

Weave Four: Presencing Included in the Loom – Being and Becoming Surfacing in the Weaver’s Learning, Living and Working and the Challenge of Rediscovery in my ‘African Birthing’

A Second Source of Learning, Understanding Level of Behavioural
Responses to Change and Accessing Deep Levels of Knowing

“I always knew that deep down in every human heart, there is mercy and generosity. No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”

Nelson Mandela

Introduction

In the previous Weave I gave evidence of Sankofa Learning Centre’s emergence on the educational landscape for children of African heritage. I also shared the significance of the Maroon and Sankofa bird in understanding the motivation and activities of the co-creators of the initiative. Further, I showed how the facility for home education included with the Africentric idea was indeed an innovation and contributed to the educational success of the children who participated in the facility.

However, I also intimated in the previous Weave that our success was not without cost. Indeed, our success masked the great sacrifice that the co-creators proffered to ensure that the initiative lasted, our educational offer remained substantive and the children were successful. The costs were financial, in the vast energies expended and in ill-health (physically and mentally).

In my own situation I became ill, and this was really a wake-up call for there were underlying issues with which I had to attend for I discovered “stuckness” across my

learning, living and work sites. I would not return to Sankofa after my illness. However, I was challenged to profound change in my life.

This is sensed as I complete my transfer paper for the PhD programme, which is entitled, "I Can Hear Jack – I Can See jack." This is a play on the name of my tutor, Jack Whitehead, whose influence and support is respected. Therefore the title can be appreciated as a demonstration of that respect for and it is. However, there is another meaning in that title, which informs on my condition of "stuckness". The title can also be interpreted as I can hear no one (I can hear jack) and I can see nothing (I can see jack).

This was the gateway to my transfer, which explored my "stuckness," focusing on mindset issues, habits, and relationship with my fatherland my African birthing. The period that I am writing about in this Weave Sankofa would be in its fifth year. I am no longer part of the Sankofa Learning Centre, but I am reviewing the experience, continuing my recovery and now, engaging integrously with living theory methodology.

I include Scharmer's (2000) "Theory U and Presencing" in my living theory methodology toolkit (my loom). This brings about profound change in my wisdom (the weaver's wisdom). There is also an added value in my loom and effected is a ripple effect through my Unique Cloth in its improved application.

In this way I give evidence of how I acted to transform 'stuckness' in my learning, living and work experiences, which as I inquired more deeply surfaced as a closed mindset, lack of clarity as to what I am doing in my study and a compromised and

limiting view of community, inclusionality, and indeed my own African Voice (in how I embraced the values extant in the traditional Maroon and Sankofa bird).

My attention is with the notions extant in Theory U and Presencing of two sources of learning, differing levels of responding to change (reacting, redesigning, reframing and regenerating), and its tools for accessing deep levels of knowing.

I had been particularly intrigued when reading what Scharmer (2002) proffered as the meaning of “presencing” in an interview conducted by Werner A. Leeb, as follows:

“Presencing means: liberating one’s perception from the “prison” of the past and then letting it operate from the field of the future. This means that you literally shift the place from which your perception operates to another vantage point. In practical terms, presencing means that you link yourself in a very real way with your ‘highest future possibility’ and that you let it come into the present”.

Scharmer continued that:

“Presencing is always relevant when past-driven reality no longer brings you forward, and when you have the feeling that you have to begin again on a completely new footing in order to progress”.

In my ‘stuckness’, I certainly felt that I was not making progress across diverse life sites, both in relation to my leadership¹⁴ in the Sankofa Learning Centre and in my own individual cultivation as learner, educator and activist embracing the African Voice.

I could cite as evidence much unfinished business as I was not yet fully out of my stuckness. It was as if a great deal of threads were strewn across the loom table, in the shuttle was a tangled weft, the shuttle was stalled and the weaver (myself) was stuck.

¹⁴1. Leading and developing individuals, building leadership capacity and growing independence; 2. Leading and developing the organisation and making the most of complexity; 3. Leading the way forward and leading the learning 4. Modelling personal qualities and values, modelling moral purpose in action

The promise of release proffered in Scharmer's twin challenge extant in "Presencing", that is, to 'shift to another vantage point', and to embrace in a very real way my 'highest future possibility' (now my fullest co-creative future possibilities) and to 'let it come into the present', was inspiring counsel. Emergent was important tacit territory affording data to support my challenge for profound quality change in my ways of being. Scharmer's 'presencing' was foundational and a new influence in the grain and weave of my Cloth.

Scharmer (2000a) also informed that 'whilst organisational learning related activities during the 1990s were largely focused on incremental improvement of already existing processes, most leadership teams were now facing a new set of business challenges that can rarely be successfully addressed with the traditional methods and concepts of organisational learning'.

Scharmer (2000a) informed on the 'digitised new way', new relational patterns of globalisation and individualisation and the increasing relevance of experience, awareness and consciousness in the process of 'spiritualisation', as new leadership challenges. Scharmer citing Castells (1996) evidenced the increasingly networked and web shaped relationship patterns, presenting as 'diverse waves of disruptive, revolutionary change (that were) redefining the context of business' (p. 4). Scharmer citing Depart, Varela and Vermersch (1999) also informed on becoming aware of one's more subtle experiences as more subtle dimensions of change, and in the interest in topics like "flow" (Csikszentmihalyi 1990) and personal mastery (Senge 1990) as signals of this new leadership challenge. He argued that it was necessary for organisations and their leaders to develop a new cognitive capability

