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LEGACY

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**Learning to Relearn: A Writing Journey Rooted
in Identity, Resistance, and Affirmation**



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The Worthy Educator

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When I started writing *Learning to Relearn* in 2021, I wasn't just writing a book - I was laying down a challenge. A challenge to myself. A challenge to the field of education. A challenge to the norms we've accepted for far too long about identity, power, and the purpose of schooling.

I had read dozens of books on antiracist education. Some were powerful, some were performative, and too many were divorced from the lived experiences of the very communities they claimed to center. I didn't want to write another book that sat politely on a shelf during PD week and then collected dust. I wanted to write something disruptive. Something rooted. Something unapologetically human. I wanted to amplify the identity stories of educators and activists who come from historically marginalized communities. A book that readers can pick up, read, and come out of the reading experience feeling seen, heard, honored, and affirmed for who they are and how they show up in our global society. I wanted to write a book that reframes the way that we teach, understand, learn, and talk about identity. From the early reader responses, I truly believe that I've achieved just that!

Learning to Relearn was born from years of witnessing how our educational systems continue to fail students whose identities fall outside the dominant narrative. But even more than that, it was born from conversations. Conversations with educators of color who felt unseen. With queer teachers who felt silenced. With White educators trying to move beyond guilt and into action. With students who were tired of being told they didn't belong unless they conformed.

I also wanted to reframe how we even talk about identity in education. Too often, identity is treated like a side dish, something we address in a February bulletin board or a DEI newsletter. But identity is the core ingredient. It shapes how we teach, how we learn, how we lead, how we discipline, and how we define success.

So this book had to push beyond comfort. It had to disrupt.

The Writing Process: Breaking the Mold

Writing this book was not a clean, linear process. It was messy. It was emotional. And it was absolutely necessary.

Every time I sat down to write, I thought about the educators who would hold this book in their hands. I thought about the teacher in a rural district who felt like the only one speaking up for justice. I thought about the assistant principal trying to shift school culture while navigating burnout. I thought about the teacher candidates who had never had their racial, cultural, or gender identities validated in their entire training.

This book was for them.

That meant I couldn't just talk theory. I had to bring in real stories. I had to center real people. And I had to ask readers to do real work.

Each chapter was written with intentionality, blending narrative, research, and reflection. I didn't want to offer quick fixes. I wanted to guide readers through a process of unlearning, interrogating, and - yes - *relearning*. That's what makes this book more than a one-time read.

As the early copies started to circulate, the feedback came in fast. And it was humbling.



Educators messaged me saying they finally felt seen. Some cried while reading because it was the first time they saw their teaching experiences validated in a professional text. Others told me they had been afraid to speak certain truths aloud - but this book gave them the language and the courage to do so.

That's when I knew I had done what I set out to do.

This wasn't just another education book. This was an invitation. A mirror. A rallying cry.

Making Identity Work a Daily Practice

One of the things I emphasize everywhere I go - whether it's a keynote, a workshop, or a classroom visit - is that culturally affirming practice is not a special event. It's not a themed month. It's not something you pull out when a tragedy hits the news cycle.

It's daily work.

Since publishing *Learning to Relearn*, I've had the opportunity to connect with educators and institutions who are putting that belief into action. From the [SENIA Conferences](#) to the Teacher Assistants Conference, to partnerships with schools and colleges around the world, the energy has been electric. These educators aren't just reading the book. They're living the work.

At [Elms College](#), for example, *Learning to Relearn* has been adopted into their curriculum through the [Center for Equity in Urban Education](#). [Seton Hall University](#) and other schools have followed suit. The book is being used not just as reading material, but as a launchpad for curriculum redesign, teacher reflection, and student dialogue.

Even international schools are embracing the message. Institutions like the [ACS International Schools](#), [International School of Beijing](#), [Seisen International School](#), and [American International School of Lusaka](#) have added the book to their libraries and professional learning plans. That kind of reach tells me that educators everywhere - across borders and backgrounds - are craving a more affirming, justice-centered approach to education.

