



JAIYA JOHN

AUTHOR ✧ PROFESSIONAL SPEAKER

Jaiya John is the founder and of Soul Water Rising, a global human relations mission invested in youth development. He serves as a professional speaker, poet, author, youth mentor, and consultant. Jaiya's passionate, poetic presentations offer inspiration to transform heart and mind. He has addressed thousands of youth and adults internationally, always with the intent of stirring the soul to remember itself. This work is truly his mission, ministry, and life. He has authored the memoir, *Black Baby White Hands: A View from the Crib*; also *Reflection Pond*, a meditation on identity, culture, and healing in children separated from original family; *Beautiful*, a poetic companion piece to *Reflection Pond*; and *Legendary*, a poetic tribute to social service professionals, teachers, and others who honorably serve devalued children. Jaiya was a professor of social psychology at Howard University (1995-1998) and served as associate director for the National Center on Permanency for African American Children (1999-2001).

Jaiya was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Immediately placed in foster care and eventually adopted, Jaiya's childhood branded in him a burning passion for giving his life to improve the way human beings relate to each other. Jaiya studied psychology at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon, and earned his doctorate from the University of California, Santa Cruz in social psychology, focusing on identity development and intergroup relations. In 1988 he lived in the Himalayan nation of Nepal, where his research on Tibetan medicine gave him insight into holistic concepts of physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Being of not only African (including Balanta, Mende, and Kru) but also Blackfoot and Cherokee descent; and having grown up in the midst of the Southwest's American Indian and Latino communities, Jaiya has a deep appreciation for the spiritual and communal passions that spring from these worlds. This spirit he ingrains in his messages about our social world. Jaiya believes that in every moment of life, each of us is a teacher and a student and that our ultimate purpose is to honor the interconnected web of life.

#### JAIYA HAS SPOKEN TO OVER 100,000 WORLDWIDE ON ISSUES OF HUMAN RELATIONS:

- cultural heritage
- spirituality
- leadership
- mentoring
- race relations
- disproportionality
- prejudice
- identity
- creative self-expression
- child welfare
- education
- literacy
- juvenile justice
- motivation & achievement
- social change & civil rights
- youth violence
- youth development
- community develop.
- family development
- teambuilding

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