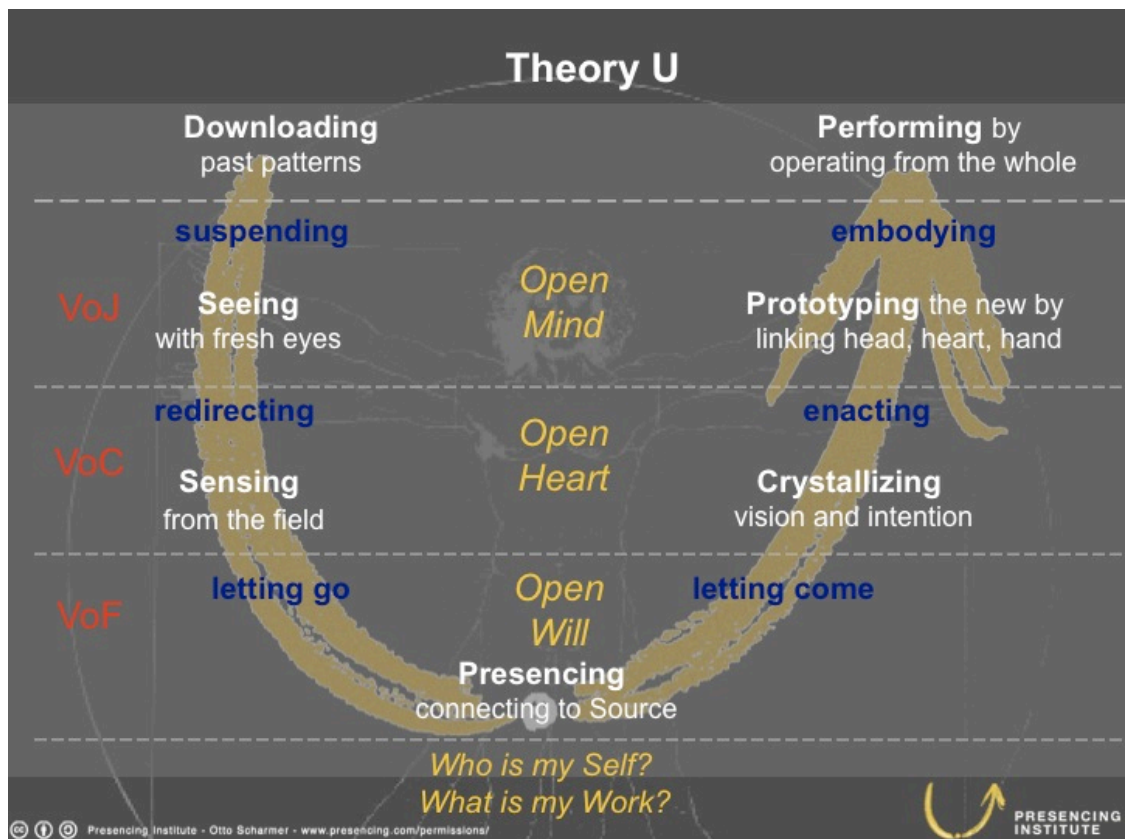
for the new business environment in the following way.

“Classical methods and concepts of organizational learning are all variations of the same Kolb (1984) based learning cycle: learning based on reflecting on the experiences of the past. However, several currently significant leadership challenges cannot be successfully approached this way because the experience base of a team often is not relevant for the issue at hand. In order to do well in the emerging new business environments, organisations and their leaders have to develop a new cognitive capability, the capability for sensing and seizing emerging business opportunities (Arthur 1996, 2000). Organizations and their leaders can develop this capability by engaging in a different kind of learning cycle, one that allows them to learn from the future as it emerges, rather than from reflecting on past experiences” (Scharmer 2000).

It is Scharmer’s new leadership challenges (particularly becoming aware of subtle dimensions of change) that engaged my interest. I appreciated the notion of organisational learning, as also meaning individual learning. Scharmer (2000) says as much in noting that presencing is both a collective/organisational and an individual/personal experience in which the Self becomes the gate through which the new comes into reality. It is the discipline of bringing one’s full Self into presence and use of one’s highest Self as a vehicle for sensing and bringing forth new worlds.

I valued Scharmer’s notion of the need to develop ‘a new cognitive capability’ and the necessity of engaging in a different kind of learning cycle, (one that allows learning ‘from the future as it emerges’). In receptivity and responsiveness to this notion and activity I was motivated to explore “stuckness” in my learning, living and working experiences downloading past patterns, seeing events with fresh eyes and sensing from the field opportunities for reframe on the downward swing of Scharmer’s U.

Figure 21: Theory U and Presencing

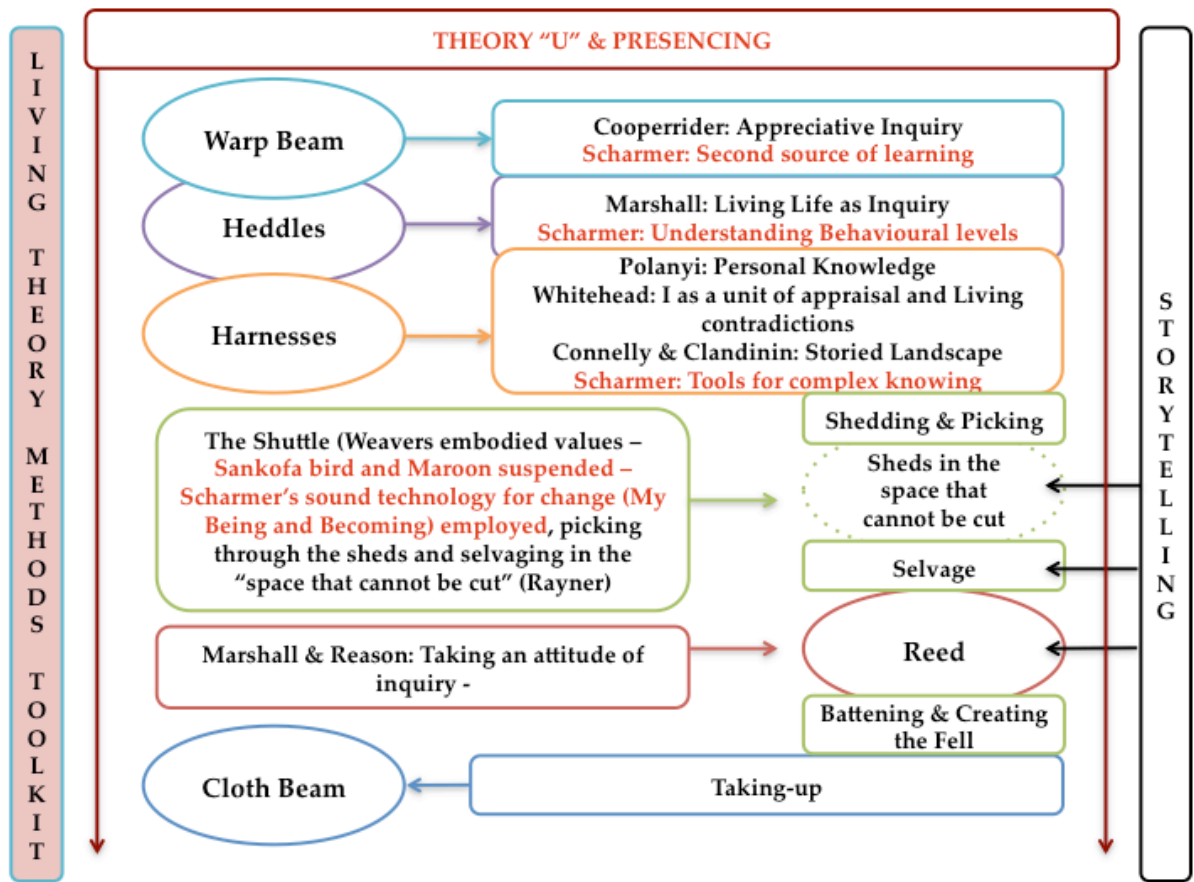


Tapping a Second Source of Learning

Scharmer's 'presencing' and Theory U (its most recent iteration is depicted above) inclusion in my living theory methodology toolkit and its placement on the warp beam proffers an immediate impact.

