Chicken Soup for the African American Soul

Proposal

Lisa Nichols, Co-Author

www.AfricanAmericanSoul.com
afamsoul@aol.com
Eve Hogan (Senior Editor)
**CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE AFRICAN AMERICAN SOUL**

**SUB-TITLE:** Celebrating and Sharing our Culture One Story at a Time

**RELEASE DATE:** February 3, 2004 (Is this correct? I heard January 15th)

**CO-AUTHORS:** Lisa Nichols (and Eve Hogan as senior editor)

**Keynote Statement:** *Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* is a powerful tribute to African Americans designed to acknowledge and celebrate their uniqueness and similarities through the art of storytelling.

**BOOK OVERVIEW:**

*Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* has added a little *spice* to the Chicken Soup series. This book is more edgy than the rest, more vibrant than the others, and expresses raw emotion unlike any other book in the Chicken Soup series. To truly honor the African American soul, it could be done no other way. The African American people have a story to tell—yes, one of struggle, strength, survival, and endurance, but also one of beauty, honor, love, compassion and forgiveness. *Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* honors these stories.

This book offers the readers a glimpse at not only what has been endured, accepted, fought and overcome, but also *how* this journey delivered them to laughter, forgiveness, growth and celebration. This book takes you to the core of survival, to the depths of self-acceptance and to the height of celebration.

*Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* has stories by African Americans *about* African Americans. This book, which shares the voices of nearly a hundred Black men and women, also has the blood, sweat and tears of an equal number of Caucasians who recognized that this community deserved this honor and worked to make it so. This collaborative step, this strong display of support, is a giant step forward representing many years of effort, growth and the resulting change.

*Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* will be the hand that reaches out to those who are still struggling and gives them a lift up. This book will be the hand that reaches out to shake the hand of men and women of other cultures and says, “glad you could take a moment to peer into my world.” This book will be the hand that pats a striving young black man on the back and points a young black girl in the direction that will lift her life up. This book will join the ancient hands of wisdom with the energetic hands of youth in a common understanding and acknowledgement.

Chicken Soup for the African American Soul holds in its “hands” the capability to heal, to embrace, to build, and to gently nurture all who hold it in theirs.
CHAPTER TITLES:

Celebrating Our Strength – This chapter introduces the reader to many slices of life in which strength was required, utilized and rejoiced.

From Strong Roots – A peek inside the minds and hearts of those who have gone before us and delivered great victories and lifetime lessons. Stories that affirm what we are made of – strong roots.

Triumph and Resilience – Stories that show the amazing journey of ordinary people through an extraordinary circumstance to an awe-inspiring ending.

Celebrating Our Black Men–The most powerful salute to the black men who have loved us, protected us, laughed with us, cried for us and stood beside us.

Celebrating Our Black Women – Come join us as we laugh, cry, sing and dance in honor of the Black woman and her amazing tenacity.

Compassion and Forgiveness– Experience the power of letting go and the rewards of healing as our contributors take you on their painful yet freeing journeys to find their inner peace.

Praise, Worship and Prayer – Enjoy the prayers, preaching, dancing, celebration, holy ghost, hats and healing stories that celebrate the common thread that crosses all geographical boundaries for African Americans – Church!

Lesson Learned – There is nothing like an impressive experience to make a lesson last a lifetime, come enjoy some of the rousing, funny and moving moments that have lasted a lifetime.

Making A Difference– People who have changed the way the world works through their kindness, caring and convictions and the world will never be the same.

CO-AUTHOR HIGHLIGHTS:

- Lisa Nichols is a dynamic motivational speaker and powerful advocate of personal empowerment.
- Lisa has spoken to over 200,000 people, captivating them with her heartfelt no-holds-barred messages.
- Her audience consists of educators, CEO’s, business professionals, teens, investors, Juvenile professionals, faith-based leaders and parents.
- Born and raised in Los Angeles, Lisa spends a great deal of time providing seminars in both California and Michigan.
• She is the Founder and CEO of Motivating the Teen Spirit, LLC which has impacted the lives of over 30,000 teens, prevented over 800 suicides, reunited thousands of teens with their parents, and influenced more than 575 teen dropouts to return to school.

• Lisa speaks to standing room only audiences and has been likened to such renowned inspirators as Maya Angelou and Oprah Winfrey.

• Her current 2003 speaking schedule is as listed:

  San Diego, Ca.       July 11
  San Diego, Ca.       July 12 – 13
  Los Angeles, Ca.     July 13 – 20th
  Flint, Michigan      July 28 – August 5th
  Big Bear, Ca.        August 15th – 17th
  San Diego, Ca.       Sept. 3rd
  San Diego, Ca.       Sept. 10th
  San Diego, Ca.       Sept. 17th
  Flint, Michigan      Sept. 21
  Connecticut          Sept. 22 – 24th
  San Diego, Ca.       Oct. 20th
  Flint, Michigan      Oct. 21 – 25
  Flint, Michigan      Dec. 1 – 7

AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION:

This book targets the African American audience in the following ways:

➢ Women and men who currently purchase self help books, spiritual guidance books and affirmation books.
➢ Church communities and congregations.
➢ Women and men who primarily purchase books by African American authors
➢ Chicken Soup for the Soul’s existing loyal readers as well as those who have not picked up a Chicken Soup book but because this one focuses on a new demographic, African Americans, they are now interested.
➢ Teachers who educate African American students or teach African American studies.
➢ Youth and teenagers who read inspirational writings
➢ African American college students
➢ Christian teenagers
➢ Teenagers from other cultures who have taken an extreme interest in learning the African American style.
➢ Individuals from other cultures that would like to become more informed about the African American experience.
➢ Pastors, Ministers, church leaders and motivational speakers who utilize a great deal of story telling and survival experiences in their message of empowerment.

