Remembering the Unseen: Healing across Generations with Thozi Theko-Oum Transcript

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Introduction to Family as Sacred

Hey friends, I'm your host, Dr. Elizabeth Samantha, the intuitive psychiatrist. Many times there are parts of our life that are very sacred. And one of those parts is this family.

We all got family, some family we're cool with, other family were not so cool. Some family we see on a regular basis, and there is some family, unfortunately, that we don't see, we do not know about, We do have the history on.

And that is unfortunate for many, many reasons. because sometimes there's the stories. What we need to know about our lineage are incredibly important and live within us.

And our next guest is an expert on helping to heal families, family systems. She does it in such a unique way. a family and systems constellation facilitator, a life coach.

She is a wisdom keeper, speaker on African spirituality, and does it in a way that is able to really speak to the soul and touch the heart. Ma Tozi Teko'um, welcome to this show.

Thank you. especially for mentioning the sacredness of family. So I'm looking forward to our conversation around that, the secretness or family Well, why don't we start there?

Tell us about you, your family, and really dive into what is sacred about the family union. You know, we all start thinking that life is about me. As much as Africans and indigenous people, We know that we are more than this physical being.

We knew that there's more to us than what meets the eye. We know that. And yet, in this world of modern life, maybe, we move along life if it just depends on us.

Until a time comes when we have to remember, put ourselves together, because maybe life questions you, or life challenges you. Or life invites you to Remember who you are.

I started in banking.

Ma Tozi Teko'um's Spiritual Journey

My career was in Banking. felt uncomfortable and I moved into voluntary work in the inner city of Johannesburg, serving really homeless and unemployed people, becoming a pastoral assistant, suggestions that I must study theology.

Because you start feeling like there's something that i need to do that is more than just me. I attempted to study the theology and it felt like it was removing me from my spirituality.

And so I move into what is this about? What is calling? And through the church, through this progressive inner city church I get to be introduced to the Inca, Andean tradition.

My eyes just blew open in remembering my African-ness. And I wondered about that because I grew up in an urban environment and I thought, what am I remembering?

You know, because it felt like there was a cellular remembering that was happening. What am I remembering? And so I started doing talks. I was invited to do talks on African spirituality from that which I remember.

And what was interesting is I wasn't invited by an Anglican priest to come and speak in churches on Africa's spirituality. When we know, when we remember that in South Africa and many countries that were colonized, the brainwashing of promoting the other against our way of being, our ways of doing things.

is more dominant in a church environment. And so I wasn't sure whether she knows what she's doing when this priest invited me, but of course she knew she was progressive and she is smart.

I found myself addressing people, some looked and were the same age as my grandfather at the time. The more I was talking about our truth, our connectedness to as Africans, Our connected to everything, to all things, all creation.

Their memory, their remembering brought tears down their eyes. And I knew that we are remembering as a collective. And I saw the importance of that. The importance doing these talks, the important of our collective remembering.

So when I came across family and systemic constellations, it looked very familiar. It felt very family. Their experience was to remember the orders of love.

Life has order, you know, and in Family Constellation we bring that down even to the orders of love. In family, families are made out of Love. We may, when we are in pain, we may forget that that's a space of LOVE.

And it's space for growth. It's the space to reconnecting to self. and it is the place of sacred love And so the sacredness of family starts there, that families fundamentally are made out of divine love.

I want to believe that God wanted to see God's self through God creation. And family is that space where we can even apply our consciousness. We can apply our conscience and we can remember our God's selves.

The light, the spark that lives in all of us. And African spirituality, that is the fundamental part of what African Spirituality is about. there's a spark of God in every human being.

So when we interact as family members, we are actually lighting up that spark and enlarging it. And when you interact with neighbors and society and communities around us were actually lighting up more candles.

So for me, when you are reminding us the sacredness of family and say, let's engage on this, what does that mean and what that look like? It's incredibly profound.

You said something while you were talking. Mentioned remembering the orders of love. And I wonder if you could detail exactly what you mean by that statement.

The process reminds us of these orders. These are fundamental principles. This is everyone belongs. Everyone belongs and they belong equally. There's no individual that is born even if they pass in a family.

that cannot be acknowledged.