Cooperrider's appreciative inquiry so vital in the interrogation of my 'lived experiences' on the warp beam is there, affording the coming into presence of the past. Presencing and Theory U with Scharmer's notion of the 'tapping of a second source of learning' are also placed on the warp beam focused on the emerging future – the coming into presence of the future. It is here that my learning, living and working is initially appreciated as being and becoming in a practical way in the operation of my loom.

Figure 22: Theory and Presencing on the Loom



However, this would not be the only place for the emergence of being and becoming on the loom, for that potential also exists with the complementary attentiveness that Presencing and Theory U affords to Marshall’s articulation of ‘living life as inquiry’ amongst the heddles. In this way warp beam and heddles combine to articulate my differing levels of behavioural responses to change.

Further, the potential for the emergence of being and becoming exists amongst the harnesses, for Scharmer’s ‘presencing and Theory U’ are integrated with Whitehead’s ‘I as a unit of appraisal’ and ‘living I as a contradiction’ and Connelly and Clandinin’s storied landscape as dynamic sources of learning, affording a comprehensive set of tools functioning as harnesses, and offering effective frames for accessing deep levels of knowing of a complex self.

It is not a single source that proffers insight to being and becoming in my learning, living and working, for Scharmer's (2000) "Theory U and presencing" are multi-placed on the loom to afford new enquiry into the 'makings' and 'un-makings' in the making of me and offer greater quality to my Cloth. It is also significant in improving the Weaver's leadership capability from the perspective of learning, change, and cognition, highlighting both the individual and the collective aspects of this emerging new capacity. Further, foundationally the loom has been transformed, and the weaver's readiness sustained.

It is with this awareness/ gaze that I was inspired to return to the messy loom table, tangled weft and inoperable shuttle. I had found new motivation and my feelings of lacking the capacity to advance the Weave receded at a pace. I knew I would need support. However, importantly, commitment to resolve my condition remained high, as I had continued as a conscious activity through my 'stuckness' the gathering of more information, reflecting on that information, and seeking to discover what actions were needed to transform my unsatisfying situation.

Tapping a Second Cycle of Learning

My first placement on the warp beam is an email exchange with Dr. Eden Charles and myself, which occurred over the period whilst I was completing my transfer paper, 'I can hear Jack, I can see jack' (Appendix Six), for the PhD programme, and a little beyond. It had been on the loom table, read, yet unexplored. It was a clear thread situated neatly in a rare uncluttered space on the loom table. It seemed as if this clear thread had been so situated to identify its importance and its need for urgent attention.

As I stretched the thread to reveal its content, the first email had the subject heading,

'Care', and informed on Eden inquiring into my well-being. My response is also there and though it is short, it has an attachment. The attachment is the transfer paper (Appendix Six), with its focus on 'my stuckness', which served as much as a response to Eden's inquiry relating to my condition, as it was for my academic purpose.

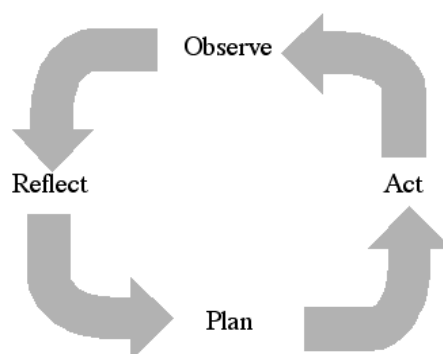
In this act of placing the email exchange on the warp beam, valuing Scharmer's notion of two different types of learning cycles, immediately recognised is Cooperrider's appreciative inquiry at work enabling me to reflect on experiences of the past – the coming into presence of the past (as Type I learning) to plan change. Almost simultaneously, Scharmer's second source of learning, grounded in sensing and enacting emerging futures – is precognising facilitating change through the coming into presence of the future (as Type II learning).

I am already seeing a difference in the quality of the loom, and in my own condition in the impact of Eden's loving words. I can see now, how this communication affords me a unique purposeful recognition, affirms Eden and I's enhanced relational mutuality and how our transaction evokes an engaging dialogical praxis (I say more on these qualities, integral to my valuing social living pedagogy later). However, it is Eden's point: "We are in communication through forces deeper than I understand and I send you my love and wish you all you need to continue your journey" and his recognition that in my transfer paper there is evidence of the integrous use of living theory methodology that lingers (a more detailed account of the email exchange is in Appendix Ten, Care).

Scharmer says Type I learning like all Kolb-type learning cycles (Kolb, 1984) of which

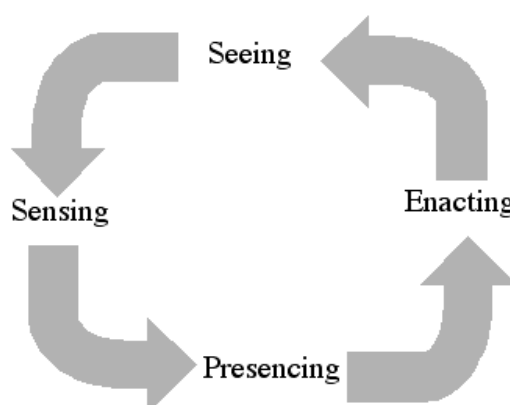
Cooperrider's is representative, offers a sequence of action, concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and action again (see Figure 19). It revolves around and reflects on experiences of the past.

Figure 23: The Kolb Type Learning Cycle (Learning From the Experiences of the Past)



The source for Type II learning noted by Scharmer is the 'coming into existence of the future'. This type of learning is focused on sensing and embodying emerging futures rather than re-enacting the patterns of the past. The sequence of activities in this learning process is seeing, sensing, presencing, and enacting (see Figure 20).

Figure 24 The Scharmer Type Learning Cycle (Learning From the Emerging Future)



It is these two sources of learning that are now awakened, as the email exchange

reminds me of the importance of dialogue and the appreciative view of who I am from another voice. It is a different quality of content informing my self-inquiry. I gaze at the email exchange on the warp beam as my thoughts cascade to profound quality change, and engagement with Scharmer's innovation. Scharmer's (2000) "breathing metaphor" (p. 10-11) surfaces in my imagination. I consider the exploration of experiences in the Sankofa Learning Centre and my own levels of behavioural response to change.

