



SANDHYA JHA

Anti-oppression
consultant

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Sandhya Jha is the founder director of the [Oakland Peace Center](#), a [collective](#), a collective of 40 organizations creating access, equity and dignity for all in Oakland and the Bay Area, and served as its director until January 2021.

Raised in an interracial and multi-faith family and witness to the sometimes subtle (and sometimes obvious) ways that racism and xenophobia show up in our society, it is not surprising that Sandhya's career has been marked by work to effect public policy change (working in the office of Congressman Thomas C. Sawyer from Akron, Ohio), religious liberty and an alternative voice to the religious right (at The Interfaith Alliance) and around the issues of housing for all (at East Bay Housing Organizations) as well as her work to build what Dr. Martin Luther King called Beloved Community (at the Oakland Peace Center).

ANTI-RACISM TRAINING BACKGROUND:

Fifteen years as an anti-oppression trainer and consultant, primarily with non-profits, youth organizing groups, universities and faith/interfaith organizations. Previous clients/training sites/lectures include:

- Young Workers United
- Bay Area Solidarity Summer (South Asian young adult activist training program)
- TradeShift
- Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County
- XPLOR National Year of Service program
- Higher Education and Leadership Ministries
- Cathedral of Hope (the largest LGBTQ church in the world, located in Dallas, TX)
- Los Medanos Community College
- Adjunct professor at three graduate schools on the subject of spirituality and social transformation / social justice
- Numerous UCC, Disciples, Presbyterian and other churches and middle judicatories
- Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County

Sandhya's 2017 book, *Transforming Communities: How People Like You are Healing Their Neighborhoods* is being taught in community colleges, universities, seminaries and graduate programs for social justice, social work, criminal justice and urban planning.

HOW I UNDERSTAND ANTI-OPPRESSION

Some consultants in the arena of cultural competence or Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are committed to fostering healthier interpersonal relations. I believe that is important. The reason I engage in anti-oppression is that I believe our individual and interpersonal work best thrives in an environment where institutional and systemic justice are explicit goals of the organization. In other words, justice creates the best container for kindness, compassion, and empathy. Therefore, my work with any organization will prioritize and support institutional/organizational practices and policies of anti-oppression, while also including cultural humility, anti-bias, and community issues.



DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

I believe that organizational anti-oppression work happens best over time, rather than with occasional trainings that don't have a through line.

Things I can provide as part of a whole anti-oppression strategy are the following:

- assistance with the creation of a team, tools for the team, and periodic consulting time with the team to support their forward direction
- creation or co-creation of a curriculum or series of events for a larger organization, combining cultural humility work, events about issues of justice in the community, film/book/discussion groups, and anti-oppression workshops and training.
- co-facilitation of anti-oppression workshops
- facilitation of cultural humility workshops
- connecting organizations with guest speakers and panel on social issues relevant to the organization's work or members' interests, and resources on how to apply workshop learnings to those events
- connections to effective trainers on issues like implicit bias or specialized issues like equity in HR, for example.

IMPORTANT TO KNOW ABOUT ME AS A CONSULTANT:

- I believe that anti-oppression work, while not easy, can actually be life-giving and even fun. Addressing issues that go back hundreds of years can bring up a lot of feelings, but at its best, we can do work that ultimately feels good, exciting and inspiring, where we all have roles to play and we are all valued well.
- I believe that understanding our history, our multiracial history of harm but also of resistance and vision, is what helps us create a vision for our shared future. History work and dreaming together are always part of the work I do with organizations.
- Accountability is central to anti-oppression work. anti-oppression work is only sustainable when we commit ourselves to practices of accountability to people and communities and organizations of color. That is true for me as a trainer, also. I remain rooted in an organization that centers the wisdom, guidance and leadership of people of color and I am part of a cohort of trainers who support, challenge, and enhance each other's work regularly.