SALES POINTS / BENEFITS OF BOOK TO TARGET AUDIENCE:

• Total book expenditures by African American book buyers in 2000 totaled $356 million!
• 67 percent of African American Book buyers noted they buy any titles by black authors, 53 percent reported titles about black issues and 26 percent specifically sited books on self-help/enlightenment. This book hits all three of these book buying incentives.
• Contributors for Chicken Soup for the African American Soul are primarily African American writers sharing stories from a large cross section of the population’s interests—self-help, entrepreneurial, from rags to riches, spiritual, success, education, sports, as well as male/female, young/old perspectives.
• The book’s release of January 15th coincides beautifully with the national holiday of Martin Luther King’s Birthday January 20th.
• February is Black History month, which creates a PERFECT launching pad for the books release.
  • Black History Month is a prime media opportunity.
  • Bookstores often feature black authors/topics in special sections for the month, have speakers and special displays.
  • Black History Month offers a reoccurring annual market thrust with direct national attention to the book and its purpose.
  • Schools and colleges feature Black History reading during February.
  • Black History Month not only targets Black book buyers, but even more so the non-black book buying community. Schools, media, churches, all focus on educating the non-black community about African American issues. (African American’s study the topic year round!)
• This is a community passionate about sharing their stories and poems (note HBO’s Russell Simmon’s Def Poetry Jam’s popularity, BET (Black Entertainment Television) features poetry and storytelling as well as every other aspect of Black Entertainment.) This is not a superficial issue; awareness and celebration of the Black culture is a profound subject that people—both African American and not, share.
• This book will contribute to the healing and inspiration of the African American community while educating the non-African American community and enhancing compassion and understanding.
• Excellent gift item for any African American—birthday, graduations and other holidays. The cover is so beautiful, it is like a gift of art in itself.
• African American studies are year-round classes in junior high schools, high schools and colleges. Chicken Soup for the African American Soul is a perfect study tool for these classes. School bookstores and libraries should also be targeted.
• The historically Black Colleges and Universities will particularly embrace this book school-wide and target it for the Afro-American studies dept.
• Black organizations—non-profits may be interested in book sales as a fundraising opportunity.
• There is immense influence from African American leaders and public figures in the arena of personal motivation—such as Oprah Winfrey, Iyanla Vanzant, Ananda Lewis and Montel Williams that helps to open the doors of interest in this book far beyond just the African American community.
• This title is widely supported by built in media vehicles
  • TV channels/shows that focus on, are produced by, directed or owned by African Americans
  • African American magazine circulations are well over 100 million, we have already been featured in Black Enterprise magazine (January ‘2003) that has a circulation of 4 million. Jet, Ebony, Vibe, O, and Essence are also prime targets for interviews, book reviews and support of this project.
  • Newspapers, we have already been featured in news article in the Los Angeles with circulation of over 1.2 million.
  • Urban, Jazz, Oldies, Hip Hop and R &B radio have already begun to embrace this project with over a dozen interviews already conducted from the West coast to the East coast.
  • Over 75 percent of Black Book buyers surveyed noted that they currently have access to the Internet either at work or at home, and almost 40 percent reported that they had purchased a book from an online retailer.
  • We have an extensive list of African American web sites, many of which were already involved in helping us solicit stories. We plan to contact them again to gain their support in promoting/announcing the book’s release.
  • Web sites are also typically starving for good, free content. We will provide sample stories that they can publish in exchange for promotion of the book.
  • Email campaign: We have a volunteer team of over 200 that have been actively helping us solicit stories and spread the word. We will utilize not only the volunteer team but all of the 2000 story contributors to help ignite a massive email word-of-mouth campaign.

COMPARABLE BOOKS IN THE MARKETPLACE:

2. God’s Leading Lady: Out of the Shadows and Into the Light, by T.D. Jakes
5. Every Day I Pray: Prayers for Awakening to the Grace of Inner Communion, Iyanla Vanzant,
6. Faith in the Valley: Lessons for Women on the Journey to Peace, Iyanla Vanzant

7. One Day My Soul Just Opened Up: 40 Days and 40 Nights Towards Spiritual Strength and Personal Growth, Iyanla Vanzant

8. Woman, Thou Art Loosed!: Healing the Wounds of the Past, T. D. Jakes

Other books authored by Maya Angelou, E. Lynn Harris and Terri McMillan, draw a huge audiences based on these authors’ history and messages of empowerment.

SALES/PROMOTIONAL:

- Lisa has already organized a national African American Soul volunteer team of over 200 professionals, speakers, writers, faith based leaders and entrepreneurs who are committed to doing whatever is requested at a grass roots level to insure the success of this book.
- She has developed a Preferred Listing Community (PLC) of people who want to be notified first when the book is released of over 2000 names (and still growing) and has access to notify an additional 4000-6000 people through volunteer team members’ existing lists. (Our focus over the next six months is to shift our focus from gathering stories to gathering names/contact info.)
- She has already been spotlighted in:
  - Black Enterprise Magazine (Jan.’ 2003 issue) with 4 million in distribution,
  - The Michigan Frontpage newspaper with 25,000 distribution,
  - Events for Christians Newsletter, Detroit, with 20,000 distribution, (featured three months in a row)
  - Wave newspaper Los Angeles, CA.
  - KJLH-FM and WROU-FM/WRNB-FM Dayton, OH and numerous websites.
- She has begun communication with the Tom Joyner team of the Tom Joyner Morning show (with a listening audience of over 8 million African American people) to receive on-going support and media attention.
- She has spoken to over 22,000 people in the church community about the upcoming book through various church presentations.
- Lisa has secured the names of all 103 Historically Black Colleges, the presidents names, addresses, phone and many emails.
- She is working with various college and university professors to achieve two goals: 1) Position CSAAS to be added to the educational curriculum for Afro American Studies in the College and Universities (starting with the Historically Black colleges, of which there are over 100. 2.) to position the book to be selected as the “book of the year” in various colleges to be read by the entire student body then followed with a speaking date from the author.
- Lisa has identified the top 200 Black Organizations to approach for any of the following partnerships to occur:
  - Organizations such as the Association of African American Women Business Owners or The Association of Black Foundation Executives to
serve as host to the CSAAS city visit by inviting 200+ guests and securing facility, supporting in PR and media.
➢ Invite Lisa to Keynote at annual events with book sales available.
➢ Purchase books for youth programs or empowerment programs that they sponsor.