Still full of thought I move away from the warp beam on which the email exchange is now rested. I am at the loom table staring at the arraignment of threads strewn across its surface. It tells that I still have much to do, and as I reflect, I am thinking that my challenge is more expansive than I had imagined. As soon as this thought flashes through my mind, I crease my brow, and wonder about Scharmer's (2000) notion of managing the complexity of large-scale change (p. 6). In my mind I impute meaning to the term 'large scale', with my appreciation of the term 'profound'. I am still thinking, now focused on managing the complexity of profound change. On managing the complexity of profound change my mind is stirred.

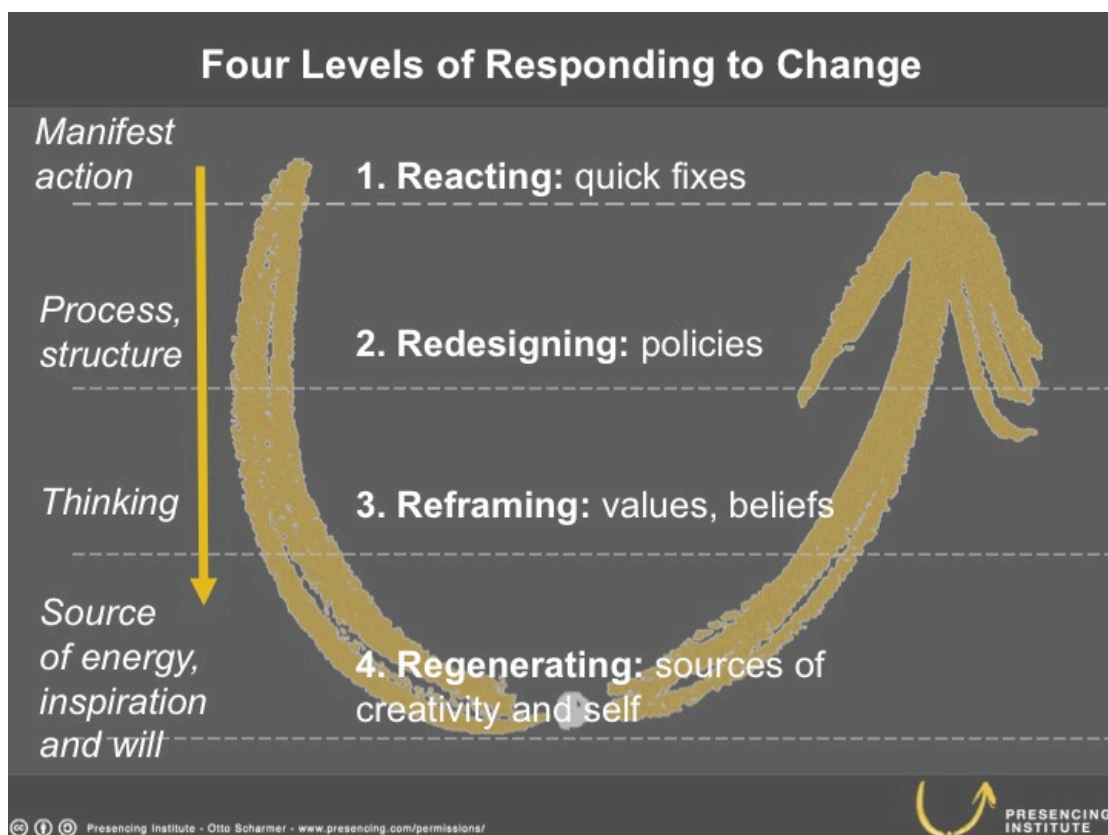
Levels of Behavioural Responses to Change

(Suspending Downloading and Redirecting from the Source of the Shadows)

In my first encounter with Scharmer (2000) his work described the levels of subtlety at which change takes place as going from re-acting to re-structuring to re-designing to re-framing to re-generating. The different levels of change he suggests were acted out as behaviourally embodied routines and practices. In his model they are depicted as if an iceberg with reaction at level 0 (the quick fix) above the water line. Scharmer noted that there were occasions when this response was adequate. However, sometimes one had to consider the context. He shared organisational structure,

processes, mental models and identities as the embedded features. The diagram/model below is a later development of the model just described. Thus instead of five levels there are now four. The previous restructure level disappears and it is in with change to processes as part of redesigning, This makes sense to me, because though they can be appreciated as distinct the level of change is often similar.

Figure 25: Four Levels of Responding to Change



I like how the different levels are depicted and explained in this new model. At level 1 reaction is likened to a quick fix response. Level 2 the first of the embedded levels is now redesign and the contextual levels of behaviour responses embedded. The contextual levels show change to structure and processes at level 2 (redesigning); change in thinking, values and belief at level 3 (reframing) and change to the source of energy, inspiration and will to release creativity and self at level 4 (regeneration).

Scharmer (2000) notes that when leaders are faced with challenges to self or in their organisation they have to decide whether to react directly to the issue or to step back, reflect, and reorganise the underlying contextual levels that gave rise to the challenge in the first place (Scharmer 2000). It is in this way, that his subtle framing of levels of behavioural responses to change is distinguished and with which I intervened my 'stuckness', as I sought to 'uncover, understand and enact change' in my condition.

I particularly, loved Scharmer's (2000) breathing metaphor in appreciating the organisation as a living system, given my own experiences (healthwise) in the Sankofa Learning Centre. Scharmer (2000) states:

"If we imagine the organisation as a living system, we can think of uncovering or unfreezing as the organization *inhaling*: taking the current reality into its consciousness (breathing in). Likewise, we can think of *enacting* as an interior-out process of converting a changed consciousness into practices and actions (breathing out)". (Scharmer 2000, pp. 9-10)

Here, I am thinking, valuing Whitehead's (1989) unit of appraisal, inhaling and breathing out. I know the nature of my own influence on self, on others and in social formations. I am the organization, in the organisation, I am the system in the system. I am with my influence the unit of appraisal. I inhale again, as I evoke my current realities into consciousness. I am at the loom table, now scanning the wide-ranging content on its surface. Now I am poking and prodding the shuttle; interrogating the weft in the shuttle; and endeavouring to awaken the imagination of the weaver (my own imagination).

The import of what Scharmer is communicating is appreciated, and this is furthered in his explanation that the 'Lewin-Schein model of unfreezing–change–refreezing can be seen as one sequence within an ongoing process of organizational breathing'

(Scharmer 2000, p. 10).

