

THE CASE OF A NOBODY

(Taken from "Healing the Hidden Wounds of Racial Trauma" by Kenneth V. Hardy www.reclaimingjournal.com)

Fourteen-year-old Assad sat nervously shaking his left leg while staring off to a far-off place. He appeared disengaged and verbally unresponsive to questions posed by his therapist while passively expressing disdain for having to be present. Intermittently, he would check the time on his cell phone which produced an audible sigh.

After twenty minutes of attempts to engage Assad, a break-through finally came. He looked at his therapist and asked in a very soft voice: "Why are you wasting your time?"

"What do you mean?" his therapist responded.

"With me," he state flatly.

"Well, I don't consider this a waste of time at all. In fact, there are way in which you remind me of myself years ago," the therapist noted.

Assad quickly dismissed the claim and noted, "There is no way I can remind you of you or anybody else!"

Surprised by Assad's expression of such strong emotion, the therapist cautiously asked, "What do you mean?"

"I mean, I'm NOBODY... I ain't s--- and never gonna be s---... and that's a fact, so you are wasting your time."

"I just wonder whose voice that is that you are repeating, because that is not how I see you or what my experiences with you has been. I see you as a gifted young brother."

Assad became quickly animated and slightly agitated as he stated: "then you are clueless Doc... and WHOSE voice?... WHOSE voice? You wanna know whose voice? It's everybody's voice. It's my mom's voice, which is why she don't come around more. It's my dad's voice, which is why he has never stepped up. It's the f---in' cops' voices, which is why they just dis' us, beat us, and kill us like we are a bbunch of f---in' animals. It's the teachers' voices who come right out and tell you in so many words that you dumb as s--- and you ain't going to be nothing. C'mon Doc, you better get with it. You can't be as dumb as you trying to sound, dog. Look at Obama and all those smarts that he has. He gets the same message. They let him know that 'Yo, you might be President and s---, but you still ain't nobody... as far as we are concerned you are just another nigger!"