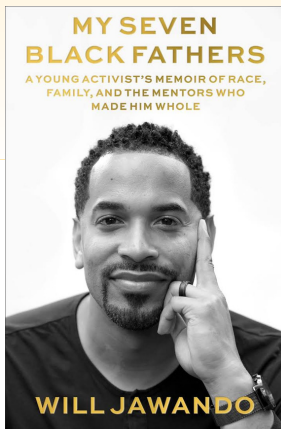


MY SEVEN BLACK FATHERS:

A YOUNG ACTIVIST'S MEMOIR OF RACE, FAMILY, AND THE MENTORS WHO MADE HIM WHOLE



As a boy growing up outside DC, **Will Jawando**, who went by his Nigerian name, Yemi, was shunted from school to school, never quite fitting in. He was a Black kid with a divorced white mother, a frayed relationship with his biological father, and teachers who scolded him for being disruptive in class and on the playground. Eventually, he became close to Kalfani, a kid he looked up to on the basketball court. Years after he got the call telling him that Kalfani was dead, a casualty of street violence, Will looks back on what saved him from a similar fate. In *My Seven Black Fathers*, Will traces his survival to an extraordinary series of mentors. Drawing on Will Jawando's deeply moving story and involvement in My Brother's Keeper, President Obama's national initiative to address persistent opportunity gaps facing boys and young men of color, *My Seven Black Fathers* explores the remarkable impact that Black men can have on the rising generation.

"A beautifully written and innovatively structured memoir of a biracial Black man's life journey."

—**Kirkus Reviews (starred review)**

"This book is a clarion call to families and communities to provide crucial support to young people, particularly young Black men."

—**Andrienne Cruz, Booklist (starred review)**

"This effective combination of the personal and the political acts as a powerful call to action in these fraught times."

—**Publishers Weekly (starred review)**

"Will Jawando's story is a necessary and important contribution to our understanding of Black men's grief, pain, and fulfillment."

—**Michael Eric Dyson, New York Times–bestselling author of *Tears We Cannot Stop* and *What Truth Sounds Like***

"My Seven Black Fathers is a praise song to the mysteries of human connection, and the resilience that is an inherent part of African American identity."

—**Emily Bernard, author of *Black Is the Body***

"Jawando has written an enlightening, heartfelt memoir that will appeal to readers looking for a 'different' all-American story; one that shows the power of community to uplift Black men in the United States."

—**Library Journal (starred review)**

"By arguing that Black fathers are not just found in individual families, but are indeed the treasure of entire Black communities, Will makes the case for a bold idea: that Black men can counter racist ideas and policies by virtue of their presence in the lives of Black boys and young men. This is a story we need to hear."

—**Ibram X. Kendi, New York Times–bestselling author of *How to be an Antiracist***

"In walking us through his recovery from the wounds of his own father loss, he speaks to our potential for healing as a people and to the incredible resources for becoming whole that are already contained within our communities. His book is the key to unlock that healing."

—**Jelani Cobb, author of *The Substance of Hope: Barack Obama and the Paradox of Progress***

"Will Jawando's story poignantly demonstrates this point but also provides critical insight into the form and structure of these relationships, and the power they have to not only transform the lives of Black boys but to rebuild whole communities."

—**Arne Duncan, former U.S. Secretary of Education**



Will Jawando is an attorney, an activist, a community leader, and a councilmember in Montgomery County, Maryland, a diverse community of more than one million residents. Called "the progressive leader we need" by the late congressman John Lewis, Jawando has worked with Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senator Sherrod Brown, and President Barack Obama. His writing has appeared in *The Washington Post* and *The Root* and on *BET.com*, and his work has been featured in *The New York Times* and *New York magazine* and on *NPR*, *NBC News*, and *MTV*. He regularly appears on *CNN*, *MSNBC* and other media outlets.

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