Scharmer (2000) says of his breathing metaphor that it can be related to the different levels of change identified in his framing. It is in this way that I begin to think of my own self in relation to Scharmer's framing. Thus, when Scharmer compares an organisation that is acting primarily at the levels of reacting, restructuring and redesigning, to an organism that is engaged in shallow breathing, I am in self reflection mode. When Scharmer (2000) informs that the organisation, which engages primarily at reframing and regenerating levels, can be compared to an organism that breathes deeply. In the moment I am breathing deeply too, as that has been the focus through this particular Weave.

Scharmer (2000) says that when an organisation is engaging only with change through quick fixes or at levels of restructure and redesign the expectation is that the organisation would suffer serious respiratory distress from a lack of oxygen. The organisation engaging with change only at the reframing and regeneration levels risks serious respiratory distress from too much CO₂ and hyperventilates (p. 10). In my own breathing I sense inconsistency. I am furtive and as I thumb the content of "I can hear Jack – I can see jack" (Appendix Six) that I am now holding in my hand, I become pensive as I think anew on my experiences in the Sankofa Learning Centre.

I reflect on what was the nature of the Sankofa Learning Centre's breathing, whilst I participated in the initiative, and at the same time, awaken my own senses to my respiratory process, paying attention to my individual cultivation and organisational learning.

My mind interjects, in an almost inaudible utterance, yet makes a loud echo through my own body as I conjecture that 'I want my Cloth to breathe', as I glance at my Emergent African Great Story now stilled.

My thoughts run to my ill-health at the time of my departure from the Sankofa Learning Centre and I say loudly, forgetting that I am not alone in my surroundings, such is the nature of my engagement with my study as follows: "I should have seen my ill-health coming", as if wanting to assure myself. Turned quizzical heads and disapproving stares reminded me of the quiet of the library in my home. My apologetic smile returned to the disapproving, yet caring stares that appeared around the door that is now ajar, affirm that my own order had been restored, and the disturbance passed.

I relaxed, and in that countenance continued with my reflection on what was going on at the Sankofa Learning Centre at the time when I became ill? What were the then current realities? What was happening? How was the organisation breathing?

This thought is not followed through as my mind cascades to the vibrancy of the Sankofa Learning Centre's beginning, and the very 'alive' state of the 'home educators' when the innovation was introduced. I know Charles (2007) was drawn to focus on the hard work ahead on our first day and said as much in his thesis. I am also aware though that just as in the Sankofa Learning Centre's existence, he was encouraged to celebrate. I think we all did. It was a celebratory and signal moment. A great deal had been accomplished just in this act and our energies were sustained at high levels for nearly four years.

Home Educators as Maroons

In the voice of the weaver I recall the 'home educators as Maroons' innovation and success, and my part in this success in the co-creation of the Sankofa Learning Centre. Our breathing was powerful then, and we felt well resourced, even though by 'school standards' we may have fallen short, our lacking did not go unnoticed, but we managed.

We operated as an extended family, an inspired learning community, with a willingness to experiment. We took a chance on 'liberation education' and there was much that was successful in our children's educational experiences included with the Africentric Idea and the embrace of a liberation education. In my own influence Cultural Action for Freedom (Freire 1970), Deschooling Society (Illich n.d.), Nguzu Saba (Karenga 1966), Kwaanza (Karenga, Kwaanza n.d.), Timeless Values (Ladner 2000), Affirmations (Angelou n.d.) were given centre stage, brought in from the margins.

However, despite the successes, I am seeing in the shadows the diminishing expectations for the Sankofa Learning Centre. What is in the shadows reveals dimly the negative impact of the lack of support from local authorities, our naivety in our ways of organising and incongruence in our own complex values.

Becoming Aware

The invasive thoughts of my ill-health, however, did not stay locked out for long, because I was drawn to recognise that even with our success, there were some important issues that caused concern. They all cannot be noted here, nor can they be covered to the level that I would have wanted in this study. Indeed, the issues

covered, and given attention, do not mean that others are not important, nor are they of less value. Those covered are wholly due to what has emerged as a result of my focus on those issues contributing to my 'stuckness' as I engaged with Scharmer's 'presencing', now included in my living theory toolkit. In my view (posed in an appreciative way) the issues of import centred, particularly, on the following:

- *The Sankofa Learning Centre prospering as a great loving educational experience and a profitable business concern*
- *The Africentric Idea as a way of being celebrating the widest human flourishing*

These were the items that I would have wanted on any agenda focused on the experiences of the Sankofa Learning Centre, and in relation to my own stuckness, it is these points above that I give attention.

Downloading: The Sankofa Learning Centre prospering as a great loving human experience and a profitable business concern

Here, I focus on my growing awareness of my stuckness, stimulated initially by recall of how Sankofa's financial difficulties increased, and my own economic situation worsened. I can remember times when I felt completely at a loss when there were no monies to pay teachers. So, no teachers came, and in the event of this I acted to take the slack. I did most of the teaching.

However, there would also come a time when there was no money to pay me. At first I continued working, in hope that things would change and I would be paid. When there was no change, in order to contribute to the innovation and sustain my

own life needs, I found work elsewhere (in Mandiani) and continued teaching at the Sankofa Learning Centre full-time. Charles continued to be supportive and contributed by using more of his financial resources in supporting the innovation. I contributed with more and more of my (intelligence) labour in ensuring that our children's education was sustained at high levels. In this process I expanded my self as I learned and taught new subjects. At one time I was teaching at least 5 unrelated GCSE subjects. I both grew and laid the seeds for my illness at the same time as I drove myself into the ground with my desire to ensure that the children received the quality of education that I wanted for them.

However, the lack of finances for the resourcing of Sankofa increasingly made an adverse impact on the innovation, the longer this state of affairs continued. My finding work in Mandiani did realise an injection of finances that gave some respite to self in relation to living needs. However, it brought no real change to the then current realities and my participation in the Sankofa Learning Centre (except in my modified use of time and the minor reallocation of responsibilities to allow my working in Mandiani). Doing two full-time jobs (one not paying and the other paying) would take its toll physically and mentally.

The duration from the time that I considered to be the onset of the experience up until the time of my ill-health was approximately 18 months. In relation to Scharmer's (2000) model the behaviours that best fit my actions over this time were at the reacting, restructuring and redesign levels (quick fixes and the tinkering with structures and processes). Taking the slack was the habitual behaviours of how I would react to the challenges posed relating to the lack of resources to employ

teaching support. Taking on two jobs, in some ways would also not have been far removed from habitual behaviours, but continuing to work in the Sankofa Learning Centre did require me to restructure how I would continue that work fulltime. Therefore, in Scharmer's (2000) terminology I would have been shallow breathing (p. 10), when actions at more substantive levels were needed, for my behaviour responses would only be at the lower levels of change. In the event of this, I was open to suffer serious respiratory distress from a lack of oxygen.