This List will be made available to HCI and Chicken Soup to support in marketing efforts.

- Lisa has secured the names and data of over 200 prominent black leaders from black mayors in Alaska to West Virginia who can be influential in getting the book into mainstream and alternative education systems, youth facilities, empowerment zones and many others places.
- She received a verbal agreement from Lindsey and Associates to do the event planning of the L.A. roll out to the National tour. Barbara Lindsey founded the 10 year old Los Angeles Black Business Expo where over 40 thousand people come during a 3 day period each year. She has agreed to plan a day even and an evening event (details to be discussed later).
- Lisa has presented de Passe Entertainment with a proposal to work together on various projects (Suzanne de Passe served as the President of Motown Records for many years and is currently the Exec. Producer on Showtime at the Apollo. She has direct access to all “A” list actors/actresses. They are very interested in producing a CD, DVD and a one hour special focusing on the CSAAS stories to be televised Feb. 2004.
- Lisa has restructured her companies service delivery system from February 2003 to February 2004 to allow maximum concentration on national media tour.
- She is currently developing a proposal to be presented to Corporate Partners to underwrite an intensive national tour that would cover 40 cities and approximately, 11,852,141 people from February 2003 to February 2004. Some of the Corporations to be presented include:
  
  | Ford Motor co.       | Wal-mart |
  | McDonalds Corporation | Toyota |
  | Johnson and Johnson   | Gateway |
  | BET                   | AOL-Time Warner |
  | Pepsi-Cola            | Mercedes |
  |                       | And others not mentioned. |

- She has been invited to speak at several churches who’s combined membership exceeds 55,000 people.

**OVERVIEW OF MARKETING/PR PLAN:**

- Our goal is to be the best selling Chicken Soup book, we estimate that in order to do this we have to sell 10 million copies, so our vision is 12 million.
- Black History Month 2004, if we begin a Press Release campaign NOW, six months out, we will be well positioned to receive coverage in many of the long-lead national media outlets.
• If you have a publicist that we can work with to create and send out these press releases we’d greatly appreciate that support as publicists are generally responded more positively by media than authors promoting themselves. If you do not, however, we are prepared to move forward on this immediately.

• Chicken Soup sampler of African American Stories would be extremely useful for advance promotions of the book. Any additional press kit support you can provide would be greatly appreciated (and utilized!)

• Lisa is an extremely dynamic speaker. She provides a great radio interview and has listeners calling in crying when she shares her story and the stories we have been collecting. She is a powerful spokesperson for this book. Jack and Mark, of course, are great spokespeople for this book as well especially in reaching the white community and educating them about why this book will also touch their hearts. Eve (senior editor) does a lot of media interviews for her other books and whenever appropriate will promote this book, as well.

• Press releases sent out to radio stations just prior to the release of the book and throughout Black History Month would really help. Again, we’ll do it if there isn’t a publicist available.

• While the majority of our media research has been to African American media outlets, we feel that this book is in no way limited to African American buyers. Thus, we will have a secondary marketing campaign to mainstream audiences that reaches the hearts of the rest of the world community, featuring this book as a wonderful way to learn, grow and understand the African American experience by sharing their tears and laughter through stories.

**WORD OF MOUTH—**

• We currently have nearly 200 volunteers on our development team that are committed to seeing the success of this book and reveling in its healing impact in the community. We are launching a huge “word of mouth campaign.”

• Volunteers are doing community outreach through their friends, family, churches, organizations, schools, colleges, local media, web site links and personal and business email lists. We are inviting all of the contributors (approx. 2000 strong) to help us with this grass roots effort. Geometrically speaking, this alone is a powerful platform for reaching large numbers.

• We have thousands of addresses of people waiting for the announcement of book’s release. Our focus for the next six months (and beyond) is to grow that data base.

• Our web site, www.AfricanAmericanSoul.com, is focused on marketing the book.

**RADIO—**

• Radio advertising campaign to reach millions of listeners
  • Press releases to radio stations
  • Listing in Radio TV Interview Report (will HCI fund this?)
  • Lisa has conducted a dozen radio interviews on radio shows that target Jazz, R & B, handicapped listeners, Christians and oldies, thus far. All have asked that Lisa return when the book is complete.
• Radio is a great medium for sharing the stories on the air and having readers call in
their emotional response to the stories. We have already utilized this means for
soliciting story submission with great success and will continue to do so.

TV –
• Talk shows hosted by African Americans i.e. Montel Williams and Oprah Winfrey
etc. as well as mainstream.
• TV news shows: Good Morning America, Good Day L.A., B.E.T.
  o Again, if there is a publicist available to help with these contacts, that would be
great. If not, we have a book of contacts to these shows and will begin sending
press releases immediately.

