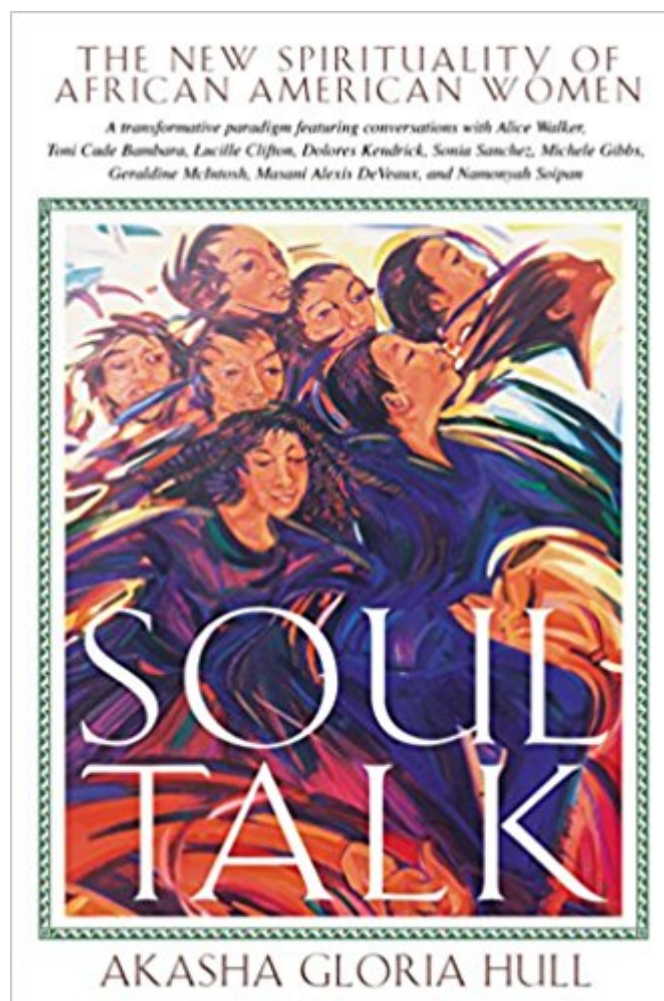


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Soul Talk: The New Spirituality Of African American Women



Synopsis

— A celebration of the journey of African-American women toward a new spirituality grounded in social awareness, black American tradition, metaphysics, and heightened creativity. — Features illuminating insights from Alice Walker, Toni Cade Bambara, Lucille Clifton, Dolores Kendrick, Sonia Sanchez, Michele Gibbs, Geraldine McIntosh, Masani Alexis DeVeaux and Namonyah Soipan. — By a widely published scholar, poet, and activist who has been interviewed by the press, television, and National Public Radio's All Things Considered

