

## IFA IWA (Lesson 1) Intro

### Ifa Practice

**Greetings: *Oriire fun owo!* (Good Tidings to you!)**

***Samona oro mi, iro mi, ati ise mi sodo asejori!***

Guide my words, my thoughts, and my actions towards success!

This is the first in a series of videos on ***Ifa Iwa, Ifa Practice***. I originally envisioned this series for the ***Ile Awo Orisa egbe*** but was encouraged to share it with a wider audience, namely those who are just beginning their exploration of the Ifa Tradition of Orisa and Ancestor Worship, seekers like L. Smith.

**Read email:**

**Culture:**

A people's culture is their **entire** design for living; **passed down** from one generation to the next through **learning**.

**Message Train experiment:** Each person tends to distort a message as they hear it and as they pass it on THEREFORE, cultures will change over time because of transmission distortion and because of innovation. The mark of an effective cultural paradigm is its ability to sustain itself over time.

**Example:**

- **Sacred *Odu Ogunda-Ka* (203)** speaks of the sacred organization of the social order.

***Ifa ni ki isin!***

When we say ***Ifa is not a religion*** we are bearing witness, that this way of living evolved naturally as a comprehensive cultural tradition, an entire design for living. Every division of life, every institution in the indigenous culture teaches and supports the ideas, beliefs, and methods of ***Ifa***.

For those who grow up indigenously in the ***Ifa*** Tradition, their process of learning to **live *Ifa*** begins a few days after birth with the ***Akosejaye***, (the divination performed seven days after a child's birth to learn about their intended journey in the world), and actually even before birth.

For one born indigenously in the *Ifa* Tradition, it is a truism that:

- ***Ifa ni bawo aiye sise!*** *Ifa* is how the universe works!
- ***Ifa ni iwa ti aiye!*** *Ifa* is the nature of the universe!

For those of us who come to ***Ifa*** later in life and from a completely different cultural orientation, we have to overcome the **Hypnosis of Social Conditioning (Premature Cognitive Commitments)** and replace old ways of seeing the world with new ideas, beliefs, and methods based on ***Ifa***. This reconstructive process enables us to transform our old way of being, our old lifestyle into a new way of being in the world, ***Ifa Iwa - Ifa Practice***.

### **Example: The power of culture and the Hypnosis of Social Conditioning/HSC**

- **Flies** in a jar
- **Fish** in a tank
- **Elephant** on a rope

(These examples do not imply that the creature is completely content with the condition, nor does it imply that there is no inner drive calling to the creature. Every now and then we will see the elephant tog on the rope, but its efforts are restrained by a **Premature Cognitive Commitment/PCC** that its efforts will fail as they did in the past.)

This is how **the Hidden** hope to maintain their power well into the future. By passing these **PCCs** down through the generations, the **Hypnosis of Social Conditioning**.

**But**, take a pencil and stick it in the jar of flies and stir (**agitate**) the atmosphere and more of the flies will escape, and then more will follow. Something has **called** to you, **agitated** you, and set you on the path of **seeking** to escape the HSC and the PCCs that have held you back from experiencing the ***Rere Iwa***, the **Good Condition**. And in this moment your seeking has brought you to ***Ifa***. Lets see what happens!

***Iwa*** (n) means a practice. Not the verb 'to practice', but the noun, 'a practice'. A 'practice' is the actual application or use of an idea, belief, or method; as opposed to (mere) theories about such application or use.

### Consider becoming a doctor for example:

- First there is a period of learning and studying from lectures, books, and other sources, a period of learning about the science of medicine.
- Then, there is the process of skills development where the students begin observing the actual application of some of their knowledge.
- Then they will begin applying some of their knowledge under supervision to further inform their understanding of the science and the art of medicine.
- Later, the doctor-to-be will do a period of internship and residency where they broaden their scope and depth of understanding of the profession and their skills.
- And then, eventually they will be able to open their own office and establish their own Practice, where they engage in the actual application or use of the ideas, beliefs, and methods that they studied and practiced for all those years.

**Therefore, *Ifa Iwa (Ifa Practice)*** implies the actual application of the ideas, beliefs, and methods of the *Ifa* Spiritual Tradition of Orisa and Ancestor Worship. These ideas, beliefs, and methods are enshrined in the **Sacred Oracles of Odu Ifa**. These ideas, beliefs, and methods of *Ifa Iwa (Ifa Practice)* find expression in the daily living of *Ifa* through these seven foundational elements:

- prayer (*adura*),
- meditation (*isha'ro*),
- divination (*afose*),
- sacrifice (*ebo*)
- ceremony (*ise isin*) and ritual (*ti ilana isin* – to regulate worship)
- fasting (*aawe*)
- seeking the Good Condition (*rere iwa* - as described in **Sacred Odu Irosu'wori** (78)

Each of these elements of *Ifa Iwa* has several components, aspects, or modes of expression, and they all work coherently, in seamless integration, shaping our words, our thoughts, and our actions as devotees of the Ifa Spiritual Tradition of Orisa and Ancestor Worship.

- Establishing ***Ifa Iwa*** requires patience, persistence, discipline, and diligent study.

The process of establishing ***Ifa Iwa*** is one of gradually transforming the activities of ***Huwa Ifa*** into the state of ***Ifa Iwa***, (like the doctor in my example).

- ***Huwa*** (v) ***Ifa mi*** - Practicing my *Ifa*
- ***Huwa*** (v) ***Ifa e*** - Practicing your *Ifa*

***Huwa*** (practice - v) means to exercise a skill, a performance, behavior, or activity repeatedly. (*Perfect practice makes perfect!*)

- Perfect ***Huwa Ifa*** makes perfect ***Ifa Iwa!***

***Huwa Ifa*** is learning what to do and how to do it, and then repeating it until ***adura, isha'ro, afose, ebo, ise isin & ti ilana isin, awe, and rere iwa*** are firmly installed in your daily life. (Like brushing your teeth, tying your shoes, walking or driving.) Not as mindless activities but rather as intentional, mindful and purposeful activities of daily living.

To be continued: **Lesson 2 – Adura (Prayer)**