PRINT (NEWS/MAGAZINES) –
• There are more than seventy-five African American magazines with circulation in the
millions in the U.S. and internationally many many more. The primary Black
magazines are Essence, Ebony, Jet, Vibe, Black Enterprise, as well as Oprah’s
magazine, O.
• There are hundreds of African American print news streams for circulation.
  • Press Releases and follow up contacts with PR Kit are critical.

WEB/ONLINE –
• We will target African American Web Sites to announce the book, share the stories
and post interviews with Lisa, Mark and Jack. We have an extensive list of African
American web sites.
• Dreammates.com has agreed to announce the book’s release and post an interview
with Lisa during Black History Month (3.5 million members and 200,000 new ones
each month.)

SPEAKING / OTHER—churches, organizations
• This area is HUGE. With all of the African American organizations and with Lisa’s
ability to deliver a POWERFUL message of strength and resiliency, this will be a
constant infusion for book sales.
• Lisa has already spoken to half a dozen churches with a cumulative membership of
over 20,000 members. Churches will be a huge sales market.
  o Many churches also have bookstores and newsletters that will feature the book.
• African American organizations have already begun to ask Lisa to speak at their
annual conferences. Organizations that will be approached to secure Lisa are as listed:
  o National Chapter of the NAACP
  o African American Educators of America
  o Over 10 African American National Fraternities and Sororities
  o African American Entrepreneurs Conference
  o Black Business Expo (Los Angeles)
  o African American Conference on Tour (this appears in over 7 states)
  o African American University Women
  o African American Firefighters Association
- We have a list of hundreds of additional Organizations and Associations that we can approach.
- We will also target Black Organizations for coverage in their newsletters and web sites.

**ALTERNATIVE DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS –**

- Schools and educational systems. Offered as an additional resource tool for African American Studies within the middle school, high school, college and university system. A special target on Historically black colleges.
  - Libraries
  - Black history, social studies and English teachers
- Youth servicing programs like Boys and Girls Clubs of America, YMCA, YWCA, Youth at Risk Program and many others who’s mission is to teach African American kids to love themselves and be proud of who they are.
  - Sales of the book may be appropriate for fundraisers for these service organizations.
- African American Book Club sales in 2000 totaled $33 million. There are several Black Book Clubs that cater specifically to titles such as this (we have names/web sites if you want them). Besides direct sales, book clubs are a great word-of-mouth sales generator.
  - We don’t know whether it is more appropriate for the publisher to contact book clubs, or the author. We will be happy to provide a list with contact info if you are able to contact them, if not, we will.

**TAPPING INTO THE POWER OF THE CONTRIBUTORS:**

- Many of the contributing authors who are professional speakers will also sell the books in back of room and will be a powerful platform for spreading the word.
  - Linda Coleman is the President of the Los Angeles Chapter of National Speakers Association, Ta’Shia Asanti regularly leads workshops, Darrell Andrews is an active NSA member and speaker, just to name a few. We plan to provide our contributors with information about buying/selling the book, doing book signings, and media interviews. This multiplies our promotional power by 100.
  - Many of our contributors have already begun promoting the book at their book signings, presentations and on their web sites.
Dear Maria, Bret and HCI Sales Team,

Attached you will find our Sales Sheet information. We fleshed it out—hopefully to your specifications. Since it is our goal that this book be the best selling of all the Chicken Soup books, we want to be sure you have the information you need to be properly “armed” to spread the word. We also want you to know that we are planning to do everything in our power to support this goal, and deeply appreciate all of your efforts to do so as well! There are a couple points we want to mention here that we weren’t sure belonged in your sales document, but that would serve you to know.

Since we want this book to be more expansive than just the American market, we had to think long and hard about the title. We received stories from Black people in and from various parts of the world wanting to know if they, too, could participate. While some prefer not to refer to themselves as “African Americans” because they feel it separates rather than unites, others prefer not to referred to as “Black.” We opted for the most politically correct term at present. While putting the word “American” in the title may seem to limit the audience, when all was said and done these stories truly do reflect the African American experience, which historically is quite unique in the world picture. After researching and reflecting, we feel that this title is the most powerful one for the book.

The African American experience has been a unique one—one that is a little harder to portray in a “chicken soupy” light as their journey has not just been sweet and sugary, it has been spicy like flavor of this book. This is a culture whose relatives, only a few generations back, were bought and sold as a slaves. This is a culture that, as recent as forty years ago, was not allowed to vote. This is a culture that has had to—and continues to—endure judgement, oppression and prejudice. It would be understandable to see a culture that has gone through so much falter and fail, but that has not been the case. Out of the mire, out of the ashes, this culture has risen. Out of the test, they have created the testimony.

This community has utilized their pain and hardship as inspiration to move forward and upward. They have risen with bold laughs, beautiful smiles and warm hugs. They have risen with a sense of community, family and pride matched by few, if any, other cultures. They have risen to the top of many fields—political, musical, athletic, entertaining. They have raised heroes and “sheroes,” honored not only with their own culture’s eyes, but have created icons of greatness recognized by the world culture. It is this spirit that we have aimed to capture, share and celebrate with these stories.