Orders of Love and Family Belonging

Not only are they getting acknowledged, even if they pass as infants, if even they were miscarried, this soul chose this family, chose to come through this, family even it's for a short time, and left.

In Indigenous societies, that child is never forgotten. But today we have a tendency of forgetting those. And in guni practices, they would name that chat.

Really? It didn't live. And those who come after or before, They would know that they came after somebody. who came and not lived long enough. And what we see in the process of family reconciliation or healing those in balance is that families tend to forget mentioning those that passed out of the pain.

For some time, people, it's too painful to have lost that child. Therefore, we don't talk about it. But also over time we forget. And when we consider the next generation is that because the person was not spoken about often, the Next Generation don' even mention at all.

Others get to not know that there was once someone like this. That brings imbalance in the family because that energy is still alive within the So, the first order is that we all belong and we belong equally.

So equally is, that everyone needs to be mentioned. It doesn't have to every day, but they need to know to have been acknowledged. We also belong in our rightful position.

And a firstborn is a Firstborn. and they have roles in indigenous cultures. The second born, the third born the last born all the way. But also in polygamous marriages the woman who came first stays has a position and the higher position is on it, right?

And today we have divorces but even in divorce in a process of doing this healing and balancing the system is that we also say The second woman, the second marriage needs to acknowledge the first.

Interesting. And in both genders, you do say you came first to the woman who came, first and probably left. Or if their children are here amongst us, we acknowledge that your mom came fast or your dad came You know, the other dad is to acknowledge that your dad came first.

That is a touchy. It sounds like very important conversations that need to happen, but I can see how it can be a bit of a touching subject talking about what happened before, especially if people have tried to forget.

or too much to talk about it. Are there specific practices, exercises that help you when you're in these kind of hot environment, hot situations, you help people move in the direction of communicating about this?

You know, there's never a moment where there is this hot topic. We find ourselves stuck or find ourself in a crossroads and we say, what's going on? Do I need to see a therapist?

Feminine constellation is just one of the tools that help us see those hidden dynamics that are alive in us. And that is usually an energy, a feeling of discomfort, of feeling stuckness, the feeling that my career is not moving anywhere.

Then we say, Let's hear what the field, the morphogenic field can tell us. Are you feeling stuck? What is happening in your life? And then we place a person in a circle of seekers, people who want to support other people's healing.

So it's usually a workshop space. And it's a very gentle process where we get to see that as you're standing here with a representative, as your representative so that you are not retraumatized, we use a representatives in that space.

This person is standing with their hunched back, or this person standing as if they are about to fall. What's happening? In that situation, we may bring your mother or your father to stand behind you, which is one of those orders of love that wherever we are, we walk around with the energies of our parents behind us.

And so in this space we come with a knowing of that. So as a facilitator, you just place a representative of a parent behind this. person. And sometimes the process then reveals that maybe even mom was weak.

Mom struggled with something or dad struggled. So we put mom or dads parents behind them. You find that there was some kind of trauma that happened. What we then do in the process, we acknowledge that which is showing up.

So what could be showing out could that the trauma that is show up through you didn't start with you. It comes from the previous generation. And you find that if they lost a child, that it was too painful to speak about that child.

That child is not acknowledged. We get to see what is that the hidden dynamic that is alive in this family. We get to see that. we acknowledge that baby and everybody in the system start breathing.

There's balance, right? Or mom or dad lost their big love. Somebody went to war and never came back.

Using Family Constellations for Healing

and you marry somebody else and that energy is still around you and the offspring in this family have tendencies of that other person. All that is needed is Oh, I acknowledge you.

I know you, but I did move on. And that shift truly has ripple effects. People go home and find that the energy is different. It's so interesting in many ways.

I'm thinking about what you're saying, but it's almost as if you are addressing unfinished business with many of these things. It sounds like when there are issues within the family, there's some business that needs to be taken care of.

Yes. And it all comes from love because it is love that keeps us connected to those that our souls met. Even those we have met in conflict, we've seen people who've killed or were killed meeting the person, the soul that killed them and having a moment of seeing one another and acknowledge what is and we don't even have to know the history what we do as a facilitator sitting with a client i didn't say what happened to your grandfather because we seeing.

his imbalance in the field. What happened to your grandfather? And the person says, actually, I don't know. They mentioned a war that happened at such and such a place, but we don t have details.

