

Voices & Communities for Liberation

Rev angel Kyodo williams

Bio: Rev. angel Kyodo williams Sensei, is an author, maverick spiritual teacher, master trainer and founder of Transformative Change. She has been bridging the worlds of personal transformation and justice since the publication of her critically-acclaimed book, *Being Black: Zen and the Art of Living With Fearlessness and Grace*. *Being Black* was hailed as “an act of love” by Pulitzer Prize winner Alice Walker and “a classic” by Buddhist teacher Jack Kornfield.

Her book, *Radical Dharma: Talking Race, Love & Liberation*, co-authored with Lama Rod Owens, is a powerful wake-up journey that is igniting communities — activist, Buddhist and beyond — to have the conversations necessary to become more awake and aware of what hinders liberation of self and society.

Books:

[Being Black: Zen and the Art of Living with Fearlessness and Grace](#)

[Radical Dharma: Talking Race, Love, and Liberation](#)

Articles:

[The black queer Buddhist teacher who is smashing stereotypes and leading an awakening on the left](#) (Think Progress, 2017)

[Your Liberation Is on the Line](#) (Lion’s Roar, 2020)

[Love Everyone: A Guide for Spiritual Activists](#) (Lion’s Roar, 2019)

Quotes/Excerpts:

“It’s insufficient to hide in centers and make money off of mindfulness while the world is burning down” (Think Progress, 2017).

“Without inner change there can be no outer change. without collective change, no change matters.” (Radical Dharma, 2016)

“If what I’m saying irritates you, you’re in a really good place. If it doesn’t, and if the lens of your practice is not turned toward liberation, then you’re asleep. We’ve internalized oppression. We’ve internalized patriarchy. We’ve internalized the idea that we should be divided, that we should be separated, that we are different, that we are better, that

someone's less than, that I am less than. I've internalized it too, and every day, with every waking breath, I push against it" (Lion's Roar, 2020).

Website: <https://angelkyodowilliams.com/bio>

Osho Zenju Earthlyn Manuel

Bio: Osho Zenju Earthlyn Marselean Manuel, poet, author, ordained Zen priest, and medicine woman of the drum, was born in Los Angeles, California. She is the middle daughter of Lawrence Manuel Jr. and Alvesta Pierre Manuel, who both migrated from rural Louisiana. Zenju Osho was raised in Los Angeles, with her older and younger sisters. As a child, she was referred to by the name her mother gave her, Earthlyn, her middle name Marselean (Marceline) was her grandmother's name. Zenju is a dharma name. Osho is a title meaning Zen teacher. She is the dharma heir of Buddha and the late [Zenkei Blanche Hartman](#) in the Shunryu Suzuki Roshi lineage through the San Francisco Zen Center (SFZC).

Books:

The Shamanic Bones of Zen: Revealing The Ancestral Spirit And The Mystical Heart of an Sacred Tradition
The Deepest Peace
Sanctuary
The Way of Tenderness

Articles:

[On Awakening Through Race, Sexuality, and Gender](#) (Lion's Roar, 2015)

[Darkness Is Asking To Be Loved](#) (Lion's Roar, June 2020)

[The Dharma of Black Feminism: Zenju Earthlyn Manuel on bell hooks and Melissa Harris-Perry](#) (Buddhist Peace Fellowship, 2013)

Quotes/Excerpts:

"I have gone through many gateways. But I am neither monk, nor nun, nor priest. I am neither Zen or Buddhist. I am neither teacher nor guide, nor author. I am a dark seed of a lineage that has resisted annihilation for thousands of years. I am a voice from the great darkness of transformation, grace, and constant birth and death. I am a collective voice that weeps and protests. I am the ever-abundant blackness and darkness that has given birth to everything. I am life from the first source of life. I am because we are."
(Sourced at: <https://zenju.org>)

“Not am i worthy enough, but am i free enough to awaken and disrupt everything old and unnecessary in my life?” — The Deepest Peace: Contemplations from a Season of Stillness

Website: <https://zenju.org>

Mushim Patricia Ikeda

Bio: Mushim Patricia Ikeda is a Buddhist teacher, author, social justice activist, and mother based in Oakland, California. She teaches at the [East Bay Meditation Center](#), where she leads the award-winning yearlong mindfulness program for social change agents, Practice in Transformative Action. Mushim is the recipient of the Gil A. Lopez Award for a peacemaker of color from the Association for Dispute Resolution of Northern California, and the recipient of an honorary doctor of sacred theology degree from the Starr King School for the Ministry.