From the last part of the twentieth century through today, African-American women have experienced a revival of spirituality and creative force, fashioning a uniquely African-American way to connect with the divine. In *Soul Talk*, Akasha Gloria Hull examines this multifaceted spirituality that has both fostered personal healing and functioned as a formidable weapon against racism and social injustice. Through fascinating and heartfelt conversations with some of today's most creative and powerful women--women whose spirituality encompasses, among others, traditional Christianity, Tibetan Buddhism, Native American teachings, meditation, the I Ching, and African-derived ancestral reverence--the author explores how this new spiritual consciousness is manifested, how it affects the women who practice it, and how its effects can be carried to others. Using a unique and readable blend of interviews, storytelling, literary critique, and practical suggestions of ways readers can incorporate similar renewal into their daily lives, *Soul Talk* shows how personal and social change are possible through reconnection with the spirit.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book concludes with the reverberating, "Am I accomplishing my work in the world?" According to author and scholar Hull, African-American women are answering this question by integrating political identity, spiritual consciousness and creativity. To expound upon this theme Hull has skillfully synthesized the reflections of nine very interesting, highly articulate women, more than half of whom are well-known authors such as Alice Walker, Toni Cade Bambara and Sonia Sanchez. All are friends to whom Hull put the initial query, "How do you see yourself as a spiritual being and how does that spirituality manifest in your life and work?" The answers reveal a far-flung yet supple spirituality that embraces many New Age ideas that Bambara neatly called "everybody's ancient wisdom." Hull not only allows the women their individuality, wise in such a group, but also fluidly organizes her conversations with them into a half-dozen themes, exploring the influence of spiritual practice on such topics as communications with ancestors, race, creativity and healing. Hull is writing for African-American women, who "wear our politicized identities every hour of every day, [and so] lean toward spiritual practices that are concrete and can easily be incorporated into daily life." However, the explorations and truths that waft up from this powerful, practical and nourishing gumbo make interesting reading for anyone. In this intelligent work of the heart and spirit, Hull reveals the exquisite and reflective interiors of African-American women. (May) Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"Hull has given us new revelations. I have seen many of my sisters embracing a new light in their lives--African American women giving birth to brightness and walking along the river of grace and redemption. This book talks to me. Soul to soul." (E. Ethelbert Miller, author of *Fathering Words: The Making of an African American Writer*) "Akasha Hull's Soul Talk offers us a cartography of New Age Spirituality from the perspective of African American women. Embracing Spirit as a world view infused with political aspirations and creative impulses, she visions a new trinity of renewal and redemption, grounded in suffering, survival, and resistance." (Bettina Aptheker, Chair of Women's Studies, University of California, Santa Cruz) "A beautiful testament and tribute to the power of black women. Here, the one-dimensional New Age paradigm shifts to a "True Age" model for integrating spirituality, politics, and creativity. This book will help men understand why women are, and must be, in the forefront of a spiritual culture that could save us all. Ache O." (Luisah Teish, author of *Jambalaya: The Natural Woman's Book of Personal Charms and Practical Rituals*) "This is a powerful and immensely uplifting work for women of all ethnic backgrounds. The new spiritual consciousness, as revealed by the women who practice it, serves as a light by which we can

envision a better world for all beings." (MTB, Napra ReView, January February 2002)"In this intelligent work of the heart and spirit, Hull reveals the exquisite and reflective interiors of African-American women." (Publishers Weekly, starred review)"Soul Talk is a worthy tribute to Toni Cade Bambara and to the lives and work of African American women writers." (Toni Morrison, author of *Beloved* and *Paradise*)

Thanks for helping me finish school!

I loved this book. The author did an amazing job of weaving together the diverse narratives of various authors, activists, artists, and scholars with her own personal experiences.

Great read!

Purchased for a gift. I looked through it and found contents interesting. Might look to purchase for self in future

for school

I am a white woman who for years has sought to enhance my traditional concepts of religion (Christianity, Islam, Judaism etc.) by exploring alternative forms of spirituality. I was surprised and even a bit "shocked" to discover this pragmatic, mainstream, woman-of-color author. Her wide exposure, deep understanding, and ability to process a powerful and elusive spirituality--and then transmit this knowledge and experience back to the rest of us in a lucid and matter-of-fact manner--is very impressive. For those of us on the seeking path, this book is a wonderful addition to our library and spiritual community as it validates that we are not alone in our journey--regardless of race, religion, and gender.

In *Soul Talk*, Akasha Hull has interviewed African American women who openly acknowledge their otherworldly spiritual experiences. Chapters on women such as the poet Lucille Clifton show how difficult yet exhilarating it is to live in a fluid spiritual realm. That "other" world beckons irresistibly to the soul while baffling the quotidian mind. This is a truly original work of scholarship, imaginatively conceived and elegantly written.

I return to this book often as its' pages are rich with stories, narrative and insight. It helps lift the lenses through which I see the world and opens the door to new places - or old and forgotten places. Through each reading my understanding evolves. This is a book that will stay in my permanent collection and grow increasingly dog-eared with use.

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