

Gangaji Podcast
Being Yourself
Episode 50
Host Barbara Denempont
Being is Belonging
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GANGAJI: Through this amazing technology we get to meet and even if we don't have physical meetings, there is a meeting once your desire to be free is prevalent in your conscious mind, once you recognize that your life is being lived to be free.

BARBARA DENEMPONT, HOST: Hello and welcome to *Being Yourself, Self-Inquiry with Gangaji*. My name is Barbara Denempont and I am always happy to be playing this role as host to Gangaji's podcast and I'm so grateful that you are here with me listening. This month I have two clips to share with you, both taken from a recent online meeting. The first is an exchange focused on belonging and the second is Gangaji's opening monologue. She speaks about freedom from identification and trusting the unknowable—really good topics.

But first, let's begin with this wonderful exchange on belonging.

(Excerpted from Online Meeting, 2022)

PARTICIPANT: I've been wanting to, to come back for a while. We have sat together twice and it's been quite a journey since last time we spoke and there are so many things that are alive and competing for attention and they feel like they keep getting bigger and bigger in a way. But at the same time, I am feeling this less interested in the "yes-but" and what, what's coming to me right now, I feel, I'm feeling a lot of gratitude for you and the, well, in many, many, many ways. You did a podcast episode recently on—I've just been playing—racism and that there is something about the what I'm wanting, the question, you know, what do you want? having to do with belonging. That's the question. That's the answer that's been coming up a lot in the last couple of years even. I've been on this journey of really, really identifying and I hear that in both ways—as a mixed race individual and then the unfolding of systems of oppression just starting to appear everywhere as this matrix. It used to be "my suffering" and now it is everywhere and I see it everywhere and it's been very overwhelming. But the simplicity I'll get in there now is the belonging. And so, I just wanted to bring that today because it's, it's been like tapping so much. It's been coming in here.

GANGAJI: Where do you belong?

PARTICIPANT: (She laughs) The story has been, I don't belong many places and it's been very painful and there's been a lot of reinforcement of that.

GANGAJI: Where do you belong?

PARTICIPANT: The word that came is "Here."

GANGAJI: So simple.

PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

GANGAJI: And what's where you belong?

PARTICIPANT: (She laughs) A message that I don't belong here. It like keeps going back and forth because ...

GANGAJI: What else is here?

PARTICIPANT: Yeah, what else is here?

GANGAJI: What's here underneath?

PARTICIPANT: A desire to stay.

GANGAJI: What is it that stays here?

PARTICIPANT: (Pause) Yeah.

GANGAJI: That's belonging itself, isn't it?

PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

GANGAJI: Yeah.

PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

GANGAJI: So then even when there is a message or a habit of not belonging, there's still belonging at the core.

PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

GANGAJI: The issue is belonging and if you stop the habit, the issue is revealed. The issue is its resolution. You want what you are. You want what you have and our habits are to look everywhere.

PARTICIPANT: (Laughing) Yeah, everywhere.

GANGAJI: But you said it. You said, "Here".

PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

GANGAJI: You used that word. Yes.

PARTICIPANT: And I'm feeling that it's like a very fast vibration of: "No, I don't belong here," and it'll come back, "No I don't belong here." But it's just, and I can feel ...

GANGAJI: You just come back home.

PARTICIPANT: Yeah, yeah, the vigilance of the invitation to just, to just come back.

GANGAJI: That's right. Then the complication is in all the ways the messages come that you don't belong or it's not for you or ...

PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

GANGAJI: Everybody, but you. Not this time. And the simplicity is simply being here whatever the static is or whatever the, sometimes quite painful messages that you aren't here.

PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

GANGAJI: Yeah, because you are. That's undeniable right? I am.

PARTICIPANT: Yeah.

GANGAJI: You can't even, you can't really get into a conversation about "I am" right?

PARTICIPANT: Right.

GANGAJI: That's belonging. Being is belonging. You belong to Being. You belong to "I am."
(Participant sighs) Yeah, it's big.

PARTICIPANT: It is.

GANGAJI: It's so much bigger than the words.

PARTICIPANT: It feels bigger than my body can hold.

GANGAJI: It is! But it holds your body so your body can be held in that. Yeah, your body can relax. Yeah.

PARTICIPANT: Thank you.

