stable.

I love that concept of being a wild horse. Most of my life, I feel like there's something in me. I don't know what it is. Part of me would want to sit down and settle and follow this one linear way. But something in me happens –I find myself out there saying, *No, I don't like this, I don't want this or I like this, or this is amazing.* And that is how the wild horse was in me. That is how I know it is coming. It traps me like that. One moment I feel I'm not okay. And then I just pick up and I'm in my process of speaking up. Like a wild horse. I don't know what happens. I can hear someone invisible telling me, *Yes, that that was great.*

My quest to find out more about this wild horse power of mine, set me on the path that turned into this thesis.

## GRATITUDES

*Dedicated to my late mum, our relationship was very complicated and I know I was a hard child. May you rest in peace. I love you.*

*To my dad (not sure if you are still with us in this world) but I still love you too. If you ever come across this, know I would want to experience you in my life.*

*To Max Schupbach and Ellen Schupbach, what could I have done without you? When I met you, I felt alone, like giving up in life. I didn't have any support and you supported me on this journey. You met a young simple girl in Africa and saw her power, and now she is unstoppable. To the DDI Kenya community and to amazing individuals who have shared their authentic selves and life journey with me.*

*I remember the first time I started to work on my thesis. And I didn't know what to work on and painful experiences started coming up from my unconscious, I felt this journey was very heavy and I wasn't sure whether I wanted to start or continue. Ellen held my hand and supported me to get to go through these experiences and memories. We came up with such a powerful topic. I am grateful to you Ellen. And to Julia Wolfson you have supported me in my thesis journey in ways I cannot describe. Thank you for being there. Going through my own inner de-colonization journey was really hard. How you supported me through that journey as a white woman to a black woman helping me unravel a very painful past while writing this thesis, was magical and healing for me.*

*To Arny and Amy Mindell, thank you for your amazing work. Process Work has been an experiential and unconventional journey for me. Process Work has guided me through unraveling many painful experiences in my life, finding new ways of dealing with challenges, conflict and changes; and enjoying life and the hidden potential in me and people I encounter in different parts of the world.*

*ASANTI (THANK YOU)*

## DIFFERENT IDENTITIES EMERGING (GOING AGAINST THE GRAIN)

### My unchartered event

The day I found out about identity confusion I was 16 years old. That is when I started questioning authority. My purpose was not to offend anyone but to understand how life works. My family follows cultural traditions and didn't understand me and decided to punish me.

I was considered the black sheep of the family. Of course, at the time I discovered this I was very hurt, confused and shut down emotionally. I felt different and my family confirmed that by punishing me for not following the chartered way of living. Just to share a little bit about the events that outlined my behavior, they included unconventional ways of living through fashion, music and lifestyles that I mimicked from the global north through watching movies. My family preserved our culture of being quiet, and humble; women staying in their gender roles, never wearing pants – only dresses, and never to question anything.

In my family, we were not allowed to wear trousers. We were just told, "No, you cannot do that". When I got to 16 years old I wanted to explore fashion. I was watching a lot of movies, and I wanted to be an actress which my family couldn't understand. My family prides itself in being humble, but there is something very submissive about it. Asking questions is not something that we normally do. But that day I found myself asking questions. And because of that, my mom took me to my uncle and they interrogated me in a small family trial because of wearing trousers and wearing tops that showed my neck, chest and shoulders, like the photo on the front page of this thesis.

After the trial I cried and I told my mom, "You really hurt my feelings because there's nothing wrong with what I did". They said they will give up on me, and they want nothing to do with me. They don't want me to be part of their family. I really felt bad about that. Nobody supported me. And I told them, "It's okay, there's no problem, I will continue being who I am".

This brought me into a lot of trouble and a lot of issues with my family. It was very painful. Nobody was supporting me. I felt like a black sheep. And that is the moment I realized that all my cousins also didn't like how things were in our family. The moment I talked about it they told me, "Thank you for addressing the issue to do with our dress code as teenagers. Thank you for approaching Uncle with this question". I was just telling him how I felt. My intention was not to hurt him or to be rude. I said to him, "Why would you tell me to dress like an old person yet I am a young person and I want to explore my sense of fashion just like my peers?" My uncle didn't say anything, but after some time he allowed me to be who I am.

This changed our family. We were able to wear trousers. Even his wife started wearing trousers! I don't know what, but something flipped. And everything was OK.



Since that day life felt different in so many ways. I grew a new set of wings and refused to be conditioned into the charted way of life. My wings showed me I could fly and the thrill of life started, I was unstoppable, like my black stallion. I could achieve anything at that moment; I was the real definition of young, bold and beautiful. Because of that, my family eventually found a new way of communicating with us instead of bashing us and using corporal punishment as a way to instill good behavior and suppress us anytime we tried to speak out.

### **My process of inner colonization and de-colonization**

Corporal punishment was also something that happened in that trial by my uncle and mother. I remember that was the last time my mother ever hit me. After that, my cousins and I felt freed to air out the issues in the family and there was a new way of supporting us teenagers in the family and coming up with solution. We began having family gatherings to address different issues. As a young person then, I didn't understand why they used corporal punishment to punish us any time we questioned something that didn't make sense. You could be hit and punished because of something as simple as tripping and falling on the ground while walking.

When I joined Deep Democracy Institute (DDI) and learned about Process Work, I could understand these were effects of colonization. I'll say more about that a little further on. They knew no other way of instilling good behavior and couldn't stand anyone questioning authority. I had until now accepted that this was just the way it was. My encounter with Process Work and my journey with DDI opened up a whole new world in which I began to de-colonize my own way of thinking about myself and my identities, my history and my potentials.

All my life, disturbances have come to me in different ways. I refer here to the experience of disturbance using the Process Work shorthand "x" which I will explain in a moment. Every time I experienced x it pushed me to the wall. I was always angry bitter and hopeless. X was something I had no control over and left me salty. The temptation to transfer these feelings and emotions was so strong in me that it scared me to the core. Remember, I mentioned I am a feeling person and the day I questioned authority in my family I was left alone and no one wanted to be associated with me as they say it in *Kiswahili* "*walininawa mkono*" which means: *they washed their hands of me*.

### **Discovering my "x"**

X is a Process Work term that means 'disturbance'. X is very crucial to me. Imagine you are just having a normal day in your life – being your everyday self – Process Work calls your everyday self your "U". And then something happens. Suddenly or gradually you start feeling, "I'm not okay".

Learning about x and u helped me look back and understand myself better as a young girl in Kenya growing up in my community.

So here I am. I'm a teenager, I want to explore everything. How does it work? I don't want to dress like other boring people. I want to try out different fashion styles. Western fashions and also Kenyan fashions. And my family is telling me, "No, you can't do that. You have to wear a long dress". I say, "No! Why are you telling me this?" The only answer they could give me was: "It's not allowed".