Other books about the African American experience are typically done by African Americans for African Americans. One of the things that uniquely positions this book, is that it is being produced and published by a mainstream brand that is not owned and operated by African Americans. This is one of the first times, if not the first, that a mainstream book truly honoring African Americans has been created through a united effort of cultures. While this is obviously a powerful and positive union, the fear that it ignites for the African American community is that the message has been watered down, or “white-washed.” In your sales efforts, if this issue is raised, we want you to know that great care has been taken to protect the voices of the African American contributors to this book, even though some of their stories were a little more “spicy” than the typical Chicken Soup book. At the same time, equally great care has been taken to protect and maintain the quality and image of the impeccable Chicken Soup brand. This has been a carefully tended to balance.
We anticipate that this book will serve to heal, inspire, recognize, and celebrate the African American community while educating the non-African American readers with new understanding, and compassion. In addition to the stories of triumph and resilience, this book contains stories by Caucasians who were compelled to share how a moment’s interaction with a Black man powerfully changed their outlook on life. It shows how a white teenager looked at prejudice through a book, deeply understood what it felt like to be discriminated against and the importance of pressing forward. This book shares stories about how African Americans discovered and overcame their own prejudices through a powerful “ah-ha” moment of self-reflection.

We see this as far more than “just another book” but a continuation of the civil rights movement. So often it is that which we fear that we oppress and harm, and it is that which we do not know or understand that we fear. It is our hope that this book will serve to amend this lack of knowledge through sharing a glimpse into the hearts and souls of the African Americans and their experience.

Thank you for your contribution to this important project.
Proposal for *Chicken Soup for the African American Soul*

**The Vision (Conceptual Summary)**

*Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* will be released into a market that is ready for it, to an audience that is hungry for it. We are now at a time, for the first time, when the African American’s dollar is becoming more lucid and the African American woman—at a time when women hold 80% of the purchasing power—is becoming more aware and more spiritual and has greater consumer power. Due to the immense influence of African American leaders and public figures in the arena of personal motivation—such as Oprah Winfrey, Iyanla Vanzant, Ananda Lewis and Montel Williams, the African American population is exposed to motivational books, self-help philosophy and products like no other time in history. That Iyanla Vanzant alone has 8 million copies of her motivational books in print is evidence that *Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* comes at the right time to a market that is ready to purchase self-improvement and personal development tools.

Through Lisa Nichols, a highly respected, African American motivational speaker, as co-author, the book will be uniquely positioned to be introduced to the African American community. With the right personality, spirituality, and business mind behind it, the book can penetrate the market at a time when it is ready to be penetrated from an internal source of empowerment.

*Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* will serve as a tribute to a culture that prides itself on its sense of survival, resiliency, healing, prayer, and perseverance. The book will serve as an opportunity for African American’s to celebrate a heritage through every stage of evolvement. It will become an opportunity for both African Americans and Sister/Brother cultures to understand what has been the glue for African Americans—what has created the code of ethics and base of integrity from which we operate. This book will be a tribute to what has been and to what still can be, filled with stories that move the test to the testimony, and the battles to the victories.

*Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* will not only celebrate the unique qualities of the African American Culture, but also honor our similarities in the family of mankind—namely our heartaches and our triumphs, our laughter, our tears, and our love.

This book will serve as a powerful tool for assisting the African American community to discover and celebrate their strength—individually, the impressive leadership their culture has
birthed, and the heroes and “sheros” of African American descent from powerful spiritual leaders, political figures, media personalities to the most popular and successful actors, musicians and athletes. The cumulative power of this public presence is immense and a book such as *Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* will spread far and wide via word of mouth promotion. It will provide an opportunity for African Americans to recognize and acknowledge that not only are the historical stories passed down from generation to generation of tremendous significance to this culture, but that the current stories—the day-to-day experiences of survival, magnificence, accomplishment, healing, love and family—are every bit as worth the telling.

It is our prayer that this book will also serve as a deep and meaningful inspiration to those within our culture who have held onto anger, who feel hopeless and trapped, who are incarcerated or on their way to being, who have no where else to turn. May *Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* be a turning point for them, offering them the hope, faith and motivation to celebrate who they are and to create their place in a healthy community. May this book also serve as an eye-opener for those in the community who are still not able to recognize the African American for their immense value, intelligence, talent and heart. May *Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* heal any remaining racial rifts in the hearts of mankind.

**The Team:**

**Lisa Nichols** is a dynamic motivational speaker and CEO of *Motivating the Masses* and *Motivating the Teen Spirit*, both of which provide transformational workshops, presentations and keynote speeches for organizations, churches, schools, the justice system, corporations and public seminars.

Having grown up in the heart of Los Angeles, been bused to school in a white community as an integration student, having dealt with gang warfare every day of her childhood and overcoming these trials and tribulations to become a CEO of her own company and a speaker committed to empowerment, Lisa is the perfect co-author and representative for *Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* to the African American community. In addition to her own personal inspiring stories, she is a master at facilitating others to discovering their own greatness.

Lisa is connected and involved with several African American business and social organizations that will provide immediate access to over 600 people who are all in the business of speaking, spiritual guidance, entrepreneurs, networkers and other professionals. She will utilize these alliances for both story collection and to ignite book sales. Lisa is also a significant
figure in a LA based church with 13,000 members and is an instructor at Income Builders International which provides her with an additional networking culture through which she can put out the call for stories—and sell the book. Of course, the Internet will also be utilized to spread the word and to collect stories (See attached letter that was sent out to a preliminary, select group of participants). The attached stories were collected via personal request and a call for stories via Lisa’s keynote to a group of powerful African American Women at the Phenomenal Women Conference.

Lisa makes an excellent co-author candidate for this book because she is talented, dedicated, driven and is well connected in the African American community. Even more importantly, Lisa has dedicated her life to the empowerment of her people. This book fits perfectly with her sense of life purpose. While Lisa is busy with her companies, she is prepared to dedicate a significant portion of her time each week to seeing this project through. As an example of the dedication and speed with which this project can move forward, we began the proposal and initial story collection process at the beginning of March 2002. By March 25, we had collected, edited and rated the stories that are included with this proposal (as well as several others we chose not to include.)

