



SADAYA ZIMMERLE  
OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, USA  
JUNE 2020

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From Ho'oponopono:  
I'm Sorry  
Please Forgive Me  
Thank you  
I love you

I feel like an odd spokesperson in some ways on this topic. But I realize I am one of the very, very few people in the Ruhaniat with any black blood at all (someone recently said to me, "isn't it just you and Omar?"). I say very odd, because I am mixed, black and white, and apparently, I have something common among biracial people called the imposter syndrome, in which they do not feel fully authentic or legitimate across all their identities.

My mother, who is white, loved me well from the time of my birth, and so buffered me a great deal as long as she could. She was a staunch ally. In second grade, she could not figure out why I kept being punished and being stuck on the bench at lunch. She knew her daughter and what a well behaved eager to please little girl I was. She could not get good answers from the school teacher in this sleepy Monterrey school. All she could figure out was that it might have to do with the fact that I was one of only two children in the whole school with brown skin. She pulled me out of the school and put me in a private school where I was well treated. So, in addition to her fierce love, I had the protection of my white mother's privilege, and I also had the benefit of my family's middle class means, that they could afford private school.

While growing up, my mother always told me that I was beautiful and that she loved me. I had the luxury of just being "Sadaya" as my mom had raised me to be. Even though I had a wonderful Daddy who was black, I was raised mostly by my Mom and so grew up what some call an oreo cookie, dark on the outside, but really culturally mostly white.

After a sad but kindly divorce, My Mom remarried, this time to a Jewish man. The later chapters of my childhood we celebrated Shabbat and attended Jewish Renewal synagogue services at Kehilla and the Aquarian Minyan. All this was in still relatively hippy circles in Berkeley, California. So, you can see why I would feel quite at home in the Ruhaniat.

I have mostly avoided race as a topic except when it is unavoidable. I have never wanted to make white people uncomfortable, both because of how I identify with being white, and also because I think there is a way in which I see in whiteness, my first love object and biggest most beautiful impression, my mother's face. It is as if to make someone uncomfortable I might make her uncomfortable. Now my world has cracked open and it is time to do my own work. So I speak at the beginning of my own new journey in this time.

Out of this Great Oneness that we zikr to remember, we have now been collectively awakened to a sickening preexisting condition in the plane of limitations in which we currently live. Many of us may be learning new vocabulary for the first time: white supremacy, privilege, racism. We may be realizing, some for the first time, that these are not things that belong to some fringe deviant other, but are an unexamined underlayer on which we have been standing and conducting our lives. We may be awaking to our responsibility as culture carriers: that it is not about them, but about us, because we cannot bear to watch another George Floyd kind of slow agonizing death. We realize it is a pattern and people keep dying over and over. We cannot bear the suffering for it to continue unchecked. We cannot bear it.

A calamity of consciousness has hit humankind as surely as the corona virus, but this is something we can do more about. What a brilliant opportunity! But we must stay awake and we must be willing to do the work. We are being beckoned to engage in the body of the Bodhisattva. Poignantly we remember it is not enough to arrive ourselves, we need to go back for everyone. It is not enough for most of the limbs of our body to be intact and okay, while one is being battered bloody.

It is like there is a pain that has been going on for generations and some of us got to walk paths that passed over or by it. Unbeknownst to us, the very walking on those paths was creating it. We did not know. We did not build them; we did not have to. The paths were there when we arrived. As soon as we could walk, we were already walking them. It turns out that each step puts pressure on the people underneath. They have bruises all over and less air to breath, and sometimes it even happens that they get crushed to death.

Now there is a crack in the earth and it is getting bigger and we have a glimpse of what is below. Now suddenly we need a different way to walk. We must dismantle the paths. It does not make sense to bemoan the chaos and disruption as people try to get out from under. No need to berate ourselves for our walking before. The only thing that makes sense is to make the necessary changes in ourselves and lend a hand wherever, however we can. We do this from our Love and we do this because we of all people, know we are One.