I said, "I can't dress like this. Please explain!" But saying no was the best they could do. An "x" is a disturbance pushing you out of your comfortable "u" way of life. It's a feeling. I didn't feel this was right. I didn't get an answer. But I got a voice, and my cousins followed me, and since then we were all allowed to wear our own fashions.

### **My identities and their impact on my family system**

My unchartered event in my family, was also the first time I experienced different identities in me who wanted to find their own way of life – not to hurt anyone. One of these identities was bold enough to say, *this is not working for me*.

She is the wild horse – I call her *Black Stallion*. In the same breath another identity emerged. She is the *Survivor*. The inner critic and the power of colonization tried to disempower her with guilt and made her feel terrible about herself and feel alone. The form of this critic was big and strict and put me in a place of fear and anxiety all the time. But as you will hear, Survivor used these powerful forces to get strong and survive. And a third emerging identity I only got to know about gradually. She is *Compass*.

This is just a snippet of my life as a normal teenager from Africa who wanted to follow her dreams of being an actress. She was influenced by her environment and her culture. She came across Black Stallion and Survivor – who shaped her behavior in both positive and negative ways.

At first, I didn't know what to do but to follow the mere fact that the disturbance (x) brought out an aspect that brought about change into our family system. As a family we had experienced the effect of colonization and through my unchartered event we learnt that there is a way to instill good behavior without hurting us as children. I gave a voice to my cousins as well. X was my guiding tool to *cross the edge* and pick the positive results that helped me maneuver in our family system.

An *edge* in Process Work as I understand it is being in an experience that is very hard to get out of. The negative effect of x – the disturbance – left permanent scars. It also showed me that I am simply human and there is nothing wrong with that. X helped me understand people's journey in life and from a very young age I learnt to support others and spread compassion even to those

who hurt me because I could understand they were just trying to figure out this thing called life. Process Work helped me learn that in the process you also have to take care of yourself physically emotionally and psychologically.

## **My work life**

I was 23 years old about seven years ago, and was working in a Kenyan marketing agency that sells internet products. I was a brand ambassador and it was a beautiful place to be at. I worked hard, and moved so fast in my career and was promoted to a team leader. My job was to interact with youth and relay information about the company, its products and how to sign up for them. Apart from buying mobile data we also gave the youth a platform to explore their talents and dreams through bringing different mentors to guide them. We provided learning resources for our customers with different perhaps unconventional talents, to find their track in life by providing training to help them figure out what they want to do in life. Most of the youths I interacted with went to school to pursue careers that they never were interested in but were pushed by their parents to pursue them. Instead, many wanted to be a musician, an artist, an actor, or play football, or create their own business, become a software developer and other unique things like that.

I loved this project as my own baby. It was my first time to be a team leader. And I worked so hard. But behind the scenes people were saying that I was doing favors, meaning that I was sleeping with my bosses to get where I am. I was given different projects to handle and again, people kept saying, I'm still sleeping with my bosses to be where I am. So I got tired. I said, *No, this is so wrong*. There was so much emotional turmoil in me. I was so young and I was trying to create my own way.

I decided to leave marketing. I wanted to understand, *what's wrong with human beings?* You can do everything right, you can do everything by the book. But people will still find a way to put you down. So I went to school to study psychology, so that I can understand what is wrong with human beings. I'm soon graduating! And in the process of learning psychology, I got to understand myself first. What I didn't expect was to meet Process Work, which showed me *what's right about me!*

## **Meeting Process Work**

One of my peers in my college where I was studying psychology told me, "Come join us in a seminar. It's going to be a three-day seminar, and I think you're going to love it", he said. That's when I came to the Deep Democracy Institute (DDI). I believe the universe pulled me into that seminar with the topic: *Know yourself, love yourself*. I came in late. When I walked in, I found Max

Schupbach (Max was the teacher) in the middle of the group. Someone was talking about their family dynamics. And then we were talking about our African mothers. And Max said, "If your mom says 'this' to you, you know, you can say 'that'". And I said to him, "Our African mothers? No, that is not possible! Here in Africa, if your mommy wants you to do something, there's no two ways about it – you have to do it. You don't expect to understand where she's coming from". Then Max replied to me, "If right now you were to fight with your mom, how would it be?"



And I jumped in the middle.

And I started.



ddiekenya



We fought,  
And we fought,

ddiekenya



And we fought.

ddiekenya



Then I got tired. I realized it wasn't about the verbal fight (argument) with my mother. It's about communicating about something that is inside of you, that you feel is being pressed and it's not coming out. And for the first time, something in me changed.

This was so different than anything I had experienced. It's not about the actual fight that you're having with someone. It's what is inside you. I didn't know anything about this concept called *deep democracy*. For three whole days I was struggling with coming on time, and I was struggling with the concept of "X and U" to truly understand.

So what is *deep democracy*? My current way of thinking about it, is that it is like a *think tank*. When I hear the word think tank, to me it means finding new ways to relate with and facilitate between diverse cultures, personalities and people as well as facilitate diverse identities within myself.

Dear reader, X came to me even in my work life and it was something I had no control of and pushed me again to find my unchartered path. Was it painful, hurtful and confusing? YES! But my X brought me to join the Deep Democracy Institute and Process Work and the process of equipping myself with ways to resolve difficult issues in my life started. I found a positive way to change my scars into beauty. X will always be there in your life no matter what, but you need to find a way to facilitate yourself to resolve X.

## **Colonization**

There's much research done and so many stories about colonization. I love how Process Work shows me a way to not only read the research and read stories, but to also connect energies, theories and behavior. My simple understanding is from my experience through my ancestors.

My grandfather was a Mau Mau fighter. His name was Joseph Makau. He died from liver cirrhosis. My aunt who is in her 60s describes her father as a very happy person and whenever he was far from home he brought them candy. When he died he left my grandmother with his 10 kids. And because my grandfather had to go and fight, he wasn't there to support fully.

How I understand colonization is that white people came to our land. And they came in different ways. Being missionaries is one of the ways that I remember. They came preaching about the Bible. And they were attracted by our resources and comfortable climate; and they stayed and took the land for their benefit. And they started to oppress the indigenous people through corporal punishment, torturing and also killing. All this was done to our people as a way to instill good behavior and fear, so that we would not fight back against the oppressor. I have experienced corporal punishment and through the experience I realized there was a lot of pain, anger, injustice and inhumane things done to our ancestors. Our family was separated by colonialism, and it took the fighting spirit in my ancestor to be free.

In the process of writing this thesis, my childhood memories about corporeal punishment are coming to me strongly. I was thinking about what happened to me when I was young, how I got to be where I am right now as an adult. And it has much to do with my mother. She passed on back in

2014. My mom used to beat me when I was young so much and I couldn't understand, *why was that?* This question was a catalyst for my inner process of decolonization.

