



JAIYA JOHN

AUTHOR POET PROFESSIONAL SPEAKER

Jaiya John was born into foster care in the high mountain desert of New Mexico. It was the beginning of a life of Amazing Grace. Latino and Native American essence imprinted his soul like ancient Anasazi rock paintings. As an African American and Native American, his struggle with cultural isolation was a forging fire. Jaiya slowly grew from childhood muteness and private self-destruction into a realization of purpose. As a college teenager, an encounter with the poet Nikki Giovanni broke through his shell and silence. Jaiya beheld in Giovanni a powerful example of what it meant to Love yourself and to make your life like poetry: a free, unbridled expression of beauty and Truth. That night, he wrote his first poem, staining the pages in tears of long desired emotional release.

Soon after, Jaiya's spirit led him to the Himalayan kingdom of Nepal, where he found a sacred spirit of land, people, and heritage. He discovered the fiercely devoted lives of Gandhi and Mother Teresa. Leper colonies, street children, and resilient parents humbled him. Living with a local Lama family and trekking for seven weeks from the jungle of Nepal's southern border at India to the icy heights of Mount Everest, he glimpsed a vision for human existence. Even in dire material poverty, the people of Nepal exuded warmth, kindness, openness, and vital light. Seeking to understand, Jaiya studied Tibetan holistic medicine through private conversation with Nepal's healers. Their message: "The souls you serve are your teacher. Be their student. Learn their life. Healing has nothing to do with treating symptoms, and everything to do with honoring every single grain of a human life. This is the root. Once you arrive at the root, you may bless the tree."

Jaiya returned to Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon, and then earned his doctorate degree in social psychology at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Even as a professor at Howard University from 1995 to 1998, the flower of Jaiya's life purpose was continuing to open. His heart and spirit had always been drawn to human suffering: the reflection of profound human beauty. In a step of faith, filled with an astounding Peace, Jaiya founded his ministry and reason for being: Soul Water Rising, a global human mission. He sits in sacred circle with youth, and as a speaker has shared soulful time with over a quarter of a million people. Thousands of his books on our human journey have been donated to youth programs and schools worldwide. His life is like poetry.

JAIYA HAS SHARED INSPIRED MESSAGE AND MOMENT WITH OVER A QUARTER OF A MILLION WORLDWIDE:

- cultural heritage
- spirituality
- leadership
- mentoring
- intergroup relations
- social disparities
- personal healing
- identity
- creative self-expression
- child welfare
- education
- literacy
- juvenile justice
- vicarious trauma
- generational trauma
- social change & healing
- youth violence
- youth development
- community & family
- compassion fatigue
- teambuilding

SOUL WATER RISING *a global HUMAN mission. Rehumanizing.*

301.221.7116 • jaiya@soulwater.org • soulwater.org
facebook.com/JaiyaJohn • youtube.com/SoulWaterRising