That in itself is enough for these souls. they get acknowledged that that happens. And if that We then realize that it's not your starkness. Then you say, you're able then to say thank you, grandfather, for the life that you've given us.

But the rest, I leave it here now. Now that I know I can't leave. because I have carried it in my subconscious mind and consciously out of love. It's so useful because, you know, I'm African American and I am Ugandan as well.

And a big, a huge chunk of my family was unfortunately passed because of the genocide in Uganda. And the war, like it was a rough, rough war. And there are lots of people who are unaccounted for.

We haven't gotten to say goodbye to, not in the proper way. So I can see, within Africa, there's so many conflicts that have happened. But even here in The United States, There are conflicts.

Like we had the civil war in Vietnam. There were lots conflicts where we've lost people. And I can just see how powerful this way of healing can be. But I think sometimes there's a little bit of a stigma about talking about things, but this is something that you can do on your own.

You don't have to have a family member come with you to this. That's the beauty of it. Sometimes we are ready to heal, but the rest of the family is not ready.

You do not have bring your family. People have said to me, I want to bring my family, you know, I'm trying to put them together so that we can come to a family constellation workshop.

No, no. You come on your own. you are represented by people who know nothing about your family. Nothing about you. And you place them in this circle and you sit back next to me as a facilitator and have these people who know nothing about your story begin to express, express even the way, even their mannerism, the ways your people would have spoken or done things or uttered certain things.

And as the facilitators I then move the process by acknowledging what we are seeing. And if there's something I don't understand, I come back and ask you, what could this be representing if this person's hand is just hanging?

And someone said, oh, my father's lost an eye. And here it shows up with somebody who's got two full hands, but the hand is doing something different.

And I asked the question, you know, just merely asking the questions from the client who then says, oh, and the representative confirms that, yeah, I don't feel my arm.

And now that is representing probably part of the biggest of traumas, one of biggest trauma in the family. Now it gets acknowledged. That acknowledgement is what we breathe into and we bring balance.

And with that breathing, there's harmony. Then you go home. And then, you know, we will finish the constellation. The constellation leads to the next thing and the thing, and then there's harmony all around.

And even people that are sitting in the circle can feel when a constellation is complete, when the healing of that particular issue has completed. We end the constellations, right, for that person.

Maybe we do another constellation in a day. we can do three constellasions because they take more or less 25 minutes to 45 minutes. to go through whatever the issue and allow it to unfold, the revelation and the unfolding and healing.

So then people go home and they say, oh my goodness, I got a phone call from my aunt who's not been feeling well and she's just said this to me. So we see ourselves as the doers of the work in helping heal ourselves but also heal ourself through our families or have our family heal through us.

So being in the room helps in that way, but you don't have to all be in there. It's just you. And of course you're working with your issue. You cannot come to a workshop and say, I want to work on my sister.

I'm going to look on Mike rather work. On your own issue, and I think that's a really important point because I. That there, there are some of us were like, Oh, want a fix.

Help that person. But about that. you come into the process because you are feeling a discomfort, you can come in and say, my relationship with my sister is not good.

And you may find that we start with you, your representative, and you find out the issue is from death and there was an issue there that is manifesting as a duplicate of what was left unfinished in the previous generation.

It's not about your sister and therefore the sister does not even feature in that particular constellation. But sometimes we eventually do put the Sister because There could be something that needs to be said or there could something mom needs see with her children or dad needs with his children.

But in most cases, you're looking at your own stuff and you realize that your stuff has nothing to do with what you think is going on.

Personal Healing, Ancestral Entanglements, and Practices

Yeah, that's why I think this is such a powerful modality, just because it's a mirror of, I feel like in many ways it kind of gets at the things that are underneath that we need to address, but don't, like the subconscious, the unconscious, all that kind goes into that terrain.

And after a constellation and there's healing, are there any practices that you recommend for people to do to maintain healthy relationships or healthy family dynamics?

Yeah. In any constellation that I do, knowing that we may work with one or two people or three people at the most, I always want people to go home knowing that there's something that they can do.

So I speak to the orders of love. I spoke to that, belonging and belonging equally. Place your siblings accordingly,

right? Imagine this, you stand in front of your parents, our parents who always stand behind us and their parents behind them and so on and all the way back to source.