In order to talk about colonization and my inner awakening that started my inner de-colonization, I first need to introduce my different identities.

## **My wild Black Stallion**

*She's very stubborn.*

I have different voices in me. There is the wild horse. I don't know what's wrong with her. She is very stubborn inside. She's always trying to come out. If it doesn't make sense in her head, no matter how long this thing has been there, or these rules have been there, she'll just come out. She's a feeling person. This is how she comes out if it's anything to do with taking advantage of people and also animals, making anyone feel bad, or making me feel bad, or not giving other people a chance, she will be supporting other people. She will speak out. That's why I call her black stallion. She's a wild horse. Her characteristic is freedom it can be personal or community or the world freedom.

I experienced my wild horse in my workplace recently, just a snippet of how she comes out. Work time is very valuable to my company. I was just joining the company at the time I was having my menstruation. I was not able to go change my pad gradually the way I normally do. And I remember we were given a questionnaire and I told them, "Some of us women have menstruation and we need time to go to the loo and come back without worrying that you will lose your job because of work avoidance when you just needed three minutes to change your pad". Yes I have my breaks but sometime one may be experiencing heavy menstruation and one can't stop a natural process, just because I am expected to go to the loo after two to three hours straight! This is my wild black horse.

## **My Critic**

*She's very mean, loud rigid and rational.*

Then comes the critic on the other side from the company, who says: "People abused the breaks, they went to the loo and wasted a lot of time. This rule has always been here in this company, you just joined two months ago, and you want to change everything. What's wrong with you? Shut up, keep quiet. You're just being too much. You don't know what you're saying you don't know what you're doing. If you were given this company to rule, you wouldn't even have an idea on how to rule it".

## **My Survivor**

*She's unstoppable, fearless and resilient.*

Enter my Survivor. She says, "Hey, I'm not saying I want to rule the company. I'm just asking for a little bit of time. I don't want to talk too much. I just want to have a little bit of time to go to the loo. It's a natural process".

## **My Compass**

*She's very peaceful and in touch with her human side.*

She is being vulnerable and forgiving, she brings us together as identities. She's the heart of everything. As long as I am with my Compass, I know I'm on the right path.

She says to me, "Hey Daisy let's find our own path to correlate with these rules. If it doesn't work we look for something new that will take care of you".

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These dialogues with my identities happen in me every time I am trying to facilitate myself to resolve my X. These scenes are just a snippet of how my identities come to me in life situations. My interactions with my identities using role play also show how Process Work supports me to catch the information inside of me for resolving issues in my life. Now I see that these identities were also present in my ancestors' journey.



## CONNECTING WITH MY ANCESTORS IN MY IDENTITIES

Because of the culture I come from, I learned that you don't question anything. Just do as you're told. I was trying to understand why this is in the Kamba culture. Why is my family submissive? My aunt told me that they had a very tough childhood. I remember my mother telling me that too. There were 10 of them.

At that time, my grandfather was a soldier. He was fighting for eight years during colonization during the Mau Mau uprising against the British authorities occupying Kenya. My grandmother was left with 10 kids. She told me they used to live in a traditional house called *kisuku* –a grass hatched house that was built by our grandfather.



They didn't have food to eat and one child had to be given away. My grandmother had a sister and my mum was taken there. My mum was the only one who was given away, and this was only because there were so many. My grandmother had to find a way for them to survive, to eat and to live. My aunt tells me that it was so bad that when it was raining, they used to coil up in the fireplace because the rain was getting through to the house. There were insects that used to bite their feet that lived in the ashes from the fire. I discovered that even my mum could never question anything because of the fear of being taken back home. And home was full of poverty.

## Survivor

My mom, my aunt, my uncles – they made it. I don't know how they did it. I cannot begin to describe their journey to freedom from poverty. My mum got a job by the time she was having me. She had got her life together. My father was not in the picture. He went back to Uganda because of immigration issues imposed by British rule, tearing our family apart. He never came back but this young hard-working mother called *Nduku* made it from harsh childhood together with her brothers and sisters. They made it! By the time she was dying, she didn't have any financial debt. She was at peace. It was so painful.

When my aunt was talking about these struggles I felt, *They made it!* It's unbelievable how you can go through so much in life and make it. And I know some people have their own definition of "making it" like cars and money – but for my mum it is not like that. It's just amazing. To be privileged to breathe, to smile, to eat. Just to relax: "*We made it*".

This touches me. It's the fighting spirit. There are so many points when they could have given up. They could have said, "No, we are tired". I now remember how my aunt and my mother were telling me, "Back then it was so bad to have a child because of hunger". My grandmother didn't think of giving up on these children. My grandmother had the fighting spirit and said, "So what if I am poor? My sister there has food. Go and eat there child, and survive. My neighbors there have food. Go and eat there and survive. We are going to make it, but not in the way we expected". When I think about her I see her fighting spirit in me.

In the world we live in, in Kenyan culture, telling someone, "I am broke, I don't have food, it is so hard" – there is the mentality: *you are a beggar; you are showing too much of your issues, keep quiet. Die with your problems or issues.* But my grandmother was not like that. She said, *Here I am. Naked! You are seeing my issues! I don't have food, but here I am! I have survived!*

And now, I am aware I am connecting to this Survivor strength of my ancestors. And I also become aware that before meeting Process Work, all I saw was poor poor poor. Poverty poverty poverty. I never saw freedom, relaxing, happiness, community support, asking for help, food!

## My inner work journey

*Memory:*

When I was seven years old my mother hit me so hard because I forgot to clear the table. The cane she used to punish me with was a plastic bucket handle. That day as I coiled up on the floor naked, I remember staring at her for a moment and I couldn't recognize her face. The single room we lived in with my mother turned into total darkness. It felt like she was moving between an *altered and extreme state* – meaning, in an intense emotional experience. Then something had taken control over her, she didn't have power over herself anymore. For the first time I experienced

severe corporal punishment. This reminds me of colonization and how African people were punished by the whites to instill good behavior. While I am connecting with this identity and these memories it's so painful and all I wanted is for it to stop. While am going back to the memory a role play comes up between my identities:

*Black Stallion to mother:* Stop stop stop! It is wrong it is wrong! Stop!

*Black Stallion to Daisy:* Run, run! Freedom!

*Survivor to Daisy:* Run with stallion. Feel fresh air around you. Feel free from all this anger, hurt and pain.

*Daisy with mum:* Now my mum is running with me, being free from all this anger too. She's not angry! Now she is relaxing and she's telling me so much that happened to her. I don't know half of it.