So it was too, with the Sankofa Learning Centre. At a practical level the lack of finances meant that we employed less external resources for teaching, as a consequence I found myself doing more and more of the teaching across wide curriculum areas. At a structural level roles and responsibilities collapsed and our structuring were more reactionary than planned as both Charles and I had to find time to raise monies away from the Sankofa Learning Centre. This was not wholly negative for this brought other leaders to the fore and the 'home education' model allowed us to be responsive. However, other pressures particularly those related to an increasing focus on exams (SATs, GCSEs etc), and a more 'school like' orientation would compromise our potential to be responsive and introduce more complex scenarios and experiences.

I am now breathing deeply, in this moment, as I remember that time. I am inhaling again. This is so, because the lack of resources, and I having to do two jobs are the actions that could be seen above the water line. However, the longer this situation continued the actions above the water masks a greater concern, occurring at the contextual levels. They are neither aligned to what is necessary for the effective functioning of the Sankofa Learning Centre, nor my own individual cultivation, as

one of the home educators as Maroons and co-leader of the initiative. The actions cause concern, because they reflect and present issues derived from challenges, valuing Scharmer's framing, at redesign, reframe and regeneration levels. Sankofa's financial difficulties did not require actions only at the quick fix level.

At the design level, I felt that if there was one area, which the Sankofa innovation gave a great deal of attention, it was here. Apt focus had been given to the complex relationship between tasks, workflow, responsibility and authority, and making sure these all supported the objectives of the initiative. We understood that good organisational design helped communications, productivity, and innovation, and that it assisted in creating an environment where people can work effectively. Indeed, awareness that in organisations many of the productivity and performance issues are traced back to poor organisation design encouraged this attentiveness. A company can have a great mission, great people and great leadership and still not perform well because of poor organisational design.

Therefore, how work is done, business processes effected, information communicated and people inspired, all directly affect the quality of organisational performance. All of these factors are facets of the organisation's design and each facet is important to organisation's success.

However, the promise of aligning the innovation's structure with its mission faltered. In Sankofa we grew to suffer from little or no planning or interventions, when such acts/qualities were most needed as processing gaps, barriers to good communications and misalignment in values emerged.

Without due planning, the organisation's design lost shape, as co-creators became under increasing stress. Our flexibility was compromised, resources were stretched to their limits and key people and their skills over-burdened. When it comes to good organisation design, it's a question of getting the right balance – getting the right controls, the right flexibility, the right inspiration; and getting the most from people and other key resources. Lack of finance would contribute to placing the Sankofa Learning Centre's 'right balance', and indeed my own 'right balance' in danger.

In some ways I still think that the processes, which were at the heart of the Sankofa Learning Centre's design for what we had to do, how it should be done and the allocation of responsibilities and authority for their accomplishment were exemplary. The success of many of those children who participated in the innovation is evidence of its relevant design (the home education model included with the Africentric Idea as described more fully in Weave Three). Here though, the concern is how the lack of resources impacted the quality of implementation of our design.

The centre as an educational hub, with individual educational plans, lessons in real professional studios (art, photography, dance and drama), in family settings (music, tutorials and mentoring), science in the laboratory of the allotment and gardens; and games and physical education in the local parks, swimming pool and recreation centres was exciting and a success. However, it was Sankofa's loss of power to sustain this design model, despite its existence over some 10 years by a group of core parents, which was the concern and contributed to its faltering and my stuckness.

Those who contributed significantly over the period to the innovation, included Varina, Abeo, Annmarie, Valerie, Nicole, Merva, Kofi, Akilah, Laurel, Eden and

myself. This is not to devalue what others contributed – however theirs was a signal effort. Amongst the children contributing in their diverse ways, I can particularly recall Nathan, Kovalan, Ife, Duane, Emmanuel, Dominic, Donya, Dominique, Frank, Nosakhere, Jason, Nkwa, Akilah, Akintunde, and others.

Seeing: The Africentric Idea in the centre of all children’s education

At the level of reframing (the mindset/theoretical level), earlier in this living theory thesis I described a shift in my own thinking relating to African children’s educational experiences, which was depicted as a move in perception from under-achievement to its appreciation as disadvantage. This was foundational in the conception the Sankofa Learning Centre. The act of parents to ‘liberate’ their children from school and to home educate was an innovative and successful reframe.

However, the co-creators of the Sankofa Learning Centre wanted to go much further than to simply reframe the context of their children’s education, for with the embrace of the Africentric Idea, we sought to make impact and influence at the regeneration level through access to their own source and creativity. Earlier in the study I informed on the inspiring symbols of the mythical Sankofa bird and the Maroons in history as the twin-application of the ‘Africentric Idea’. The Sankofa bird symbolising the notion of going back to the past and fetch the gems that could be used in the present and future (resembling Type 1 learning). The traditional and historical Maroons placing great emphasis on their independence, self-sufficiency and survival based on a dynamic sense of community.

It is these notions and ways of being that would come under scrutiny in my engagement with living theory methodology, particularly in the application of Scharmer's 'presencing.'

These values modelled by the co-creators of the Sankofa Learning Centre, and in my depiction of our activities as the twinning of the Sankofa bird's call to history and our functioning as 'home educators as Maroons', made the link of drawing resource from these traditional sources. The traditional Maroons embraced independence, communalism and self-sufficiency, as important values stemming from their successful warrior heritage and to their own ancestry. We, as 'home educators as Maroons', attached particular importance to our achievements, as the result of our novel innovation included with the Africentric Idea, our collaborative ways of working (sense of family and community) and how we had overcome challenges against the odds, to see our children towards remarkable successes through our own resource.

These were conceived as inspiring successes and afforded the Sankofa Learning Centre (the hub, and an array of parent, family, community and professional places), in our own eyes 'sacred' status, valuing Connelly and Clandinin (1995). This also was very much like how the traditional Maroons gave attachment to their land and to specific geographical sites, which they gave a particular valence arising out of the sacredness of their treaties, in how they anchored their conception of history and the importance they accorded to their social and cultural values. We created our own veritable learning community (our village/community).

However, the Sankofa Learning Centre despite committed work and the educational success of our children over the duration of my participation in the innovation did not grow to be the economic/business success that it promised. The reasons for this are many, though in my opinion, we, as 'home educators as maroons', with our placing of great emphasis on our independence, self-sufficiency and survival based on a dynamic sense of community, rather than surviving as a profitable business contributed to our lack of success in the financial sphere.