Mushim has been featured in two documentary films: "Between the Lines" (on Asian American women poets) and "Standing on Faith: Women and the New Religious Activism in America," distributed by the Pluralism Project at Harvard University.

Articles:

[How to Practice Metta for a Troubled Time](#) (Lion's Roar, 2021)

[I Vow Not to Burn Out](#) (Lion's Roar, 2020)

Quotes/Excerpts:

“Metta meditation is not a magical spell you can cast on the population of the U.S. in order to produce a state of utopian bliss. It is not a cure-all for oppression and the unequal distribution of power and privilege. Metta meditation doesn't work like that. It's about being determined, courageous, and patient in purifying your own heart and mind... What this form of meditation is designed to do — is to purify us of hatred and ill will... Good will, or loving-kindness, is the antidote to ill will, hatred, and enmity.” (Lion's Roar, 2021).

“Is it possible for us, as disciples of the Buddha, to engage with systemic change, grow and deepen our spiritual practice, and, if we're laypeople, also care for our families? How can we do all of this without collapsing?” (Lion's Roar, 2020).

Website: <http://www.mushimikeda.com>

Kritee Kanko

Bio: Buddhist Zen teacher, climate scientist, grief ritual leader, and social permaculture designer. She is a founding board member of [Rocky Mountain Ecodharma Retreat Center](#), a center that brings meditation in nature together with dharma teachings for ecological action, as well as [Frontline Farming](#), an advocacy group that lifts up people of color and women farmers and focuses on food cultivation, education, policy change and justice. As a senior scientist in the Climate Smart Agriculture Program at [Environmental Defense Fund](#), she is helping to implement environment and climate-friendly methods of small farming at large scales in Asia with a three-fold goal of poverty alleviation, food security and climate mitigation / adaptation.

Articles:

[Why Bodhisattvas Need to Disrupt the Status Quo](#) (Lion's Roar, 2020).

[White Supremacy, Climate Crisis, and Human Trauma](#) (One Earth Sangha, 2020)

Quotes/Excerpts:

"An individual cannot beat a system. To beat one system, it will require another system. Systems of oppression or separation must be replaced by systems of nonseparation or nonduality. The opposite of patriarchy is not matriarchy, where women are more powerful than men, but rather it is one of deep equality and solidarity. We are so used to systems of oppression that we have forgotten how to live in a way that is not separate. The top-down hierarchical systems that are rooted in exploitation and oppression must make way for systems and institutions that are rooted in compassion and sacred care of all beings. This requires more than words and good intentions; it must be backed by actions that redistribute power and wealth to those who are marginalized. Without this, societal healing and a just transition will not be possible" (Lion's Roar, 2020).

Robin Wall Kimmerer

Bio: mother, scientist, decorated professor, and enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. She is the author of *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*

Books:

[Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants](#)

Gathering Moss: A Natural and Cultural History of Mosses

Articles:

[Speaking of Nature: Finding language that affirms our kinship with the natural world](#) (Orion, 2017)

['Every breath we take was given to us by plants': Robin Wall Kimmerer on climate change and Covid-19](#) (Penguin, 2020).

Quotes/Excerpts:

“Action on behalf of life transforms. Because the relationship between self and the world is reciprocal, it is not a question of first getting enlightened or saved and then acting. As we work to heal the earth, the earth heals us” (Braiding Sweetgrass, 2015).