That day she was not herself. I've never seen her in that light. She loved me. She took care of me she gave me a toolkit for maneuvering this life. But at that moment she was someone different. Something took control over her. A painful energy had taken over her. Completely out of the ordinary, and very intense. How I understand it, when an extreme state takes over us – as I experienced with my mum – you have very little agency over your ordinary everyday. My teacher Ellen Schupbach talked in one of her classes about Arnold Mindell's concept of "city shadow" as an altered or extreme state that is connected also to the way a certain culture views people who appear outside the norm of everyday reality. This extreme state may be marginalized in oneself and society. This helped me make sense of those times when I experienced my mum's very intense and extreme behavior towards me. If we don't like all the feelings and emotions that come with an extreme state, we may pass it to others. This teaching was an important moment in my process of inner de-colonization. I realized that my mum was not acting alone – but in the context of her painful history and cultural alienation also.

*Compass:* I have seen her love. I have seen her tickle me while I'm sleeping. I have seen her come into my room when I was a teenager just to check if I'm alive because I sleep like a bag of potatoes: "Just sleep my daughter" she whispered. I have seen her do all this. Even when she had cancer I have seen her reaching out to me for help. And it helped me just to sit down with her. I have seen her work hard. I have seen her sing. I have seen her dreams. She wanted to be a musician. She wanted to drive a car. The woman that was hitting me – that was not her. That was just someone else. So since experiencing the human part, Compass tells me to forgive. Right now I'm so peaceful.

*Compass says:* Hey, stop running. Okay, stop. Stop criticizing yourself. Survivor, where are you? I can see you. Black Stallion where are you? We're not in danger anymore. Let's write a letter to our late mum, lets write a letter to the white person.

## **Dear mum**

I understand it hasn't been easy since your childhood but am hugging you and crying together with you. Come back to me. Get out of that altered/extreme state and let's work together to get out of that darkness. I love you and I forgive you Dear Mum. I have experienced your love, care and laughter. You have shared your dreams of being a musician with me. So come back from that pain and darkness and let's move towards the light.

## **Dear colonizers**

I'm peaceful inside. And to the white people who say sorry for the hurt of colonization: Personally, I am learning a new way to relate with all of you. Forgiveness is such a huge part for me, maybe for some other black people too. It's not easy to be in that position of being killed tortured and oppressed, so understand if am not able to forgive easily, it's a process and it's a journey but through my journey the hurt that was caused to my ancestors – the hurt that I experienced – I forgive you.

*To the white person:* You ask me what you can do to atone for all your ancestors have done? There is no manual on how you can live. Be yourself. The most important thing is to catch yourself when you feel you want to colonize by taking advantage of anyone no matter the color of their skin. It's really hard for me to tell you how to live your life because you're human like me. And I want you to have the best out of your life. I don't want to dictate how you're going to live. The most important thing is to find yourself in those moments of being unjust; and call yourself out. Do your homework and do your part because you're human. White person be conscious. Of course, we are all human – even me, I have those moments. Because I'm a human being I would want to take advantage of someone. But what is the need? Is it going to oppress them, YES! Is it going to destroy their self-worth, YES! Just catch yourself and stop it. That's how you change yourself and change the entire world. If you're able to catch yourself, that is important.

## **Dear fellow black people**

*To my fellow black people:* I cry with you, I feel with you, I cannot even imagine how painful it has been for you, through this journey with the colonizer. I want you to find a space in your heart and in your lives to find your compass. I know I am asking a lot, because I have not experienced being sold as a slave. I see you in a foreign country, because this is where your ancestors were sold, and trying to make a life for yourself there, but still you were not accepted in that country. But the hate and the pain is too much to carry around. And now, a whisper comes to my mind, my ancestors, your ancestors, telling me and telling you, *It's OK, and we are here with you.*

## **My healing journey**

Compass is the heart of everything in my journey. She helps me know I'm on the right path. She is peaceful. She always looks at the human part. She doesn't realize, *Oh, this is black. This is white. This is yellow.* No. She just sees the human part of you. And that is the one who forgave my mom and started the process of forgiving the white person for what they did to my ancestors.

## USING PROCESS WORK TO TACKLE MY INNER CRITIC

Process Work is an experiential journey. In DDI or perhaps any Process Work training or seminar, there are terms you will hear people mentioning. Dear reader, don't worry too much about these terms. It's an experiential thing and you will have your own way to define everything based on your own experience. However as this is my thesis to introduce Process Work according to my experience and understanding, I describe a few terms that are relevant to my inner and outer group process.

### Process Work terms

Defining an experiential thing is like defining an uncharted life – it is a bit different for everyone, because we are all different. But dear readers I will try and give you characteristics of certain experiences I had and that helped me, even during my coaching sessions with my deep democracy coaches. Perhaps you can recognize a version of these experiences in your own life?

*Group Process* - I love to come with my own way of how I understood group process from that first experience in the middle with Max my teacher, that I described in the previous chapter:

Group process is an interaction between a group of people who bring out different topics and experiences. The people get different perspectives from playing different roles, or from speaking from a personal level. This process has a facilitator who supports the process through framing what is happening so that the group gets more awareness – and helps to create a space for people to resolve a topic or issue.

*U* - This is the part of your identity you relate to as *you*; you experience it as just part of you.

*X* - This is something that disturbs you. Normally *x* comes to you; you have no control over it.

*Edge* - It's an uncomfortable feeling that blocks progress and brings conflict that will eventually lead to cultivating something new and unique in you.

*Inner critic* - It's an inner voice that always judges and criticizes you. In my case, it uses guilt, fear and perfectionism to motivate me.

*Altered and extreme states* – are intense emotional states that you're temporarily pulled into and and at times you don't recognize yourself.

*Ally* – A friend on the inside or the outside.

*Role play* – Having an inner conversation with yourself between two roles or parts of yourself.

*Energy* – A feeling that changes a person's mood or feeling.

*Inner work* – Interacting with your inner figure or figures.

*Essence* – An insight or message that appears at the end of a coaching session or group process.

## **Crossing personal edges to live an unchartered life**

*Is it OK to create your own unchartered way of life?*

I have struggled with many things in life. If things were working, and were good in this world, we wouldn't have so much pain. So much despair, and so much hopelessness.

*One part of me says:* When you say you want to create your own unchartered way of life, do you really know what you mean? Because that is a really big thing. People have been living like this for a very long time.

*And another part of me then says:* If it was working, then we wouldn't have any pain and despair. So what you're asking here, it's big. And it's your own journey. Your own story. Through your experiences, if you found your own way of living, and it's working for you, it might work for someone else.

What follows here is not a transcript of how you should live your life. This is how I live my life. And it worked for me.

*Is it OK to create your own unchartered way of life? Why am I the way I am?*

These questions led me to beautiful answers. Is there an unchartered way of life? Yes, there is. If you're a young person, in your mid years or a senior person and you find yourself in a situation that makes you question some of the societal ways of life, don't feel weird. Don't feel there's something wrong with you. Creating your own unchartered life is like finding your own tribe, your own people where you feel okay. No matter what happens to you in any stage of life, if you feel like there's something new that makes you feel like there's an unchartered way of life right now and you're trying to look for your Compass, just go for it. Don't feel shy. I'm not saying it's going to be a bed of roses. No. It's going to be a roller coaster. Get ready. Put your seatbelt on and get prepared. All in all, I just want you, my readers to understand that there is beauty also in your scars. I know they're painful, very painful.