While Lisa has not had a lot of previous writing and editing experience, she is an excellent storyteller and communicator. With the onset of this proposal, she has discovered that these talents translate nicely to the written word. In addition, she is working with Eve Hogan, as a ghost writer/editor to assist her.

**Eve Eschner Hogan** is an inspirational speaker, relationship advisor and author of “*Intellectual Foreplay,*” “*Virtual Foreplay,*” and co-author of “*Rings of Truth.*” In addition to assisting Lisa with the collection and editing process, she has a strong presence on the Internet as a relationship advisor for several sites and will be assisting with Internet promotion of the book. Eve will provide behind-the-scene marketing support.

In addition, Lisa has a large community of friends and colleagues who are anxious to assist with the project—from writers to readers—as well as a host of ministers, speakers and community leaders who will actively assist in word of mouth recommendations of the book.

It is our intention, if accepted, to work on this book in the most expedient manner possible, as we see the African American community as ripe for the release of this book. Our initial strategy was to send the attached letter (Appendix) to a hand picked group of Lisa’s
friends requesting story submission for the initial proposal process—and we feel we got an excellent and immediate response. If accepted, we will make this a much more wide-spread call for action and feel our results will be just as immediate and impressive, allowing us to collect excellent and powerful stories quickly.

**The Audience and Marketing Plan**

There are over 32 million African Americans in the United States (American Census, 2000) both male and female, spanning the ages. Since women make up 80% of the typical book buying public, this book should be marketed specifically to the African American Woman through media, the Internet, and the multitude of organizations that are niched to this market. However, there is also a growing target market with African American men which can be accessed through the myriad African American male motivational speakers, such as Les Brown, Tim Story, and Wally Amos, to name a few. In addition, there are a number of organizations, associations, magazines and web sites dedicated to African American alliances and support.

In a recent study, when African American book buyers were asked what "types of books you generally enjoy," 67 percent noted any titles by black authors, 53 percent reported titles about black issues and 26 percent specifically sited self-help/enlightenment. (BISG, 9/2001

See attached article.)

According to this same Book Industry Study Group, Inc report, total book expenditures by African American book buyers in 2000 totaled $356 million! Books bought through retail outlets by African American book buyers totaled $297 million. African-American book buyers surveyed were more apt to have purchased a book from a chain store than a black bookstore, with 83 percent citing a chain store versus nine percent for a black store. Over 75 percent of those surveyed noted that they currently have access to the Internet either at work or at home, and almost 40 percent reported that they had purchased a book from an online retailer. African American Book Club sales totaled $33 million. These statistics back up what we know to be true of the trends within African American culture.

The African American community will serve the book well as a niche. Unlike “golfers” or “Christians” who may not recognize each other if they are sitting together in church, or passing on the street, the African American community is a recognizable brother/sisterhood—just as is the *Chicken Soup for the Woman's Soul* niche. This will serve to strengthen the word-of-mouth sales opportunities by facilitating communication between members of the community.
most likely to purchase the book. In the above-mentioned study, **43% of African Americans reported that they were strongly influenced by word of mouth recommendations** when purchasing a book.

Schools and Universities quite often offer Black History courses, African American Literature courses and cultural diversity classes in which *Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* will serve as a valuable tool for celebrating the African American journey. In fact, the whole month of February is dedicated to Black History Month. At this time, schools—elementary through university level—will be prime candidates for sharing *Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* stories. **In fact, planning the release of the book to coincide with Black History Month would be a prime media campaign.**

Churches are another huge market for this book. Numerous churches cater specifically or predominantly to the African American Community. By introducing the books to ministers, *Chicken Soup for the African American Souls* stories are almost guaranteed to be read out loud as they relate to specific topics of inspiration, motivation, hope, faith and overcoming the odds. Again, the inspirational nature of this book and the spiritual commitment of the African American Community go hand in hand.

Since somewhere around 60% of 1.8 million inmates currently in our prison system are African Americans, an important part of this ministry would be to sell/promote/distribute *Chicken Soup for the African American Soul* to the justice system, as well as churches, families, welfare and probation programs. Since 150,000 copies of *Chicken Soup for the Prisoner’s Soul* have successfully made it into prisons all across America through ministries and prison outreach programs, we anticipate that this book will also serve as an inspiration to this part of the community.

Lisa will actively seek media opportunities to promote *Chicken Soup for the African American Soul*, will reference stories in her presentations, sell the books at the back of the room and encourage fellow African American speakers and public personalities to do the same. Lisa has both TV and Radio interview experience and will be an excellent and dynamic spokesperson for the book.
**Teen Market**

Since *Chicken Soup for the Teen Soul* has been so popular, and since Lisa has provided transformational workshops for over 20,000 teens through her company, Motivating the Teen Spirit, it would be appropriate to add a chapter in the book for teens—or create a totally separate book *Chicken Soup for the African American Teen Soul*. African American teen celebrities like Brandy and Destiny’s Child could be interspersed. It is an exciting era to be an African American teen, as so many ancestors have forged so many previously unwalked paths and African Americans are being rightfully recognized as never before.