“Knowing that you love the earth changes you, activates you to defend and protect and celebrate. But when you feel that the earth loves you in return, that feeling transforms the relationship from a one-way street into a sacred bond” (Braiding Sweetgrass, 2015).

“Even a wounded world is feeding us. Even a wounded world holds us, giving us moments of wonder and joy. I choose joy over despair. Not because I have my head in the sand, but because joy is what the earth gives me daily and I must return the gift” (Braiding Sweetgrass, 2015).

Website: <https://www.robinwallkimmerer.com/about>

Lama Rod Owens

Bio: Lama Rod Owens invites you into the cross sections of his life as a Black, queer male, born and raised in the South, and heavily influenced by the church and its community.... officially recognized by the Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism after receiving his teaching authorization from his root teacher the Venerable Lama Norlha Rinpoche. He completed his Master of Divinity degree at [Harvard Divinity School](#). Lama Rod also practices, studies, and teaches secular mindfulness and is a teacher with [Inward Bound Mindfulness Education \(iBme\)](#) where he is also a faculty member for the organization's teacher training program. He is also heavily engaged in social change activism.

Books:

[Radical Dharma, Talking Race, Love and Liberation.](#) (2016)

Love and Rage The Path of Liberation Through Anger. Love and Rage (2020)

(Note: See Love and Rage Chapter 8, #MeToo and the Guru for a deep look at abuse of power in teacher/student dharma relationships)

Articles:

[Is the Guru Model Broken?](#) (Lion's Roar, 2019)

[No One Like Me](#) (Lion's Roar 2021) Lama Rod Owens on taking care of your own needs when you don't see yourself represented in those around you.

[A Love Song to My Anger](#) (Lion's Roar 2021) Lama Rod Owens discusses his book, Love and Rage, and finding the wisdom of anger in charged times.

Quotes/Excerpts:

"To begin with, this is not a mindfulness book on how to bypass anger and focus on happiness. Nor is this a book about using any other spiritual path to transform the nature of anger into something more profound or transcendent. This book is about facing our anger and welcoming it as a teacher and friend so it can help us to benefit ourselves and others" (Love and Rage, 2020).

"There's something about our identity as activists that is so closely related to the anger that we experience. What would it look like if we formed our activist communities around joy, not the suffering or the anger, as a basis for our change work?" (Love and Rage, 2020)

"The most profound practice I have ever been taught by my teachers is simply letting my shit fall apart, developing the courage to sit with all of my rough edges, the ugliness, the destructive and suffocating story lines I have perpetuated about myself, and letting go of the same suffocating storylines others maintain about me" (Radical Dharma, 2016).

Website: <https://www.lamarod.com>

Ruth King

Bio: Ruth King teaches mindfulness meditation retreats worldwide and develops meditation practitioners at Spirit Rock Meditation Center, Insight Meditation Society, and the Mindfulness Meditation Teacher Certification Program. She has a Masters Degree in Clinical Psychology from John F. Kennedy University, CA, and is the author of several

publications including her most recent, [Mindful of Race: Transforming Racism From The Inside Out](#).

King's work is also featured in the 2021 publications of Chicken Soup for the Soul's [I'm Speaking Now: Black women share their truth](#), and Nautilus Book Award Gold Recipient [Black & Buddhist: What Buddhism can teach us about race, resilience, transformation, and freedom](#).

Books:

Mindful of Race: Transforming Racism from the Inside Out (2018)

Healing Rage: Women Making Inner Peace Possible (2007)

Quotes/Excerpts:

"The world's heart is on fire, and race is at its core. What's happening in the world today is the result of past actions. The bitter racial seeds from past beliefs and actions are blooming all around us, reflecting not only a division of races that is rooted in ignorance and hate, but also, and more solely, a division of heart."

