

Gangaji Podcast
Being Yourself
Episode 1
Hosts Hillary Larson and Barbara Denempont
A Crack in the Illusion
Released November 21, 2018
www.gangaji.org

[00:00] HILLARY LARSON, HOST: I'm Hillary Larson, and I'm going to introduce to you a brand new podcast, our brand new podcast from the Gangaji Foundation. But first, I'm going to give you a little teaser, playing a clip for you, right here.

[00:13] GANGAJI: So don't know who you are, and if you are experiencing being separate, experience it fully, right now, completely. What does it mean to be separate? Teach me what it means to feel separate.

[00:25] HILLARY: That was a clip from the first episode of *Being Yourself*. It's the new podcast that the Gangaji Foundation is kicking off right now as you're listening to it. And I'm going to introduce to you the host of *Being Yourself*, and that is Barbara Denempont. She's sitting with me right now instead of Gangaji. I'm used to sitting here with Gangaji, I feel like still as stressed out actually.

[00:51] BARBARA DENEMPONT, HOST: Hey Hil.

[00:52] HILLARY: Hey, hey Barb. Anyway I think what we're doing here is kind of formally passing the baton, which, I'm thrilled to be doing that with you. I think you're the perfect person for this. And I know that you're probably not going to like this, so -

[01:09] BARBARA: Uh oh.

[01:10] HILLARY: - so I just, I just want to prepare you ahead of time - is that you didn't want to make a big thing about being the Executive Director of the Gangaji Foundation, but I feel like it's important to kind of dip into that for a second, because (*laughter*) see - I knew, I knew, okay.

[01:25] BARBARA: Okay.

[01:26] HILLARY: All right - here we go. So, I feel like you, you know you met Gangaji in 1993?

[01:33] BARBARA: That's right.

[01:34] HILLARY: Gangaji had her awakening in 1990. You have been with her for a long time, and you've been with her in many ways that most of us will never even be able to relate to. As far as even being in all these satsangs over the years, and hearing the most incredible exchanges. So there I, I rest my case on that need to introduce you in that way.

[01:57] BARBARA: Well thanks Hil. It is, it's been a, a privileged life, and of having all this time to just - what's the word - dive into this opportunity, this invitation with Gangaji, over all these years. And there's always been an evolution, and a revolution, in my life. It still happens, even after 25 plus years. So I'm really happy first to say "thank you Hil". And I know I'm representing so many people who are saying "thank you" to you for, for the dedication and the beautiful podcasts that you've created. And so I am – you're my mentor in this – and I feel like I'm coming out from behind the desk and saying "okay". Because this is something that I truly love, that's truly meaningful to me, it's been truly meaningful in my own life, and I know that this treasure trove of recordings can be really well used, and really serve all of us in our own inquiry. So we really want to take a dive into different topics, different questions, so that we can actually inquire together over, over time, over these, the coming months. However, if people like it, if it works, you know, we'll continue. But it's really an opportunity to be together in this, and that's really thrilling. So it's not a conversation with Gangaji per se, but it is the conversation we're all in.

[03:33] HILLARY: I was going to say that it, this podcast is different, because it's not you sitting across the coffee table talking to Gangaji, but it is you culling this incredible archive of segments of satsang that are so rare, and so unique, and something that you can't find on YouTube. And I think that this is going to be intriguing for people to hear these things that they normally would never have access to.

[04:01] BARBARA: I'm so moved by the material, and it's really wonderful to be able to dive in and find what feels really relevant, and really brilliant, and really illuminating. To find the right pieces that are going to, to serve, to serve us all.

[04:21] HILLARY: I was privy to hear the one you're going to play for all of us right now, and I have to tell you, it's an incredible exchange. And when we were getting ready to sit down and do this recording, you were talking about one of the very first times you sat with Gangaji, and the, the fear of being cast out, and how that's linked to what we're about to hear.

[04:42] BARBARA: I felt like the greatest place that we could start, because you were ending on *finding* home, and I thought well maybe I should start on how we *lose* home, how we lose sight of home. So, in many ways, it's actually a very simple thing that happens. But it is fundamentally our human story of separation. How are we separate? How do we imagine ourselves to be separate? So looking at that, I came across this exchange that really reminded me of that first conversation, literally the first conversation I had with Gangaji, when I said, I said to her "I'm afraid of being cast out." And she laughed immediately, and she said "how far can you go?" And she really stopped me in my tracks in that moment. She was asking me, essentially, to check my assumptions. Really, how far can you go? And that was transformative in that moment, that was so compelling, and that was the beginning of turning my life in a completely and utterly different direction, and in a direction that was at home, and at peace, and not separate, and recognizing I'm not separate, even though there is this archetypal human story of being separate from the Source, separate from love, separate from ourselves, separate from each other. That there's something that can be penetrated in that story, and it's absolutely freeing.

