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## **Revolutionary Relationships Can Heal a Broken World Rozella Haydée White Shows How in New Book *Love Big***

It will take a revolutionary kind of love to heal the brokenness, division, and violence in today's world, says life and leadership coach Rozella Haydée White. But there's a lot of work to be done before that can happen. Humans haven't experienced true peace and reconciliation yet, but White believes both are possible. She maps out the way forward in her new book, *Love Big: The Power of Revolutionary Relationships to Heal the World* (Fortress Press, May 7, 2019, \$21.99 paper).

"I have hope for a world and for relationships that reflect a sense of belonging," White says. It starts with a reminder from Mother Teresa: "We have forgotten that we belong to each other." White says that's because we've forgotten that we were created by a God of love who embodied relationship in the Trinity. "We have forgotten, or never believed, that we were crafted in the Divine's image to be lovers—to love big and to practice this love with ourselves and with each other," she writes.

Modeled after the image of God as a lover, revolutionary relationships cross the dividing lines of race, gender, religion, orientation, ability, identity, and class. White defines such relationships as "life-giving, risk-taking, vulnerable, gracious, forgiving, diverse, and accountable.

In *Love Big*, White shows how to do the hard work necessary on our minds, hearts, bodies, and souls that is required before we can create and nurture revolutionary relationships. It is often painful work, as her own experience attests. She weaves together theological, personal, historical, and cultural perspectives on topics such as:

- **Racial justice:** As a Black woman, White says she can't name a time when people of color were in reciprocal and uplifting relationships with white people. "Yet people talk about being reconciled as if there is former reality that we can recreate." Any talk of reconciliation without directly addressing the harm that has been done to Black and indigenous people is "bullshit and doesn't honor the very people you want to be in relationship with," White says.
- **Self Love as Spiritual Practice:** I had to first be in healthy relationship with myself before I could be in healthy relationships with others. This would be the most revolutionary act of all. Jesus says love your neighbor as you love yourself. If we don't love ourselves how can we profess the we love our neighbor as we love one another?
- **The Trinity:** I believe in a God who exists in three ways, each an entity entirely unto itself yet in constant relationship with the other parts. One God in three persons God chose to live out relationship in the Trinity. If we start with the trinity as the ultimate model of revolutionary relationships we get a clear pathway into relationships that are life giving and transformative

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- **Womanist Theology:** Immersing herself in the study of the lived experience of Black women and their relationship with God had huge implications for White: “If I, a Black woman who experiences oppression and heartbreak, was made in the image of God then God is a black woman who experiences oppression and heartbreak.”

“To love big is to recognize the inherent worth of everyone and to realize the the most important work to be done is the work of relationship,” White says. “This leads to a fundamental shift in worldview so that all experience liberation here and now.”

**Rozella Haydée White** is a public theologian, spiritual life coach, leadership consultant, inspirational speaker and writer focused on nurturing life-giving love in this world. She engages issues of faith, justice, self awareness and love, mental illness, and the radical and transformative love of God as embodied in the person of Jesus. White is a contributing author for *Renew 52: 50+ Ideas to Revitalize Your Congregation by Leaders Under 50* and *Anonymous: Naming the God of Esther and the Women Who Plant Churches* and is coauthor of *Free Indeed: Devotions for Lent 2017* and the *LEAD Work Out Guide: Calling People of Faith into Meaningful, Wider Relationships*. Her writing appears in many publications and blogs including *Gather, The Salt Collective, Living Lutheran, ShePreaches Magazine, Believe Out Loud, Biologos, Café, The Mudroom, and Thirty Seconds or Less*.

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*Love Big:*  
*The Power of Revolutionary Relationships to Heal the World*  
by Rozella Haydée White  
Fortress Press  
\$21.99 paper, ISBN 978-1506433738  
**PUB DATE: May 7, 2019**