**Internet Marketing**

A brief preliminary search on the Internet revealed a multitude of marketing opportunities from African American organizations where the book can be promoted, to sites that cater specifically to the sales of African American authored books, to reciprocal link opportunities. By selecting a few stories from the book and strategically distributing them for print on the web, and through a strategic email campaign, word about the book will spread quickly. Below is a sampling of the sites that we discovered in our initial search:

http://aalbc.com/

**African American Literature Club**

Our goal is to increase everyone's knowledge of the diversity of African American literature, facilitate the exchange of opinions, satisfy your on-line book buying needs and serve as a resource and vehicle of expression for aspiring and professional writers.

http://www.afrobookstop.com/

**African American Bookstore**

The African American on line bookstore. Our warehouse stocks over 500,000 other African American books.

http://www.black-collegian.com/issues/2ndsem00/books2000-2nd.shtml

**The Black Collegian Online**: The Career Site for Students of Color, New Books by African American Authors. The magazine is distributed on over 1,100 campuses nationwide, primarily through the career services office.

http://www.suite101.com/links.cfm/aaw_literature

**African American Literature Links**

http://www.blackwriters.org/
The Black Writers Alliance (BWA) is dedicated to providing information, news, resources and support to Black writers while promoting the Internet as a tool for research and fellowship among the cultural writing community.

http://www.aabooks.com/findauth.htm
Lists of African American Books
http://www.chistell.com/site_map.htm
African Americans–authors, writers and women
http://www.atomicage.com/aalcs/
African American Literature and Culture Society of American Literature Association
http://www.sistahspace.com/
SistahSpace: The Black Woman’s Online Mecca
This site focuses on the celebration of sisterhood. Poetry, Art, dialogue, sistory, Q&A, are some of the page’s categories. There are some good links and resources as well.

http://www.blackgirl.org/
The International Resource for Black Women
This site has links for several web resources for African American women, including (but certainly not limited to) extensive links on literature, entertainment, education, health, beauty and resources.

http://www.mtsu.edu/~vvesper/afam.html
African American Writers: A celebration
African American Magazines Online
While these represent the online presence of these magazines, many also have print magazines as well that will do interviews, book reviews and book sales.

Black Enterprise
http://www.blackenterprise.com

Ebony
http://www.ebonymag.com

Essence
http://www.essence.com

Quarterly Black Reviews: Black Book Review Online
http://www.qbr.com

Upscale
http://www.upscalemagazine.com

Vibe
http://www.vibe.com/new/home
Mosaic Books
http://www.mosaicbooks.com

Callaloo: An African and African-American literary journal which publishes original works and critical studies of Black writers worldwide.

Black EOE Journal
http://www.blackoejournal.com

Tentative Topics/Chapters
Topics based on key components of the African American Culture—a cultural approach that evokes a connection to the African American Community.

- **Praise and Worship**
  Church Folk Like No Other
  Can I get a witness?
  Faith of a Mustard Seed

- **Song and Dance**
  Music for my Soul
  Dancing like they ain’t watching

- **Laughing and Humor**
  Laughing the pain away
  Humor that heals
  Laugh until it stops hurting

- **Athletes and Sports**
  Saving ourselves through sports
  Let us shine
  Born to fly, Born to soar

- **Triumph and Resiliency**
  Single Moms, Sister Soldiers
  Our plight with incarceration
  Rising from the dust
  Success—not an option
  Celebrating the Sheroes—a tribute to mothers and grandmothers
  Paying honor to the Heroes

**Celebrity Contributions**
Since a large number of the most popular and talented athletes, musicians, actors and public figures are of African decent, we’d like to see a representation of “celebrity stories” in each of
the above mentioned sections interspersed among the other stories. Here is a partial list of impressive African American celebrities from whom we will solicit story submissions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oprah Winfrey</th>
<th>Marion Edelman Wright</th>
<th>Virgie Binford</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iyanla Vanzant</td>
<td>Les Brown</td>
<td>Montel Williams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Cosby</td>
<td>Tyra Banks</td>
<td>Maya Angelou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colin Powell</td>
<td>Chris Rock</td>
<td>Eddy Murphy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wally Amos</td>
<td>Rose Parks</td>
<td>Coretta Scott King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelson Mandela</td>
<td>Jessie Jackson</td>
<td>Michael Jordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Tucker</td>
<td>Will Smith</td>
<td>Janet Jackson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitney Houston</td>
<td>Tyrese</td>
<td>Marian Johnson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magic Johnson</td>
<td>Tiger Wood</td>
<td>Venus and Serena Williams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn Swann</td>
<td>Marcus Allen</td>
<td>Andre Reed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ananda Lewis</td>
<td>Tim Storey</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample Stories

The Day I Walked and Walked
  My “Shero”
And, He Looks Just Like Me
The Bionic Woman is Black
  I’m a Little “Teapot”
At the End of My Block
The Price of Resentment
  Winners Never Quit
The Unsolicited Gift
Finding the True Treasure

The stories and a rating sheet were sent to a select group of people in the African American demographic—both male and female, as well as some Caucasian readers who are strong supporters of both Lisa and this project. They were asked to rate the stories on a scale of 1-10 and only rate them a 9 or 10 if the story made them laugh, cry or gave them goose bumps. We were pleased to see that all ten of the stories we chose to submit repeatedly received a
majority of 9 and 10 ratings. We were surprised to discover how clearly stories touch the heart and soul of people differently, based on their personal experience—both past and present.

Author Questionnaire

We are delighted that we will be publishing your book Foreplay: Making Your Online Relationship a Real-Life Success  

(working title)  

(expected publication date)

and we want to do everything we can to make it a success.

This questionnaire is an important stop in achieving that success.

At a very early stage we begin working on cover/jacket design and descriptive copy for use on covers, in publication schedules, catalogs, advance book information sheets, and advertisements. We also need to provide sales representatives and publicity teams with all the information they need about you and your book.

The information from this questionnaire will help us to identify, understand, and reach all potential buyers of your book. All leads – no matter how small – can result in added sales, more exposure, and greater success.