Blog: <https://ruthking.net/wise-talk/>

Resmaa Menekam

Bio: Author, artist and psychotherapist specialising in the effects of trauma on the human body. "I help people, communities, and organizations find strength in healing that is holistic and resilient. Together let's set a course for healing historical and racialized trauma carried in the body and the soul. I am a healer. I help people rise through the suffering's edge. I am a cultural trauma navigator. I am a communal provocateur and coach. I am a Senior Fellow with The Meadows Institute. I consider it my job in this moment to make the invisible visible." (Sourced at <https://www.resmaa.com/about>)

Books:

My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies (2017)

Articles:

[Healing Your Thousand-Year-Old Trauma](#) (Medium, 2018)

[Why Healing Racism Begins With the Body](#) (Center for Compassion Studies)

['Notice the Rage; Notice the Silence'](#) (On Being with Krista Tippett)

Quotes/Excerpts:

"Years as a healer and trauma therapist have taught me that trauma isn't destiny. The body, not the thinking brain, is where we experience most of our pain, pleasure, and joy, and where we process most of what happens to us. It is also where we do most of our healing, including our emotional and psychological healing. And it is where we experience resilience and a sense of flow" (My Grandmother's Hands, 2017).

"A key factor in the perpetuation of white-body supremacy is many people's refusal to experience clean pain around the myth of race. Instead, usually out of fear, they choose the dirty pain of silence and avoidance and, invariably, prolong the pain" (My Grandmother's Hands, 2017).

"There's a way out of this mess, and it requires each of us to begin with our own body. You and your body are important parts of the solution. You will not just read this book; you will experience it in your body. Your body—all of our bodies—are where changing the status quo must begin" (My Grandmother's Hands, 2017).

Website: <https://www.resmaa.com>

Courses: [Cultural Somatics Institute](#)

COMMUNITIES OF LIBERATION

[ARISE Sangha](#) (**Awakening through Race, Intersectionality, and Social Equity**) is a community of mindfulness practitioners and monastics who come together to heal the wounds of racial injustice and social inequity, beginning with looking deeply within ourselves and using the energy of compassion, understanding, and love in action. As practitioners in the Plum Village tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh, we aspire to engage our global community in the work of healing through social action. We seek to nourish and protect Beloved Community in our sangha and beyond.

[East Bay Meditation Center](#) — Founded to provide a welcoming environment for people of color, members of the LGBTQI community, people with disabilities, and other

underrepresented communities, the East Bay Meditation Center welcomes everyone seeking to end suffering and cultivate happiness. Our mission is to foster liberation, personal and interpersonal healing, social action, and inclusive community building. We offer mindfulness practices and teachings on wisdom and compassion from Buddhist and other spiritual traditions. Rooted in our commitment to diversity, we operate with transparent democratic governance, generosity-based economics, and environmental sustainability.

[Buddhist Peace Fellowship](#) — The Buddhist Peace Fellowship shapes movements for ecological and social justice by sharing spiritual-political practices and resources. We come together from multiple lineages, Buddhist and otherwise, to support bold, creative, loving actions to block systemic harm, while building collaborative tools and gatherings that give us the strength to be with our suffering, in order to transform towards liberation.

[One Earth Sangha](#) — a virtual EcoDharma center supporting a global community in the Path of Engaged Practice.

“We assert that engagement is, on the one hand, essential to the spiritual path and, on the other hand, more effective and sustainable when grounded in transformative insight and authentic compassion...

We aspire to skillfully challenge contemporary convert-Dharma culture and practices. We suggest that because the predominant Dharma traditions in the West are embedded in consumerist, militarist, hyperindividualist, white supremacist, and species-ist culture, they will have a tendency to replicate and empower these cultural patterns.

Yet the Dharma itself teaches self-scrutiny. As practitioners, we can welcome challenges to what we take to be reality, to what we view as “the way things are.” This endless Dharma never lets us off the hook and yet always offers a way forward.

The EcoDharma we aspire to develop and share is rich and multifaceted. Briefly stated, it is thoroughly rooted in Dharma, wholly inclusive of Earth and other than human beings, applies to the individual as well as collective level, counters patterns of domination across differences and over time, and emphasizes practice that is engaged and relational.”