In 2024, *Learning to Relearn* won the [Foreword INDIES Gold Award](#) for Best Education Book. In 2025, it was honored with the [IPPY Gold Medal](#) for Best Education Commentary Book. And while awards aren't the reason I write, I won't lie...it means a lot to have this work recognized.

But more than recognition, these awards are validation that *this* kind of work belongs in the canon. That the stories and perspectives I've centered are not niche - they're necessary.

[Dr. Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz](#), who wrote the foreword, said it best: "*With Learning to Relearn, Sarfo-Mensah has written himself into the canon of scholars who boldly advocate for social justice in schools.*" I hold those words close because they remind me of the responsibility that comes with writing and the power that comes from doing it with integrity.

And while I'm appreciative of the overwhelmingly positive response that the book has received from you all, I'm also weary of the fact that there's a great level of resistance from individuals, corporations, and others who don't want books like mine to see the light of day. For this reason, I'm humbly asking you to continue to support me and other independent Black and Brown authors who are producing written works that challenge white supremacist systems.

Pushback and Persistence

Of course, not everyone is cheering.

The truth is, there's a very real and growing resistance to books like mine. There are school boards and corporations that are working overtime to silence any curriculum that challenges white supremacy or centers marginalized voices. There are laws being passed to limit what we can teach about race, gender, and power.

So yes, while I'm deeply grateful for the outpouring of support, I'm also aware of the fight we're up against.

That's why I'm calling on our community - not just to read the book, but to protect the space for it to exist. To speak up. To share it. To review it. To use it in your schools. To invite me to your campuses. To bring the conversation into spaces where it's been shut down.

Because this book wasn't written to play it safe. It was written to shake the table.

The beauty of *Learning to Relearn* is that it's not finished. Not really. Every conversation it sparks, every educator it reaches, every classroom it impacts - *that's* part of the story. That's part of the legacy.



So here's what I'm asking from you:

- Watch the recording of our Learning to Relearn Book Study through The Worthy Educator.
- If this book moved you, leave a review. Let others know why it matters.
- Share it. With your team, your district, your professors, your students.
- Adopt it. Make it part of your curriculum. Use it in your professional development.
- Bring me in. Let's do the work together - in your school, your city, your network.

This isn't about promoting a product. It's about sustaining a movement. One rooted in the belief that education should affirm, not erase. That our classrooms should be places of liberation, not assimilation. That relearning is not a weakness - it's a form of resistance.

Relearning is a Radical Act

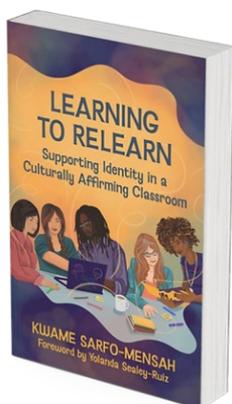
The more I talk with educators, the more I believe this: Relearning is one of the most radical things we can do.

It requires humility. It requires courage. And it requires community.

Learning to Relearn was never about perfection. It was about possibility. It was about rewriting the narrative - starting with ourselves. And judging from the response, the conversations, the transformations I've seen - educators are ready.

They're ready to question. Ready to evolve. Ready to teach from a place of deep identity, fierce love, and unwavering justice.

So let's keep learning. Let's keep unlearning. And most importantly, let's keep relearning - together. Join me at [Learning to Relearn](#).



Kwame Sarfo-Mensah is the founder of Identity Talk Consulting, LLC, a global educational consulting firm that specializes in developing K-12 teachers into identity-affirming educators. Prior to starting his firm, he served as a middle school math teacher in Philadelphia and Boston for nine years. His latest book, "Learning to Relearn: Supporting Identity in a Culturally Affirming Classroom" is highly acclaimed and the basis for this piece.  

Legacy is the official journal of The Worthy Educator, elevating the good work being done by leaders in education who are working to change the narrative on the profession and actively plan for impact that transforms its future to serve the needs of a diverse, decentralized, global society that is inclusive, equitable and open to all people as next generations adapt, evolve and contribute by solving problems and creating solutions that meet the needs of a world we have yet to envision.

Submissions are accepted on a rolling basis from educators who are implementing new and innovative approaches in the classroom and at the building and district levels. Information on specifications and instructions to submit can be found online at theworthyeducator.com/journal.