For us in the Sankofa Learning Centre, symbolic of those Maroon treaties was our historical anchoring included with the Africentric idea, our children successes, and own celebration of what we achieved rather than promotion of our business/commercial interests.

It is in this way that the home education innovation sought to make an impact, with its thrust to ensure as much as is possible that the costs for parents were minimal and that their contributions had financial value (as in a time bank). We operated within tight margins, and in so doing, a great deal centred on trust (parents paying their fees on time), frugality/viability (being careful with expenditure) and getting the maximum out of the resources at our disposal (more for less). This, of course, does not mean that business was not our interest, but with so many parents involved and their children's educational interest uppermost it was not surprising that the economic thrust was secondary. This was also the same with me, given the nature of my recompense for playing a leading role in the initiative and the arrangements made with Eden, which was at best minimalist.

Home education as the thrust of the innovation worked well. It demonstrated what was possible in a simple way. However, it did not work so well for advancing its business/commercial interests. Economics was certainly a driver in the development of the Sankofa Learning Centre, but its social enterprise focus gave too much weight to altruism in the swaying of our business decisions. This attitude seemed always to place economics as secondary, despite our diverse communication in this sphere, which would consider how such a perspective compromised our educational success.

Over the period there were never enough monies coming in to run the innovation as efficiently and as effectively as we wanted without tremendous sacrifice. Charles in his thesis communicated the nature of his substantive financial loss and informed on the sacrifices of “home educators as Maroons”.

This situation was further exacerbated by our own marginalisation and disadvantage, again much like the traditional maroons, who were politically, socially and economically marginalised in their societies as a result of meagre support from government in progressing their establishments/settlements. We as ‘home educators as maroons’ expected some modicum of support for our initiative with home education, being part of the UK system of educational arrangements. This was so, particularly with the avowed tenet ‘that the money should follow the child’ in their education. However, in practice this did not materialise and many parents felt that they were penalised for making the decision to ‘home educate’, rather than be supported by their local education authorities. The nature of support from local authorities to a large extent was outside our control, but in our charge were the secondary focus given to our finances and in the imprisoning of our initiative in

naivety. This, together with vulnerabilities and a dependency upon the external economic system, over which we had no control, for parents to raise funds for fee payment, meant that for many their financial experience was a roller coaster over the life-span of the Sankofa Learning Centre. The quick fixes, restructuring and redesigning brought no resolve to Sankofa's structural issues and financial demise. It would be the same for me, for the knock-on effect impacted the innovation substantively, and as a consequence my own livelihood, in financial terms, but also in terms of distress, inconvenience and pain and suffering.

Distress here included embarrassment (inability to pay debts including college fees to pay for involvement in this PhD), anxiety (not knowing where monies would be coming from), disappointment (feelings of being unsupported) and loss of expectation (realisation of living someone else's dream). Inconvenience includes wastage of time and/or effort as a result of the Sankofa Learning Centre's situation and lack of resources (over-stretched and stressed). Pain and suffering are the more extreme forms of distress and inconvenience (ill-health). These feelings on one hand could be little more than a relatively minor annoyance. But in other ways, they caused worry, loss of sleep, wasted time and prolonged ill-health. All of these factors impacted my productivity and performance and though they are considered often as non-financial items, they can be costed financially.

The weaver, who previously was lacking in oxygen, is now hyperventilating and suffering serious respiratory distress from too much carbon dioxide (hyperventilation), as thoughts strain to reframe the thrust of the home education innovation and impute/inspire new values to be included in the Africentric Idea.

Engagement here, valuing Scharmer's (2000) model depicting change at the reframing and regenerating levels, is where I come to fully recognise the nature of my own 'stuckness'.

In my own thoughts I begin to consider that the Africentric Idea appreciated through the symbols of the Sankofa bird and the traditional Maroon, as it is cannot progress the innovation. Incongruence emerged as I viewed the symbols of the Sankofa bird and Maroon being heavily weighted to the past and in need of reframing. This was not a challenge as to their value, but with respect to experience, awareness and consciousness of the process of spiritualisation (becoming aware of the subtle dimensions of change), they were in need of repositioning (renewal and re-invention), in order to take account of the emerging future. The imprisoning of the African Voice was at the heart of my own 'stuckness'.

The Africentric Idea so appreciated; I arrived at a place where I begin to consider that I would have to begin again on a completely new footing in order to progress. It is in this way that I returned to the shuttle and the knotted weft in the shuttle, pursuant of the continuing creation of my Cloth. In this activity I found some of the knots in the weft had been released. This included the issues raised previously as being important but somehow, simply in their raising they could moved to the boundaries of my thoughts. This allowed for deeper inquiry and responsiveness to concerns, which straddled my experiences in the Sankofa Learning Centre and Mandiani Project, directed to my embrace of the African Voice, as depicted symbolically in the mythical Sankofa Bird and the historicity of the traditional Maroons as my way of being, and that of the collective. My weft is tangled, the shuttle is stalled, I am staring at my Cloth stilled and on the loom table is strewn an arraignment of unfinished

business.

According to the Lewin-Schein model, the highest leverage point is located at the stage of unfreezing (Schein 1989). Here, the key challenge to leaders at this stage of the change cycle is how to enable the uncovering of the layers of organisational reality that will afford movement from change at the reframing level (new mental models and cultural assumptions) to change at regeneration level (deep purpose and common will) (Scharmer 2000, p. 10).

Scharmer informs that shifting from level 3 to level 4 involves shifting from reflective learning (Type I: learning from the experiences of the past) to generative learning (Type II: learning from emerging futures). In this shift, Scharmer continues, there is need for a sound methodology that takes an individual/team/organisation from the reflective space (level 3) to the space of deep intention of will (level 4) (Scharmer 2000, p. 10). For me presencing and Theory U is that sound methodology for understanding the underlying processes behind deep change, and of enabling the enacting of such change processes. Its inclusion in my living theory methodology toolkit (on my loom) affords my journey towards deepening my ways of knowledge creation and knowing (Scharmer 2000, p. 11).