I definitely do not have all the answers, but I can encourage you from my own perspective re: what will help:

- 1) Seek knowledge inside and out. If you are like me, you may have actually managed to avoid much of this topic for years. Welcome to the many wonderful books, podcasts, websites that are now available. Of great note, are books like White Fragility by Robin

DiAngelo, How To Be An Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi, and the book I am presently reading that has a workbook to work through (and is also for biracial people, or people with mixed situations like me) called Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor by Layla F. Saad.

You will not be alone in your studies and learning. In fact, you will stay current with a new wave of evolving consciousness. The more you educate yourself, the less you will have to lean on others to explain new basics to you. The world we were born into is racist and white supremacist. To be anti-racist will involve a new language with new ways of thought. It is an auspicious sign that many of these books in hardcopy are out of stock, but they are all still available on Kindle. Reading will spur self-reflection as well, which is essential.

In this process of education and expanding world view, new questions may arise. Some of my questions have arisen around the Ruhaniat:

Why is the Ruhaniat sufi order so white in the United States? Does it matter? Is there anything we could do to change that? Is there anything lost by having the leadership all white? Given that it is mostly a white organization, is there any special role it could take or way to take responsibility in a meaningful way to be part of the solution and not an unintentional part of the problem in these times?

2) Come together and speak. All the worst things are free to flourish if unconscious and unspoken. This is a great time to talk about race and racism with friends, family, and our spiritual community to further aid our learning and mobilize our strength in the face of this issue. Join or create a book club to be able to share insights and thoughts. In these discussions, we need the humility, curiosity, and openness to evolve our thinking with each other. One should not expect that the place someone starts in their thinking is where they will end.

Creating new culture where we can talk about racism more fluidly, makes it easier to fix any issues as they come to our attention. Remember, this is 400 years in the making. The only way to make change will be to be proactive. Although it is a marathon and not a sprint, if you get a lot of work done now while the wave of media attention and protests can help carry you, it will be a helpful investment to draw on later, when the world's attention shifts elsewhere.

3) Be ready to Keep seeing how you can help and then do it. This is not a onetime thing. Different people have different talents, connections to people and organizations, and spheres of influence. Different people may witness different things. Be prepared to be uncomfortable and speak up or take action. And do not let the perfect be the enemy of the good. If you are not able or up to protesting in the streets, make sure you take actions with your energy or pocket book so that your caring goes beyond verbiage.

4) Tend to your spirit and mental health. Proactively alleviate stress. This will help maintain your bounty and reserve for the work ahead. Although stress and pain can be excellent alerts and impetus to change, it is easier to actually make change and learn when we have more blood up in the higher centers of the brain. Maintain your spiritual practice, chanting, singing, the purification breaths and deep breathing, and thereby

attract unlimited resources of the Divine to come to your aid. Soak them in through your roots. Also keep moving. I find working on my physical flexibility and strength is a great way to cultivate mental strength and flexibility as well while taking the stress out of my body.

Consider learning Trauma Tapping Technique. It is a powerful easy to learn trauma healing tool, that only takes 10 minutes and involves tapping on acupressure points for mental health that is great for every day stress as well. Once you learn it, you can teach it to anyone and everyone who needs it, giving yourself another ready way to help people in the moment. To learn, just follow along with the cartoon from non-profit [Peaceful Heart Network](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9vbl-R9Rw0c) which is an organization that has helped people recover after such things as genocide in Rwanda. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9vbl-R9Rw0c>

5) Remember to continue to include yourself and others in your compassion and as Layla Saad says, move forward with it but do not make the work a stick to beat yourself with. Remember also what we are going Toward. We have so much to gain. Disowned and oppressed parts of our humanity mirror disowned and oppressed parts of ourselves. What a joy it will be to be all together and not have this perverse burden with all its associated fear and suffering. What energy will be freed up with the healing of this collective sickness.

**\*Ya Fattah Ya Fattah Ya Fattah\***