[06:25] HILLARY: Let's take a listen.

(Excerpted from Marin, CA Public Meeting, October 24, 2004
Transcript file: "10-24-04 Marin Public Meeting.doc")

[06:31] SATSANG PARTICIPANT: *I have no doubt that radiant, free consciousness is who I am. But ...*

GANGAJI: Uh oh. Okay, this is going to be interesting. Given there is no doubt of who you are.

PARTICIPANT: *But the attachment to the story is still there.*

GANGAJI: What's the story?

PARTICIPANT: *The story I have created all my life and nurtured and ...*

GANGAJI: What is that story, can you give it to us in a nutshell? I have a nutcracker here. *(laughter)* I am going to put it right between these two. This is the no-doubt, yeah. So what's the story? In a few sentences, couple of sentences.

PARTICIPANT: *The me that is separate from you, and separate from everybody else in the room.*

GANGAJI: So that's a doubt that you are radiant, free consciousness. And it is very important to recognize that *that* in itself, is the doubt. So you may have had the experience and the understanding that you are radiant, free consciousness, but when you are caught by the story, or the belief that there is a separation between you and me, and you and everyone in the room, that's the doubt. So you *do* have doubt, and it is very important to recognize doubt is present. Then you aren't relying on past experience or understanding, because if you are relying on that and you are still suffering with some experience or story of separation, the conversation ends. It's a closed box. But to open that box is to go, "My God, this is a manifestation of doubt." Do you follow that?

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah, I thought that was part of the problem, was the doubt. That is part of the problem.*

GANGAJI: So you got rid of the problem by saying, "I have no doubt."

PARTICIPANT: *Well I recognize the doubt, but it seemed out of place knowing that radiant, free consciousness is really who I am.*

GANGAJI: Forget that. Forget that, don't know who you are.

PARTICIPANT: *Okay.*

GANGAJI: What a relief, already you are more at ease. You see what it is to carry around some knowing of who you are. "I know I am radiant, free consciousness." Forget it, don't know anything. (pause) What?

PARTICIPANT: *I don't know, everything kind of goes away at that point.*

GANGAJI: You see how complicated that knowing is? And how in the knowing there is an attempt to get rid of what has been thought to be bad, so I will know I won't doubt, and yet I am still suffering because I *feel* my experience that I am separate. So don't know who you are, and if you are experiencing being separate, experience it fully right now, completely. What does it mean to be separate? Teach me what it means to feel separate. Is there a feeling in your body, physical sensation of some kind that I could generate so that I can feel separate?

PARTICIPANT: *No.*

GANGAJI: Is there anything going on in the throat, or this area, or this area, any energy or ...

PARTICIPANT: *No, it's just a thought.*

GANGAJI: It's just a thought.

PARTICIPANT: *Oh.*

GANGAJI: That's wonderful. Do you have this thought every moment?

PARTICIPANT: *No, I have to think about it.*

GANGAJI: That's right (*laughter*) that's right, so this thought, when you think about it, appears, and then sometimes it disappears. So it's not real. Not - I am not saying for you to believe that, and now are going, "The thought I am separate from everybody is an unreal thought." Just tell the truth. Just notice this, this comes and goes, this thought "I am separate." And you know what comes with that thought "I am separate," there are feelings that come with that, and then there is this, usually, this desire to get un-separate. But if you just stop and recognize this is a thought, and I am not suggesting that you substitute a thought for that, just let that thought go. Don't *think* that thought. Just for this moment, just as an experiment, don't think any thought. And if some thought appears, just see it appear, but if you don't *think* it, watch how it just crumbles. Takes activity for a thought to continue.

PARTICIPANT: *It does.*

GANGAJI: That's right, so what is here now that is real? That's not subject to change? If you say radiant, free consciousness I am going to hit you with a beanbag. Because you have used up that term, haven't you?

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah, I think I have.*

GANGAJI: That term has been corrupted now by the egoic mind structure, which is common. It's become a kind of spiritual jargon, so just toss it. Who needs it. Does radiant, free consciousness need to be named "Radiant Free Consciousness"?

PARTICIPANT: *It used to, but not any more.*

GANGAJI: Did it ever really need to be named that? Yeah, that's right, what a beautiful name that is, Radiant Free Consciousness. What that says! Until it becomes enfolded in some thought.