It's a journey of loss, and grief. But at the end of the day, you will follow something that is inside of you. Something that is very unchartered. And you'll formulate your own path. Nobody said you're going to be this or that, no, it is your own way. That's why I'm writing this.

## **Edges and the inner critic**

I don't want this to be all about pain. But there is no way of getting to that place without talking about a situation that started in a simple way and in the process, something painful came out of it. I crossed the edge, and I got something beautiful out of it.

*My compass is telling me:* I don't want you to lie to you your readers and say, it's all about victory here. I want them to see how you got into this place and crossed your personal edges.

*The inner critic is telling me:* Let's do this.

She is my ally in this. Usually she's very loud. She never says anything with a soft voice. When she comes to me, she makes me overthink, double check my everything: "Is this going to be okay? Are you doing this too much? Are you taking care of everything? Are you taking care of yourself? Why are you even doing this?"

So until now, I've never experienced her being an ally. She's loud. And she pisses me off.

## **Inner critic as relationship ally**

Now thinking on my question *Is it OK to create your own unchartered way of life?* I realize she's also an ally. The other day, the way she came to me was quiet. For the first time I went looking for her, rather than her coming to me. I called out: "Hey, where are you? You're so quiet today. What's happening? I need you right now. I'm not sure if what I'm doing is okay". And as much as I don't like her, for the first time I wanted her to come back. Here is another snippet from my life to show my experience of my inner critic becoming my ally.

I was in a romantic relationship for nine years. I met my partner when I was 21. Very young. And we stayed together for a very long time. There are things I did. I played my part in the relationship conflict. We got where we got to, and we broke up. But I'm the one who left, because there are things that were happening in the relationship, that were not really okay with me. And now looking back at that relationship, among so many things that happened there was a particular incident that changed my inner critic to my ally. Even right now, as I'm writing, I'm struggling with forgetting my former partner and moving on from him.

When we got together, I moved out of my mother's home and I moved in with him. We were influenced by a societal expectation that we were supposed to figure things out – get married and start a family. We were just trying to figure things out and neither of us knew at the time what we were doing. In hindsight, I can say that he was part of my x, helping me discover my unchartered life. He was not the villain here.



At the time I wasn't working, I was at home. I was fulfilling my social role as a woman, doing the cooking and cleaning, and I enjoyed my role. He was taking care of the bills and the rent. And it was a good feeling being financially taken care of for the first time in my life. In my lineage the women never sat down to be taken care of. They're always hard working. As a woman in our family you always have to work to survive financially. So this idea of sitting down and being taken care of was very foreign for me. But I enjoyed it. When we first moved in together, everything was okay. We were talking about our finances, and what we want to do. We were planning towards moving into a bigger house. But unfortunately, that never happened.

So there was my inner critic, she was always there asking me: "Why are you sitting down? You need to look for money. You know this is not right. Why are you being taken care of? You need a job".

Then a part of me said back to her: "Hey, let's just relax. I mean, why are we even thinking about anything? I mean, this is *my* life!"

But one day, my partner started hiding his finances from me. I used to do all the shopping, but this time around, he didn't give me money for shopping. As a woman here in Africa, you cannot just spend everything. You have to budget and find a way to save a little for a rainy days. And he found out that I was doing this and that's when he hid his finances from me.

And my inner critic told me: "Haha, look at you. You don't have money. You're here just being taken care of. So look what happened! Right now you have no money to do anything. He just cut you off. So what are you going to do?"

And I told my inner critic: "Hey, just relax. We are all human. I don't know why he did it. I don't have an answer, because he never gives me one".

Now this next part is hard to write about. We had moments of abuse. There was emotional abuse. And there was also physical abuse. He has his own version. He believes this didn't happen.

I told him: "You did this to me and it was very wrong".

And now I see how this moved me towards my unchartered life.

I decided to move out. I didn't have a job. And I didn't know where to start. I met this guy when I was 21 and now I'm 30. I didn't even own a bed. I only had my clothes and my books. And I found an apartment and moved in. My inner critic was very quiet. She was not criticizing me, she didn't tell me: "Hey, you could have done this, you could have done that to take care of yourself". No. She was there with me. And she was trying to help me figure out a way of finding a bed, finding a gas cooker. Finding a job. So she was not so loud and telling me to take care of myself or double check things. No, she was just saying, "Hey, what happened?"

It was very painful. Because I never got to admit that what was happening to me was wrong. I never, I never got to admit that. And that's when I started journaling about the things that had happened to me. Only then when I was reflecting and writing, it occurred to me that what

happened to me was so wrong. My mind has a funny way of operating. If something is too painful, it's pushed away. Edge. I don't want to think about it. I just pretend, hey, this didn't happen. But it comes out eventually.

I was scared to leave the relationship. I wanted to be there because society tells me: "Hey, when you're 30, you need to get married, you need to have a family". And I was scared of leaving that relationship because of how society views you when you're in your 30s. But my inner critic defended me, she told me, "It's not a must".

Only later with the help of my coach Ellen Schupbach, I realized that my inner critic was able to do that, because someone else was with her. And she's called Sassy. Sassy showed me that I'm finding a new way of life. I don't have to be pregnant with a child as the society expects, for me to see I have achieved so much.

## **Enter Sassy**

Sassy told me, "Hey, you know what we are 30 and we are already pregnant! Together we found a new way of life!" I moved out. I have a bed. I have a cooker. And I have a job. Yes. So that's how I got to Sassy.

People say it takes two to tango. It does. Yes, my partner and I were where we were. I'm sorry. I did what I did to you. But hey, I need to move on. If you're not right, for me, you're not. There is nothing written that I have to be in this relationship.

So Sassy showed me from my experiences that there is another way – the unchartered way.

*Sassy says:* Every single time the wild stallion has come out, you have run together, and you found a new way. And it worked. And you don't need a whole community to follow you. It's just that one person who said, 'Hey, thank you'. Just that one person. And it doesn't have to be even anyone, even you can say to yourself: 'Hey, thank you for trying'. Because look at you. You have Compass'.

I told you Compass is peaceful. At the end of the day I found peace. I don't care if anyone follows me. I'm happy. And I'm okay. So, for me, I feel like yes, there is another way. Because I have tested it every single time. And it worked for me. Was it difficult? Yes. It's a journey. It's a process. I'm still figuring things out. And right now I'm in my 30s and I don't have a kid. Yes, I don't even have a relationship. But I'm happy because it took so much for me to realize that. And my inner critic, she just supported me in so many ways. And even in my house right now, she never comes out. When I'm in the house, she's always quiet. Because she knows I'm trying something and she's telling me, "Hey, go on girl. Go on".

