

Iya Oloruntomi

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katreina Oloruntomi Ifafunmilayo is an esteemed daughter, sister and Godmother who serves as a Conduit for diasporic liberation. She has over a decade of professional expertise as an educator and community organizer working within diverse environments and stages of life. She is an initiated priestess in the West African IFA/Orisa tradition, an HBCU Alumna and has upheld a commitment to healing and mastering herself through *The Sacred Art of Self Study (SASS)*.

Oloruntomi's life and leadership are rooted in the belief that *"in all things, love is our solution"*.

It wasn't until eighteen years into her life that she developed an appreciation for what it meant to be both Nigerian *and* born in America. Until then, knowing exactly where her paternal lineage came from was a source of embarrassment and shame. This, among other distinct traumas, led her to significant Self-neglect. After coming into the affirmation of her identities, an intimate journey into remembering her divinity was ignited. She received a dream from who she now knows was her paternal grandmother with guidance to elevate the middle name she'd been given at birth: Oloruntomi, which means *"God is enough for me"*. This

was the beginning of her journey into forgiveness, intergenerational healing and exploring the true definition of unconditional Self-love.

Alongside her personal commitment to ongoing spiritual, mental and emotional development, Iya Oloruntomi is blessed to be a student of Oluwo Ifasola Onifade, Chief Priest of Ile Amedeope located in Osogbo, Nigeria; Elder Yeye Luisah Teish, Osun Priestess and author of [Jambalaya](#) and Baba Sangosakin Ajala of Ile Iba Orisa.

After graduating from Spelman College with a Bachelor's degree in Psychology, Oloruntomi joined Teach for America and moved to Detroit where she taught 7-10th grade. She credits her students for teaching her the importance of authenticity, ongoing and honest self-reflection as well as Self accountability. Following her time in the classroom, Oloruntomi served as an instructional coach and curriculum designer where she developed social justice educators who were both in-service and pre-service. During this time, she also designed and facilitated Equity and Identity development which solidified the vision for her first company: [Cultivating Liberation](#).

Since the 2017 inception of [Soar Higher You Never End, Inc.](#), Oloruntomi has been on an ancestral assignment to build a *sustainable movement rooted in Diasporic healing*. While she has many ancestors who support her path, Oloruntomi is heavily guided by her maternal great-grandmother, Helen Stockton, who offers a legacy of faith-based women's organizing work and her paternal grandmother, Amdalat Hassan, who offers a legacy of isese (traditional) wisdoms from the Yoruba people.

In 2016, after having envisioned solely focusing her work on Black *girls*, Oloruntomi received an ancestral assignment to launch Soar Higher You Never End... and, to start with Black *women*. This was during the final stages of regaining her mobility after having split her ankle bone and being told she would 'most likely' never walk again if she did not accept the suggested surgery. Prior to the inception of SHYNE, Inc. Oloruntomi had dedicated

over 10 years studying and healing herself from codependency, food addiction as well as clinically diagnosed depression, anxiety disorder, ADHD and emotional conditions that impacted the health of her interpersonal relationships. She

deconstructed her entire being and found that *"through this process, I clarified my socialization vs. my authentic humanity. I realized that the source of all my struggles were spiritual and intergenerational. What I was dealing with was much deeper than I would've ever imagined. SASS helped me to connect more intimately with myself, which ultimately helped me truly remember who I AM. Through this, I was able to discover practical methods for actualizing sustainable healing from internalized oppression and the impacts of trauma inheritance."*



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Oloruntomi's approach to liberation combines spirituality with psychology, sociology and education. This mission is deeply personal for her as she has first-hand awareness of the correlation between our mother/father/family relationships and our own ability to live in an authentic version of ourselves. Oloruntomi is notorious for the saying: *"we teach through being; we lead through living"*. All of her strategies stem from her own reconciliation of the complexities in what she refers to as *The Bottom 3 (TB3)* and wholeheartedly surrendering to the path of "Ori" (spiritual head, highest consciousness, destiny).

Oloruntomi envisions a world that sees possibility in eradicating suffering and restoring righteousness through centering truth and healing; Self-first. She feels blessed to have been chosen to live her life on a divine assignment to support the realization of a world where spirit is at the core of how we love, live, lead, behave and make decisions; while ensuring alignment with fulfilling our Ancestral agreements.