GANGAJI: Oh, I thank you. So beautiful—a transmission—really. Thank you.

PARTICIPANT: Thank you.

GANGAJI: It's such a joy to meet you here, in form as we just had in the Bay Area with our retreat at Santa Sabina, and through this amazing technology, we get to meet. And even if we don't have this technology, even if we don't have physical meetings, there is a meeting once your desire to be free is prevalent in your conscious mind, once you recognize that your life is being lived to be free.

I don't know what you might mean by "free." I didn't even know what I meant by it when Papaji asked me what I want by being here and I said, "freedom." I was surprised by the word. I didn't know what it meant. I had come out of the sixties and seventies and I understood a political freedom, a desire for freedom, but this was a freedom that was free from identification so that I could be, I could be myself without knowing what that is. So, to be free of knowledge and to be free of ignorance because it's, it may be a divine ignorance and a sublime knowledge but it's not the ignorance of ignoring the truth of yourself or the knowledge of what you have accumulated about yourself. So, I used the word "free"—you are free, you are here. I invite you to, to let yourself be open. Whatever the normal play of thought that is occurring in your mind or whatever you regress to or try to get to—to just let all of that go. There is a *leela* at play here. This consciousness that has this form of Gangaji, has your form, has the form of Gangaji when she was Toni, a little girl, has the form that each of us will have as we take our last breath. So, there's a play in that. It's a mystery play. It's not a play where you can memorize your lines or your part. But you play a part without knowing your lines and without knowing what you should look like and without knowing what you should know.

What our meeting is here, is an invitation to play together. I am playing the role of the teacher. Papaji asked me to play that role and when I told him, "Whoa, I don't know how to do that!" he said, "You don't need to know. You just speak from your direct experience." Another way of saying that is you just speak truly, I didn't have to come in and meet a group of people or one person or you, knowing what I would say, having everything that Ramana had said at my fingertips or what Papaji had said. He said, "You can trust your direct experience." And he told me that you would ask the question and, in that question, there would be a play and that play would be a discovery of a deeper truth of being, a bigger discovery than even the most profound *samadhi*, a more ordinary discovery than even you brushing your teeth in the morning.

So, the transcendence of the most extraordinary and the absolute presence, regardless of the ordinary, this is, this is our meeting. You play the role of, you could call yourself student or just person attending, questioner—that's the role for this morning. Later, if you post on the forum or you're in a conversation with people in a small group after the bigger meeting, you will be playing the role of yourself and to play the role of yourself, which is the transcendent role, which is the role of freedom, you really have to trust something unknowable—not your known response, not the story in your mind, not what you have played before, not what you have memorized, not what you think the other wants you to play. It's a, it's free. You are free and your role is free and that's a discovery that happens in an ordinary moment of time—an extraordinary discovery that happens in the most ordinary moments of time.

So, I invite you here to play. We are in this play and it's best if you don't, well, I don't want to say it's best because maybe what you have decided to say or what you have rehearsed saying, is best for you to say, but to say it from the place of absolute freshness and unknown unknowability, and to recognize that we are, we are simply here waiting for direction and when that direction is give, we are called. We are called, we either speak or we don't speak. We are, and if we speak, if we post on the forum, if we speak in here, then you are playing the role of the speaker of truth. So let it be spoken in a way that is fresh and unknowable and not the same old story. That's really the invitation. We know the old stories and they have value. It's not that they are bad or wrong or you need to change your story, substitute a new

story, a spiritual story—it's not that at all. Even the old story, even the old suffering story can be infused with this presence of freedom and freshness. And you know the difference. You know when it's just words, even beautiful words that you are shuffling through or when you are discovering, as you speak or as you write, what is here—what the words are but what is inside the words. What's always the word as a pointer and the truth of this power of freedom that allows us to play in our *leela*.

BARBARA: I love the interplay of these themes, belonging, identification and what it means to truly be yourself. What a powerful combination. I am so very grateful to those on the monthly online meeting for sharing themselves in this way. And if you would like to learn more about the global community that gathers each month, just visit gangaji.org, that's gangaji.org. And you can also sign up to get the e-news or learn more about how this global community is serving peace together.

I am very happy and grateful for your presence here. Thank you for listening. My name is Barbara Denempont. Until next time.