## **My inner critic becomes my ally: Role play between me and my inner critic**

*Inner critic:* Hey, so you fucked up in your 30s you really fucked up! You have not organized, look at you, you haven't finished your studies. You're just running around from one job to another! What's wrong with you? Why are you the way you are? Why can't you just sit down and focus on one thing? And then the other?

*Daisy:* Hey, I know I'm messed up. But do you have anything else to tell me about apart from criticizing me? You have an answer? If you had an answer, we wouldn't be here in the first place. So please give me your answer.

*Inner critic goes all quiet*

*Daisy:* All you know is to throw your mouth around with no answers or solution. If you have nothing else to say, shut up. Do you have anything that can help us in this situation?

*Inner critic:* I guess I have been taking you for granted and I see the power you are using now in how you talk to me. So I realize how it's difficult for you because even me personally I don't have answers. All I can do is just throw my mouth around and tell you what to do and not show you how it could have been done well. I don't have the answers. So I am here with you.

*Daisy:* But I am scared to fail and am alone.

*Inner critic:* You're not alone. I am here with you. Rather try and fail than not to try at all.

*Inner critic and Daisy:* Let's do this!

## **Reflections on the role play**

My inner critic saw how powerful and scared I was. She knows I double check everything and am keen, and she knows when to push me around. But that day she saw my pain. She's saw I was alone; and by alone I mean my mother was not here. My best friend was in Australia and I was just here alone going through this and I had no idea what to do. I was so scared. There was a point I thought, I'm not going to make it.

And I remember I went home and talked to my aunt, and I told her, "Hey, I know you want me to have kids. But I feel I'm not in the right space of mind, and I'm not in the right relationship".

And for the first time, they saw me cry. The only other time they saw me cry was when my mom died. But this time they saw me cry. Do you know what happened? My aunts and my cousins, they came together. It was just like a bonfire.

And I saw the spirits of support. I knew I was talking to them. But at that moment I was there and not there. I knew I was in an altered state because I felt the spirit of support.

*Spirits of support telling me:* Hey, it's okay. I mean, if it's hard, if it's difficult, it's okay. You don't have to fight so much. And you don't have to prove anything.

That's what I was getting from the spirit of support.

### **Coming out into my unchartered life**

My inner critic was the only person who was there with me in that moment in my house. And she saw there's no need to fight anymore. Learning to fight with Max at that first seminar, was part of my coming out into my unchartered life. *We will fight another day, not today.*

It is so beautiful, because when I'm in my house, she never comes out. It doesn't matter what I'm doing. She never comes up. She respects my scars. She respects that unchartered way that I'm looking for and that's how I was able to do a role play and facilitate myself and figured out that my inner critic is my ally.

## PHASES OF LOSS AND GRIEF AS A GROUP PROCESS

There are many theories about the phases of loss and grief. Research in this area is ongoing. To name a few, there is Robert Kavanaugh's seven phases of grieving. William Worden's four tasks of mourning. There is Elisabeth Kubler Ross's five stages of death and dying. I don't want this to be a manual for your grief process. Everybody has their version. What I share here is my version that I have developed from my experience. Perhaps dear reader you will find something familiar? Maybe you can understand what I'm talking about, from your own experience?

For me, the phases of loss and grief are a group process, meaning there is a wide range of perspectives and ideas based on an individual's unique experiences and socialization. Here I give you just a few things that really touched me on my journey through loss and grief, and that for me created change. But first, I want to situate these phases in the context of healing colonization which is inseparable from my experience of loss and grief.

### **Loss, grief and healing colonization**

My experience of Process Work at that first Deep Democracy Institute seminar in Nairobi, was also my first time to interact with white people. I used to see them at work, and in my daily life, but I never knew how to interact with the white person. It's not that I was stupid, or I didn't know how to speak to them. It was complex. So even when writing about my inner de-colonization story in this thesis, I was scared that another black person reading is going to tell me, "No, this is not how I feel about a white person".

But I told myself, *It's okay. Everybody has their own learnings, feelings and journey.* And this is my journey.

During that DDI Process Work seminar, I was thinking, *I have heard stories and seen in movies about white people. And here I am with white people.* So I wanted to understand them from my own perspective, my own journey, my own story.

I was coming in with the attitude that a white person is greedy, a white person is racist. A white person doesn't like black people. But no, indeed it was very different.

The best thing about my DDI experiences was being for the first time in a diverse group. I was interacting with white people from different parts of the world. That was really interesting for me. I was not only with someone from US or London. I met white people from Germany, Poland, Thailand, Vietnam Middle East, Australia, France and Amsterdam, just to mention a few. And it occurred to me that they are just like me. We can interact and we can talk. I didn't know this before then. I interacted with them and I got my own learnings and my own perspective.

I'm not saying every black person is to forgive a white person. I know so many hurtful things were done to the black community and it still continues; and this really hurts me each day. But personally, interacting with a diverse group of white people from different parts of the world, laughing and crying together in the seminars, having dinner, meeting part of their family and partying together has taught me so much about the white person.

That first DDI seminar was the start of my journey to interact with them and experiencing them from a human level. Something in me flipped and the journey of forgiveness, understanding and empathy started. It's my genuine forgiveness to that white person that freed me. I remember when we were in Amsterdam at the DDI annual intensive seminar and I saw different white people speak. They were really disgusted by their ancestors who colonized Africans and black people and I saw them blame themselves and carrying the burden of their ancestor's sins.

Then Black Stallion came out. She said: *Oh, my God. I mean, you didn't do this to me. It was your ancestors.* And I felt the world needs to heal.

So much has happened to us as people, we rarely take the time to slow down and reflect on all these losses. I understand life can be busy and crazy and it's one thing after the other. I know I speak from a place of privilege where there is the power of community support and love. But we also need to heal. My experience in that seminar taught me that the healing journey is hard, but it starts with you. Then hopefully the rest will unlearn and re-learn new ways of interacting. When I took time to reflect, I got my personal understanding of the phases of loss and grief that I personally went through.

## **The rise and fall of life: my phases of loss and grief**

### **Numbness**

*When I lost my mum, I didn't have any reactions. I was numb.*

It was the first time I lost someone who was very dear to me. I didn't react and I didn't cry. When the nurse called me and told me, "Come to the hospital, your mum has died", I thought she was just joking. I mean, I was with her during her mini surgery. "We looked for a bed to lay her down to get some rest, and I left her safe and sound, so what are you talking about!" This news felt so ridiculous at the time.