But we, as we stand in front of our parents, the first born, you will stand from right to left. The father is on your right, right? The mother is one your left, The first one will be going that way also.

First born second born third towards the left place your, even in your journal, I'm not saying you call home and you have your sisters and brothers stand in front of whoever and no, you can do this in a journal.

Say I am first born, then there was a brother that I lost, dies in an infant. Then I have a half brother and then I had the half sister in my case, right?

One of the healings I did was because also there's another dynamic that happens in families, entanglements. When people die young, some people get born and they feel like they've taken the spirit of that person that died.

For example, my mother lost a baby sister when she was nine and the sister was seven. And they were on their own in Malawi. having been taken to relatives because their parents were working in South Africa.

So the first four children, there were 12 of them, the four first children were taken, to Malawi. The first two were boys and then my mother and this baby sister.

My mother was the main caretaker of her sister and she lost her. We don't know what that trauma did. And as a child, nine years, you forget eventually.

I'm the first born to my mother. There was an energy that felt like me and my mom are not mother and daughter. We are sisters. interpret that. But in my Harald life, and of course, eventually the exposure to feminine constellations, I placed my mother and her siblings accordingly.

And of, course I stand in front of my mom and my father, but I had to place the first born of the family, my uncle Benjamin, then uncle Derek, the sister they lost, my uncle Dennis and all the way to the last born, because they were 12, and I was able to then stand in front of my mother.

I'm not of this generation. And that healed my relationship with my mother because this entanglement, as much as it feels like sister, sister relationship, it was not healthy.

And so that's one way of, that is something you can do. Put orders, put yourself according to your siblings. So people, what they do then, they go home and say, and ask, mom, did you ever get a miscarriage or an abortion or ask him with respect because you actually come to know in a family constellation, compassion shows up, a lot of compassion and understanding.

So people go home with deep, deep respect, even if they have questions to ask. And they don't ask the questions if there are not ready and they feel that the other person is not reading.

They will find another way of saying, how do I place people accordingly? Right? An aunt could wander off or Aunt, mother's sister, brother or father's brother, one does often get lost and that person was never reclaimed and back to the family.

Or somebody ended up in a mental institution. Somebody ended in prison with a life sentence. We don't talk about those people. But when we honor that this person lived, might have had a different fate, but that person belonged with us.

So we place them in their rightful position. Those you're bringing order, you are bringing those orders of love into play. Oh, wow, yeah. It's so, so important.

I wonder, as you've been doing this for a while, what are you hoping to see within the world if people are able to do

the work and participate in family constellations?

Constellation workshop is my work. So I would love to have as many people as often as possible in the room. But what I would like to see in the world is that which was taken apart.

Really what i would to like see is recognizing that a lot of what we know, what brings harmony in our system was taking away by colonization in spaces, modernization, and so on.

Remembering Ancestry and Closing Reflections

What we do know is that we didn't bring ourselves onto this planet. We came through two people. Who came though two peoples? Who comes through to people?

And when we imagine the entourage that you walk with, you are strengthened as a being. Because if you keep going back, you go back to source of all things.

So you don't have to be in a workshop to know that, to remember that. Place yourself in front of your entourage. Turn around for a moment and thank them.

and look forward into your future, which is usually their biggest of dreams. Your ancestor's dream, that's what you are. So when you have acknowledged that and you turn around and your look into you future with this entourage behind you, you're reconnecting with the truth of who you So that's what I wish.

So for me, this process is about helping us remember that. Yes, remembering the rich history of people who have come before us and the strength, the support that we can draw on if we remember that connection.

I think it is just incredibly profound. And I'm sure that our listeners will definitely want to connect with you. What's the best way for them to Facebook, on Tozi Terko on Facebook and on Instagram too, tozi.terko at gmail.com.

Those are the ways. Well, thank you. Thank you, Ma Tozzi so much for being on the show. You have such, you have a such a unique background. And you are very thoughtful in your approach and I can just feel how you bring people together and how even just your presence is healing.

Thank you so much for being on the show. If you haven't heard it yet today, I appreciate you. The soul in me honors the soul and you." If you'd like to see more episodes like this, please subscribe or click here.

And friends, if this spoke to you, leave a comment below. We would love to hear from you!