PARTICIPANT: *So what don't you have over there?*

GANGAJI: I don't have you over here, because you can't be put any place, or thrown, or grabbed, or thought. Because anything that can be put over here, can be moved from here, can disappear from here. But who you are, is free of all of that, un-thought.

PARTICIPANT: *That's huge.*

GANGAJI: That's huge. That's right. So huge that the mind, in its attempt to grab it and understand it, takes a piece and calls it "that." But if you recognize it's a piece, and that piece is like, made of nothing, is insubstantial, the mind can open to the hugeness of what the mind is appearing in. What just happened just then?

PARTICIPANT: *A glimpse of that hugeness, it's awesome, it can't be grasped.*

GANGAJI: Well, in, in that glimpse, what was the experience, physically and emotionally and mentally?

PARTICIPANT: *That same release, that it was just a thought that I had before, and letting that go, and now the same, radiant, free consciousness, letting that go and ...*

GANGAJI: Yeah.

PARTICIPANT: *... just keeps getting bigger.*

GANGAJI: That's right.

PARTICIPANT: *And um, too big?*

GANGAJI: Are you willing for it to be too big? Too big. Then we are speaking of really self-inquiry. Too big. Uncontrollable. Unconditional, unmanageable, unknowable. You see the release gets bigger too.

PARTICIPANT: *Yes, yes.*

GANGAJI: It's a very different experience, isn't it?

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah.*

GANGAJI: But this is an experience, this wasn't here, it's here now, at some point in the future it won't be here. Because all experience is subject to change. Even the experience, the direct experience of what is not subject to change. But in an instant, as you called it a glimpse, in an instant of some kind of alignment with, direct experience and what is bigger than direct

experience, a glimpse of the hugeness of reality. There is a shift. The challenge then is to not *know* that shift. To not take this moment and put it in your knowledge bank. To not save it. Because in an instant of doing that, there is a belief or an understanding that you have it. That you have it, rather than it has you. And then what was huge is made smaller, and that is all imagination. It is fabrication by the mind. One of the great powers of mind, an awesome power, so that's the invitation, it's the invitation to vigilance. That if there is some suffering of separation, don't know anything. Don't know that you are God, or that separation is unreal, just in that moment don't know anything. Be separate. Fully and completely separate, and in that you discover what separation is in. Anything to say?

PARTICIPANT: *Wow.*

GANGAJI: *Wow? That's right. That's right, and the potential is for that to be fresh every moment. Otherwise it's just some knowledge, that - something you remember. This can't be remembered, stop trying to remember it, and you find it here. In whatever else is appearing here, whatever emotion, whatever physical state of the body, whatever state of the mind. Then you don't need to know anything. Then your understanding is pure and fresh and alive, not something that is relied on in case trouble comes. That's vigilance.*

PARTICIPANT: *So now my tendency is to go out saying "don't know anything, don't know anything, don't know anything".*

GANGAJI: Well you see, you can say, "that's my tendency". Yeah, tendency is to know something, and the tendency is to not know anything. Those are the tendencies. What is free of both? Then we are speaking of true knowing, there is no word in our language for that, *jnana*. There is nothing to do with what we think of knowing and not knowing is. It's closer than that. It is reality knowing itself as reality. Regardless of the appearance, for however brief or long time, of a body, emotions, feelings, mental states, circumstances, everything that changes. Without a glimpse, it is all abstract, with a glimpse that's a crack, it's a crack in the mind hold, that's the essential experience. Whether it appears small or big is irrelevant, that's a shift. Whether it's come with drugs, whether it's come with nature, whether it's come in satsang, in meditation, whether it's come in dream, all irrelevant. It's the crack. Then the response to that, the vigilance to that, is the willingness to not know anything. And see. Then you see for yourself, in this moment, freshly, what's real, what's unreal, what's still here. I thank you for this inquiry. Very pertinent.

PARTICIPANT: *Thank you.*

GANGAJI: That's how we serve one another, that is what this meeting is about. Really serving one another, as apparent separate beings. And discovering what is changeable in each of us and what is unchangeable in each of us. And does that know itself in each of us, regardless of the changes.

[22:03] BARBARA: Thank you for listening to this first episode of *Being Yourself*. In future episodes we will take a look at longing, what is unnecessary suffering, and when a political issue becomes a spiritual issue. You are most welcome to share your report or suggest a topic.

Just write to me, Barb, at info@gangaji.org. That's info@gangaji.org. And to learn more about Gangaji, her schedule of in-person and online events, or to find out more about the work of her Foundation, please visit the website at gangaji.org.

This is Barbara Denempont. Until next time. Thanks Hil.