### **Anger**

*Then I became angry with everyone.*

The anger was direct to the hospital for keeping us in line for so long. For losing my mum's file. For being careless for allowing interns to do a mini surgery on my mum. I mean this part is so painful to write. I am crying while writing this. I remember she had water in her lungs and they needed to put a pipe through her lungs to drain the water and I could hear her scream all the way from her

bed to the hallway, asking for help and praying. I was very furious. Actually furious is an understatement. To cut the long story short, no words could express how angry I was.

### **Bargaining with God**

*One day I woke up and started to bargain with God.*

I was telling him: "I am still young and I have nothing significant to do in this world than to eat drink and sleep. My mum is such a faithful servant to your word (the bible) and she goes to church and she is just a good person, a good provider and she has so much to achieve. I want you to come and sit with me, and have a conversation with me, and look me in the eye, and take me instead of her, then I will forgive you, God".

### **Depression**

*Then I went to depression.*

I remember this is the second time I cried because reality dawned down on me that she's not coming back and we are going to bury her six feet under. I was surrounded by family and friends, and still I felt alone, I wanted to die. I hated everything and I was mad with God. This was such a terrible phase.

### **Acceptance**

*After being nothing, change began to happen.*

No matter how hard I cry, my mother is not coming back. God is not giving her back to me. I got tired of being angry and again something in me flipped. At the time I didn't know it was resilience growing in me and helping me find a new way. I decided to accept the situation and something new was born in me and that was resilience.

### **Resilience – finding a new way**

*Learning and unlearning and re-learning.*

Why am I talking about these phases? Because life is a process of losing something and gaining something new. It's the rise and fall, learning and unlearning and relearning. Through Process Work I have been able to facilitate myself in seeing the journey of loss in my life ever since I was young. Process Work has enabled me to start the journey of healing from my inner colonization to resilience.

During my first encounter with group process in DDI, I learnt that in all that you encounter you will always have something new that grows in you, and that is *resilience*. For me resilience is such a big word. Here I define what I mean by resilience in my own words, from my own perspective and experience.

I was reflecting on my first experience of deep democracy: finding Max my teacher and learning to fight with him in the middle of the group. My next stage was coming into the group process and talking in the group about how at my work people used to say about me that I was only

progressing by sleeping with my boss, not due to my talents and hard work. It was really hard. It was too much for me.

In that group process, while I was talking about my issues and saying that people are very mean, Mariam, a fellow student came over to me and held my hand. She was standing opposite to me speaking from the other side in the role of my work company, looking directly at me and trying to help me understand a different perspective. This got me very furious at the time. Now I realize I was in the *anger phase*. I was angry with the world and with my work company. Mariam just came to me and held my hand. And to see someone switch their role from standing so firm with the company to then come over onto the side where I was standing – something in me changed.

I was in a very hurtful place. I was angry at the company. But this DDI group process gave me a careful way to bring out the hurt in me. I didn't feel judged. When I was crying, I didn't think that other people will think, what is wrong with this leader? There was a safe space to bring out these emotions in me without feeling judged, and I was able to resolve something in me about the situation I was grappling with.

The role that my fellow student Mariam played in acknowledging my pain was for me respect. You're respecting my scars. And you're ready to stand with me and understand how it feels to be on this other end. For me that is support. The support that I got from the DDI community and from Mariam that day showed me that Process Work is beautiful. You can talk about difficult things in your life and what you've gone through. And if someone – just one person – can understand, that's enough for me.

And in the process of thinking about that group process, I came to think about my journey to resilience that I've learned through group process. Every single person is expressing different roles. For me, this builds me up with resilience. *Resilience* to me is change: I'm able to change, meaning I'm able to look at things through a different lens. And that's the important thing about group process in my experience. For me, you don't come out of a group process the same person. You might not have the words to explain what changed you because it's experiential. But in my experience I became more aware of different roles and situations in my life.



## **HEALING AND BIRTHING THE FUTURE IN MY UNCHARTERED JOURNEY: APPLYING MY THEORY OF LOSS AND GRIEF AS A COACH**

Dear Reader,

Remember I talked about phases of loss and grief in the previous chapter? As a DDI student I went through those phases. I went through them with my mother. I went through them in my romantic relationship, and in my work situation. For you to change the world, you have to change yourself. The skills and talents I gathered from DDI helped me get to the last phases of acceptance, hope and resilience and finding my uncharted way of life. It wasn't easy. And now I know that in every interaction I have with people, we have many things happening in the background.

My uncharted journey gave me new talents and skills as a coach and facilitator. The skills and talents that I acquired through DDI teachings was making those things in the background more visible and become more able to interact with them.

Deep democracy coaching in my experience is about helping people and supporting them in their journey and process in life to expand your identity and access more information than your everyday "u" identity picks up. You can access this background information through signals that can be felt, observed, experienced and named.

The signals that carry this information flow through channels – meaning different ways of getting the information, for example via a movement channel, a visual channel, an auditory channel, body sensations – a proprioceptive channel, relationship experiences – a relationship channel. And even things that flow in from the world around us – the world channel.

During coaching sessions something magical happens. In the process of facilitating your client you also change yourself. It's a two-way traffic.

### **My inner work as a coach**

You are the coach and someone is coming to you for support. You will be changed. But you have to be grounded. And to be grounded, there's a lot of inner work you have to do. I went to a class on inner work with Gabryisia Gabryjelska-Basiuk, one of our teachers. It was very touching to me when she said, "When you're working with a client, and you think you want them to do or try something, ask yourself, 'Why do they need to do this?'"

For example, if you want to ask a client to cross an edge, it has to be more about them, not more about you. If you find yourself wanting them to cross the edge, slow down and do a little bit of

inner work to unstuck yourself and ask yourself, why is this important for me? It has to be important for the client.

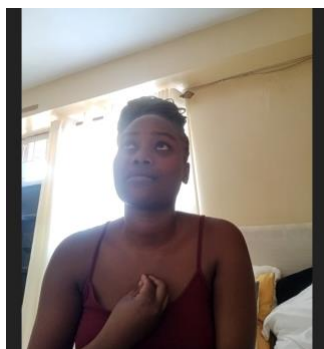
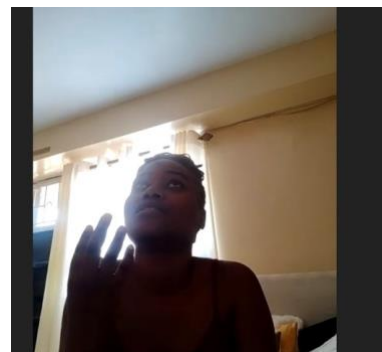
I cannot generalize about issues with clients. So let me come back to me. During coaching and facilitation I have learned the most important thing is to first find a topic, meaning something you can work on with a client. In my case in the situation I am about to discuss, my topic is a body symptom.