It is in this way that I return to my visit to Elmina Castle and place, the poem, 'I made the Journey' (Phillips 2004), on the warp beam. The poem is as follows:

I made the Journey" which follows:

I made the Journey
 I made the journey
 To the door of "no return" in Elmina Castle
 To complete my personal "birthing"
 Heeding the call of my ancestors to come Home

Feeling ill-prepared as they walked with me at Elmina, They counselled ... use lived
 experience to understand
 Why your life's journeys have brought you here
 Know who you are ... who you are not
 Know where you are from ... where you are from not
 Search out your footprints
 Respecting those of others
 Tell the story ...inform
 Disassociate fiction from fact
 The values to behold though blurred are still in tact
 Remember
 We are one with you
 You are one with us
 But more than that spiritually
 We are one
 One are we

In ancestral years
 Two hundred, three hundred, four hundred
 May have been amassed
 Since through that door of no return
 My ancestors reluctantly passed
 Unbounded or chained I may never know
 And questions of how they came to be in this place
 Or from which lands they came
 Or how far they had journeyed - near or far
 May well remain unanswered - I cannot be precise
 But through this door of no return I know they left
 I know this place ... the walls ... the smell
 Elmina Castle ... this cell
 Here too, Yes! I did dwell
 Remember ...
 They are one with me
 I one with them
 And more than that spiritually
 We are one
 One are we

I know how they must have felt
 Being chased, caught ... captured
 I know they gave their best
 Dancing and weaving through obstacles
 Skirting pass outstretched arms ... flailing nets
 Bravely attempting to escape captivity
 Or would have ... if not surprised
 I know the conditions they faced
 When journeying or ensnared
 Ashamed, insulted and full of fear
 Shackled, hungry, in a whirl of despair
 And I know the treatment meted out to them
 In those darkened dungeons

Or in the light, made dark by the actions of evil men
 Oh they raped our women in those cells
 Remember ...they are one with me
 I ... one with them
 And more than that spiritually
 We are one
 One are we

I know their sense of loss
 I know the pain they suffered
 And I know too, that in their defiance
 They were caused to suffer more
 Certainly, certain death
 It is to their condition that I bear witness
 And awaken the spirituality within me
 To make claim to and reclaim
 That which has been bequeath to me
 My ancestral inheritance
 I call on the ancestral spirits that flourished
 In those great kingdoms of Nubia, Egypt, Ethiopia
 Of Ghana, Mali, Songhay, Zimbabwe ... others
 To say I know Elmina ...
 Here was not the beginning
 Remember ... they are one with me
 I am one with them
 But more than that spiritually
 For we are one
 And one are we

Yet it's to Elmina I've come
 I am in the cell from which you left, never to return
 Ancestral spirits you brought me here
 And willingly I've journeyed
 Retracing the path from whence you came
 Pacing the ground with measured steps
 How wretching the experience must have been
 To leave ... never to return
 Defiant I now return
 And kneel in the place you would have knelt
 With arms outstretched
 Remind myself of the awful scenes
 That must have been the prelude
 To the tortuous journey over the seas on slave ships
 Then on to the killing fields of the Americas
 Remembering ... One with me
 One with You
 But more than that spiritually
 We are one
 One are we

Yet, I know your calling is not to avenge,
 But to regain inner peace

That unified sense of being
 Which offers us a release
 For you, it is the impossible return
 For me, it is knowing I have been here too
 Which completes my birthing
 Not to be born again, for in personal years,
 Over two-score and ten has passed
 Since entering this physical world
 But my enjoining with you
 I've bared my feet,
 To leave my footprints here beside yours
 With you, I'll turn my back on that door of no return
 Walking away... knowing the cycle is now complete
 Remembering ... One with me

One with You
 But more than that spiritually
 We are one
 One are we

Some urge ...I should forgive
 Forgive those who perpetrated such an inhumanity
 On their fellow women and men
 Those whose evil actions caused so much hurt
 Those who's profiteering
 The product of Africans suffering ...continue to thrive
 Those who in their wrong-doings
 Have sought no forgiveness
 Those who made my ancestors symbols of hate
 Forgive ... higher authorities will make that call
 Yet there is no hatred in my heart ...
 Love is its foundation ...
 Akwaaba ...I welcome strangers again,
 But I'll be wiser when men state their mission - I must
 I'll never forget the betrayal of trust
 Know ...my ancestors are with me
 I ...with them
 But more than that spiritually
 We are one
 One are we

With the journey to Elmina now complete
 Reflecting I know there are many
 Who have made their footprints large
 I owe them a great deal ...for laying the foundations
 And though I felt ill-prepared
 It is their strength, wise counsel, simplicity of being
 That prepared the way ...forged a way of being
 In which belief in an inner spirituality ...
 Respect for others ...
 Honesty and a sense of responsibility
 Self-reliance and respect for hard work

Resourcefulness, belief in education
 Resilience, courage and integrity
 Informed an identity – of the African in me
 Know ... That my ancestors are with me
 I am with them
 But more than that spiritually
 We are one
 One are we
 Blossoming in a wholesome unity
 (Phillips 2004)

My mind is alert with reframing thoughts as I survey its content. It is with an open mind, open heart and open will that I expose 'I Made the Journey' to Scharmer's second source and cycle of learning, as I discover this signal event anew on the warp beam. It is scrutinised through the heddles, which the harnesses raise and bring each relevantly into play, by scoping change and seeking to effect transformation. Presencing is integrated with harnesses and alongside the not so secure living contradictions that has been troubling for me over the course of my living theory thesis. However, re-engagement with my journey to Elmina Castle discovers new meaning with the surfacing of my 'African Birthing' as a 'rites of passage event' and a signalling of the challenge of my becoming (in Appendix Six) I give greater detail on my African birthing as a rites of passage event). It is here that I am challenged to rediscover Africa, renew my mission and to tell my African Great Story.

Accessing Deep Levels of Knowing

In engagement with Scharmer's (2000) "presencing", my valuing of Scharmer's second source of learning – the coming of the future into presence (the becoming present), it is the forming of the thought of being and becoming in my learning, living and working that is the foundational in appreciating a transforming self. It would lead to profound quality change and innovation in the weaver's wisdom, ways of being and becoming, and life and professional practice. It is in this way that

a new way opens up, freeing my learning, living and working towards focus on my future highest possibilities. Two important symbols (Sankofa bird and Maroon) in my African Voice, are suspended and it is with this act I set about clearing the loom table as engagement with Scharmer's (2000) innovation moves to a deeper level. The shuttle is stilled, awaiting awakening to journey in a 'presencing' way of being and becoming.

It is in this way that I "let go and let come" embracing new voices in my African Great Story. In the following Weave on the upward swing of Scharmer's "U" (2009), I tap the collective collaborating with my son, Kamau Phillips, to engage with family. I also surface new perspectives (personal and universal) in commitment to the African Voice and the Great Work, my Great Passion, (Berry 2000) to be in the room in complementarity. It is this emergent vision and commitment that I would see "live" in my storytelling in Turning Point and crystallise as my valuing social living pedagogy. This is foundational in my inquiries, whilst I am reaching out toward my fullest co-creative future possibilities. I "retreat" as I seek profound change in my learning, living and working.