

# Raising Free People

## Unschooling as Liberation and Healing Work

**Akilah S. Richards • Foreword: Bayo Akomolafe**

No one is immune to the byproducts of compulsory schooling and standardized testing. And while reform may be a worthy cause for some, it is not enough for countless others still trying to navigate the tyranny of what schooling has always been. *Raising Free People* argues that we need to build and work within systems truly designed for any human to learn, grow, socialize, and thrive, regardless of age, ability, background, or access to money.

Families and conscious organizations across the world are healing generations of school wounds by pivoting into self-directed, intentional community-building, and *Raising Free People* shows you exactly how unschooling can help facilitate this process.

Individual experiences influence our approach to parenting and education, so we need more than the rules, tools, and “bad adult” guilt trips found in so many parenting and education books. We need to reach behind our behaviors to seek and find our triggers; to examine and interrupt the ways that social issues such as colonization still wreak havoc on our ability to trust ourselves, let alone children. *Raising Free People* explores examples of the transition from school or homeschooling to unschooling, how single parents and people facing financial challenges unschool successfully, and the ways unschooling allows us to address generational trauma and unlearn the habits we mindlessly pass on to children.

In these detailed and unabashed stories and insights, Richards examines the ways that her relationships to blackness, decolonization, and healing work all combine to form relationships and enable community-healing strategies rooted in an unschooling practice. This is how millions of families center human connection, practice clear and honest communication, and raise children who do not grow up to feel that they narrowly survived their childhoods.

### ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

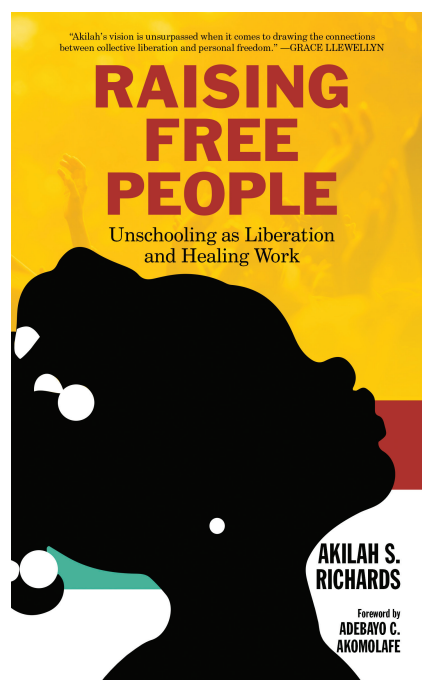
**Akilah S. Richards** is a public speaker and the founder of Raising Free People Network, a social enterprise focused on resolving the ways that unexamined experiences with bias and oppression disrupt families’ and organizations’ capacity to sustain cultures of belonging.

**Bayo Akomolafe** is executive director and chief curator for the Emergence Network and is the author of *We Will Tell Our Own Story* and *These Wilds Beyond Our Fences: Letters to My Daughter on Humanity’s Search for Home*.

### ACCOLADES

“This is an insightful, brilliant book by one of today’s most inspiring leaders in the realm of Self-Directed Education. We see here how respecting children, listening to them, and learning from them can revolutionize our manner of parenting and remove the blinders imposed by the forced schooling that we nearly all experienced. I recommend it to everyone who cares about children, freedom, and the future of humanity.”

—Peter Gray, research professor of psychology at Boston College,  
author of *Free to Learn*



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