### **An inner work practice**

Before you change the world, you have to change yourself. It's not an easy thing. When you are supporting your client, you need to understand that these channels and interventions you are using, you have already tried out on yourself. So when your client is stuck, you will be able to assist them to get the essence out. Inner work is a guiding tool for yourself, as well as for your client. The theory will not work unless you experience it on yourself. So let me try:

Right now, my voice is disappearing. If I do my inner work I sit down and scan my body and look for something that is disturbing me – an x that is outside my u. I'm noticing right now that I am already beginning to guide myself through a body symptom inner work. And while I'm scanning my body I'm feeling a strong throbbing pain in my throat. It has been there the whole week.

And I realize I was already doing this movement like a throat being in pain. The next thing is to get into that movement and amplify it. And then I notice, this movement represents a closed flower. I'm getting it, I'm holding the fingers together, but then I'm letting go of it. So when I do this more, I feel like a flower in the way it always has a time to shine, to sprout.



Now I'm concentrating more on the part where I'm putting my fingers together and now I suddenly remember my thesis that is on my mind. And I relate how I feel with this movement to my thesis. I feel this thesis is so dear and so deep to me – it's very special. And it's very painful. And the more my fingers stay there, the more it hurts.

But when I let go and release the energy in my hand, like a flower shining and sprouting, I feel – whooo – I'm relieved. This thing is coming out. It's hard, it's painful, but I feel good. It's coming out. It's helping me process a lot of my pain.



Now there is a movement I notice I am doing. I am trying to support my head. I get into that movement for a moment and try to find what roles – perspectives – are present and trying to interact? I realize that in attempting the role play, nothing is coming out. But when I support my head like this, I can get to the essence. Essence meaning the message or insight that my movement is trying to communicate. And the feeling of resting on my hands *flirts* with me. A flirt is something that suddenly catches my attention without thinking about it and has new information within it. I make space for the flirt to speak to me. The feeling of resting on my hands tells me, I have all the support I need. I have my coach, I have myself and I have my

ancestors. I have all the support.

### **Stages of my inner work**

Here are the steps that looking back, I noticed that I used in my inner work. These are guiding tools that anyone can use:

- ✦ First I noticed I had a body symptom. Then I became aware it was a topic that I can immediately work on as an inner work.
- ✦ Then I framed the disturbance x through how I explained the body symptom and looked for a movement to explain my experience (movement channel).
- ✦ Then I amplified the movement by doing the movement big and slow and paying close attention to my experience of the flower (visual channel) until it's complete, and I get relief.
- ✦ I slowed down and amplified my head resting on my hands, and got new information in the proprioceptive channel, until I found an essence. I framed the essence as an insight and discover spontaneously where I can use the insight in my life.

## **Diversity of coaching styles**

Every single time you're working with a client, you gather information in different channels about the client's experience. Knowing about these channels of communication will help you as coach.

Everybody has a different style. Some channels and interventions come more easily to me. For example, when I'm coaching a person, role play comes easily to me.

But if I try to role switch with my client and it doesn't work, I can drop it and look for something that flirts with me.

If I'm doing a roleplay with myself in an inner work, I might feel there's a block when I get to a point where I'm not able to move past the role play. For example, facilitating myself I might say: "Hey Daisy, what are you trying to communicate right now with this channel?" Then I realize on the other side, there is no role that is coming up to respond the first one.

Just like in my body symptom inner work earlier, when I noticed that getting into the roles wasn't working, I dropped that, relaxed and went for a flirt.

And now I come back to my uncharted way of life and realize there is no one particular thing that should show me my uncharted way of life. It's everything that I get to experience in different channels in this world, and how I relate them to me.

## **My life myth guiding my uncharted life**

*Life myth* – Someone's path or an organizing principle that existed even before you were born.

*Dreaming level* – Like a door into new aspects of yourself, an event or scenarios in life.

Life myths are connected with the *dreaming level*. You can find your life myth story in an early childhood dream or memory, or in a peak "out of this world" experience.

My uncharted way of life and my process of coming out is connected to my life myth.

DDI helped me and supported me to find out my life myth and my understanding why I am the way I am. I acquired the coaching and facilitation talents to be able to use the X in my life myth to grow into my uncharted life.

I have an early childhood memory where I wanted to play with other kids, but I was not able to. My mother was very strict. She bought me toys and said, "You have to play alone". One day, a boy in the neighborhood came and got me so we can go and play together. That playing lasted a short period of time, but was the most amazing thing I had ever felt. I could be myself with simple children playing in the street. My mum came home and beat me for defying her rule to not play with kids. But for me, it was still ok, I got to play with the kids. It was worth every moment.

A few years ago, in Thailand at the DDI Facilitation Intensive, something magical happened. I paired up with a monk for a life myth exercise. The essence of freedom came to me from a full-bodied expansive uplifting movement with my arms and upper body.

Soon after, while a group process was going on, I was walking around the room, relaxing, and something caught my attention outside the window – a little kid playing. I remembered my memory that I had just worked on in the exercise with the monk, me seated alone and playing with my toys. Just then, through the window I saw one of the other kids go to that kid sitting alone and hold her hand to play with her. I was seeing my childhood memory playing out in front of me! And then I had the insight: freedom is my path:

*Enjoy people, be with people, experience everything in life and enjoy.*

That child through the window in Thailand, was my inner child who pulled me out of the cage I was in and brought me to this world where I can experience people, experience this life.

I was so moved. I went and laid down on the floor. Vlad, a fellow student noticed me and came and lay down next to me. He began humming, and everyone joined in the humming. Later he told me, that he heard that song coming out of me.

So here I am. My song has brought me to this point. Freedom to live my unchartered life.

## **PARTING ENCOURAGEMENT FOR YOUR UNCHARTERED LIFE**

Dear Reader,

Making your own unchartered way of life is not pre-designed for a few privileged ones. It is only for those who are willing to curate their own paths.

Is it going to be easy? NO!

Is it going to be hard? YES!

Was I scared looking for my own unchartered way? YES!

Was it worth it? YES!

Process Work supported me with the necessary tools, talents and support in curating this path.

Don't be scared to try if you get scars along the way. Scars build resilience and resilience builds courage and there is beauty and a story in every scar.

ASANTI Process Work

## SOURCES

Arnold and Amy Mindell videos [www.aammindell.net](http://www.aammindell.net)

Max and Ellen Schupbach videos [Conflictology Series](#)

[Interview Max Schupbach](#) video

Regular DDI Seminars Nairobi 2019 – 2023 facilitated by Drs Ellen and Max Schupbach

DDI Annual Facilitation Training Intensives 2019-2023

October 2019 Thailand: *Unity in Diversity: Expansions, Collisions, Wholeness*

October 2022 Amsterdam: *One Flat Round World*

October 2023 Nairobi, Kenya: *Birthing Our Future: Our Nature, our Ancestors, our Youth*



November 2023 Nairobi Kenya: On my first DDI facilitation team with Diplomat Emmanuel Karisa Baya - *Our Culture our Leadership, African Tradition and Deep Democracy*