Please carefully consider each potential buyer for your book and, specifically, whey they will buy it. Remember that we are often competing with similar books already in the market, so we need to know how you and your book stand out. The more specific and detailed your answers here, the more successful we will be at reaching these buyers. Please attach extra sheets as necessary and/or expand the space available for answers if you are responding electronically.

This questionnaire becomes a vital marketing tool once you have completed it, and we would be grateful if you would answer the questions and return the form to us by:

Please return the form to:
Please reply as completely as possible. Typewritten forms are very welcome, but the information is the important thing. Please use supplementary sheets wherever needed. If you would prefer an electronic copy of this form, please call us or email.

Date form received: ____________________  By: ____________________

---

**Personal Information**

Your full name ____________________

Name as it should appear on the book (if different, including post-nominals)

______________________________

Co-authors

______________________________

The following information is not given to anyone without your permission. Please circle the information you want us to give people wanting to contact you:

Mailing address

City_________________________ State______ Zip_______

Shipping address ________________________________

(if different) City_________________________ State______ Zip_______

Telephone numbers  ___________ (work/home)  ___________ (Toll-free)

Cell _____________________

Fax numbers _____________________ (work) __________________ (home)

Email addresses_________________________ (work) __________________ (home)

The following information is needed for copyright purposes but will not appear in print:

Nationality ________________________________

Date of Birth ________________________________

Social Security Number ________________________________ (for tax reporting purposes)

School Affiliation/Degrees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>School/College</th>
<th>Diploma/Degree</th>
<th>Course of study/Major/Honors</th>
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</table>

23
Present Occupation (include name and location of employer, job title, brief job description, year begun)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Position held/Work done</th>
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Significant past employment which would be of interest to the readers of this book, including dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Position held/Work done</th>
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Publishing and Professional Information

Previous books published by you (including year, title, publisher, editions, details of paperback or foreign language editions, number(s) of copies sold):

Periodicals in which your work has been published (with any relevant notes on the material published):

Articles:

Quoted in:

Please list your professional affiliations - organizations or associations of which you are a member, particularly those relevant to this book.

Please list any awards or honors that could directly contribute to the potential success/value of this book.

List any other honorary qualifications including major offices held (with dates of office) that may contribute to the book’s success.
Please list those professional accomplishments that emphasize the practical application aspect of your book (i.e. workshops/seminars presented, consulting assignments, grants/research contracts, etc.).

Please mention any other professional experience you feel contributes to the value of this book.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please attach a separate sheet describing the content of your book in at least 250 words. If you have already sent us this, please indicate where.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What inspired you to write this book?

List and explain the three most important concepts or ideas of your book:
Describe its most unique qualities. What is the "hook"?

List the chapters you feel have the most impact, and explain why.
Which chapters or sections can stand on their own or be most easily adapted for a magazine or newspaper excerpt?

Is there anything else you can tell us about the subject area of your book that would help us in selling it? Include any relevant information about the general awareness about the subject, common misconceptions, any special commemorative anniversary years/months coming up, etc.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Marketing Information</th>
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<tr>
<td>Under what bookshop category would you expect to find your book?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

List competing titles indicating the publisher, price, comparable content, and how your book differs?

What specific needs will your book address and what benefits does it offer each reader you described?
Please list ways you would try to reach each market:

Do you plan to buy any significant quantity of the book for resale? Can you give an approximate number per year? How will you be reselling the book?
List groups and organizations that might want to use this book in bulk as program resource material. Please consider professional groups, non-professional groups, special interest groups, government agencies, and corporations. Do you know the name of someone we may contact there?

List any websites that you think should be contacted or linked to for promotion or sales of this book.

Can you suggest any professionals (including other authors), well-known popular authorities/personalities, or celebrities who you believe would be willing to read galleys and provide us with suitable pre-publication comments and quotes endorsing your book? Please list name, address and phone number.

Is there any country that may have a particular interest in your book? Have you had any previous contact with foreign publishers?

Do you spend any significant amount of time abroad, and if so, where?

Are you willing to promote your book through radio, television, newspapers, magazine interviews? Would you be willing to receive media training at your own expense?

What aspects of your book would you like to see emphasized in publicity and promotion?

List any review media or broadcast-interview programs (especially local newspapers, magazine, and radio and TV stations) which will be particularly interested in this book. Include names of personal contacts, if any.

Which specialty magazines/periodicals/professional journal do you think would excerpt or review your book? Please list contact names and phone numbers if you know them.

Which specialty magazines/periodicals/professional journals do you think reach a targeted audience that would respond to advertising for your book?

List all bookstores where you are known, or which could be good places for signings for the launch of your book.

**Travel Plans and Additional Information**

Please give us the dates and destinations of any trips you are planning to other metropolitan areas during the six months immediately following expected publication date on which you will be available for interviews without cost to the Publisher if appointments can be made by us. If you do not have plans now, please let us know as soon as you make plans. It is very important to your book to be able to promote it in cities you will be visiting after its publication.
It is helpful to have personal information on you that relates to the content of the book for press releases. Please give some general information about your family, hobbies, outside interests, etc. (Please attach a vitae, if you have one):

Please use additional space below for additional information/queries/suggestions/comments:

Please include two or three good, sharp, recent photographs of yourself, including at least one black and white glossy 5x8. The portrait should use a single-color, neutral background that provides adequate contrast for enlargements and book reproduction. If photo credits are to be given, please indicate to whom (the photographs may be used on the cover of your book, or for publicity purposes).

Thank you for completing this form. By doing so you have provided us with a valuable resource that will help us to best promote and sell your book.