

Gangaji Podcast  
Being Yourself  
Episode 52  
Host Barbara Denempont  
Invitation to the Open Door  
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GANGAJI: If your attention is on the story of how you do not deserve what is being offered, this is the continuation of the self-denial. Because there is an open door in this jail, in this prison, there is a door that is open.

BARBARA DENEMPONT, HOST: Hello and welcome to *Being Yourself, Self-Inquiry with Gangaji*. My name is Barbara Denempont. Perhaps you're like me, you've found yourself on a spiritual path seeking freedom, but freedom from something, perhaps imagining that you were inside some kind of a prison, and I don't mean a physical prison, I mean a mental prison, the kind that we lock ourselves up into. So I'm going to bring you this exchange today that was recorded in two thousand in San Diego, and in it Gangaji points all of us to the open door.

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(Excerpted from A Meeting with Gangaji, Intensive, San Diego, CA, February 6, 2000)

PARTICIPANT: Last Thursday's satsang was the first time I had seen you in person, I had been watching you on TV for a year and a half. And waiting for you to show up all of a sudden, I realized that I had this agenda, "Well, once I get enlightenment, then I can have this, and this, and this." And it was such a shock, it was just like moments before you walked into the room. And I was like, "Oh my God, I am a fraud." You know, and "She is going to see right through me." And so, I barely heard you for those three nights because the defense mechanism just went "red alert, all rationalizations to their stations."

(Laughter)

GANGAJI: It is like in a prison when a door is left open, ding, ding, ding.

PARTICIPANT: Well, it was a prison

GANGAJI: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: And I was yelling from the little peek hole, "Gangaji!!" Because I wanted to expose all of me to you, because I knew otherwise there would be no help. In exposing it to you, expose it to me.

GANGAJI: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: And vice versa. So, it was, I think it was just the months leading up to that, of all of the expectations of what I was going to get out of it. I was pretty much broken apart by those three nights, which was good. And then knowing I was coming here, I kind of hibernated this week to kind of prepare, and try not to be prepared. Even though I have been sitting here for three nights thinking, "Well, what am I going to say when I get up there? I am not going to say that, I am going to say that."

GANGAJI: But seeing it all.

PARTICIPANT: So the exercise we did yesterday with the partner, twice I hit the answer "nothing". I came back to it. And after a while, every time he asked the question, it was like the first time I heard it. So then I would just answer whatever came up, and I think the last answer was "nothing". So last night I am at home, and you had suggested checking out "What would it be like if you did not want all of these things, what if you wanted nothing?" I tried that out, and I was amazed that my mind said, "Okay", to everything that I could list. And I thought, "Well, what is wrong here? Because I still don't feel right, something is not right here." And then I remembered, there was a woman that I met here at *Satsang* that I don't really know. And yesterday she came over and gave me a hug. And I just sort of cut everything short with just little chit chat. And I thought about that last night, and I realized that besides the fear and everything else that everybody talks about, I realized that the big story, the reason my brain said, "Go ahead and get rid of those things, was because you don't deserve to have love." That was the big story, that was the big lie. And it was just that simple experience with her, feeling that she just wanted to hug me and give me some energy. And then I could not take it, could not accept it. I mean that has been pushing me around my whole life. That this need to get acceptance, I related to the gentleman that needed acceptance, related to everybody. I mean, it is all the same question.

GANGAJI: It is, because the need to get acceptance goes with the rejection of that acceptance.

PARTICIPANT: Yes. And the sadness from old hurts, and the anger at those, and the fear of everything. At the same time my mind is saying, "It doesn't matter what you want, you cannot have it." So it is like that thing in Alien that pops out of the guy's stomach. It comes out of nowhere, at the worse times, and it screws everything up. Just when everything is going right, this thing pops up.

(Laughter)

GANGAJI: So, what if it is right? What if it is correct, you do not deserve anything?

PARTICIPANT: I cannot do anything about it.

GANGAJI: You can experience getting nothing, rather than trying to get around that, trying to slip into heaven, trying to learn something so that you will be deserving of God's grace. What if you just experience not searching for a way around, just meeting that monster that says, "No, you do not get in." What is that?

PARTICIPANT: I just realized that everybody is looking at me. Sorry.

GANGAJI: No, that is alright.

PARTICIPANT: I have spent years on stage and teaching, I don't know why I thought about it now.

GANGAJI: That is alright, you see, actually something popped. Your attention on this undeservability, when it was acknowledged to be fully there, it was like it was not as big. It was not as big, it was like, "Oh, that too is an act." That too is an act, and it was one that was taught maybe when you very early and reinforced, and you learned, and you learned how to filter reality to prove that over and over. But finally, it has to be seen, is it real? And the only way to see it, is to stop fighting it or to stop wishing that someone will take it away, or stop thinking, "No one can ever take this away." Just to, in that moment, that such a quick

moment. It is the superego, of course, and the more you try to fight the superego, the stronger it gets. Because you have made it your mental god, and it says, "You are bad". Were you raised Catholic?

PARTICIPANT: I was paroled after the second grade.

GANGAJI: Into limbo or purgatory?

PARTICIPANT: Public school.

GANGAJI: Limbo.

PARTICIPANT: Yes, that is right. I got better.

GANGAJI: But there is something that gets so deeply ingrained there, and believed as true, this superego, the imitation of God, saying, "You are basically worthless. Now get busy proving your worth." Which you do, but yet constantly realize that no matter how you prove your worth...

PARTICIPANT: It is never satisfied.

GANGAJI: It is never satisfied, because at the core you are worthless. So that, that, "I am a body who is worthless. I am somebody who is essentially a nobody, a fraud," this must be met full on. This is self-investigation, who is that fraud? Who is that undeserving, worthless one?

PARTICIPANT: For a moment there was nobody there.

GANGAJI: That is right, it cannot survive the light of investigation, because it is made up, it is made up. You can know that, and understand that, and that understanding can be useful, if it pushes you into the investigation of that for the first time, each time. It is quite amazing if you are willing to see it as it appears, and meet it. It is quite amazing how your whole past will change. My God, the stories that we have told ourselves.

PARTICIPANT: You do carry it around like a journal?

GANGAJI: That is right. "Ha, ha. Another one", that is right.

PARTICIPANT: Another thing I find myself doing is taking, I don't even want to read your work anymore, or listen to any tapes, or anything, because I, my intellect takes that, takes chunks of that and hammers it up as reinforcing the....

GANGAJI: To the superego.

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: That is right.

PARTICIPANT: So I am just flooded, too flooded with all of this stuff.

GANGAJI: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: And so it just does not do me any good any more.

GANGAJI: That is right, because it has all been used as a motivation, as you saw, when you were sitting here, as a motivation to get something.

PARTICIPANT: Right.

GANGAJI: To get deservability, to be worth something, something for you. And you have seen that. That is very clear seeing, that is a very important disillusionment, very important.

PARTICIPANT: It was, the past two years have been great, it has been just a pouring through me like fear though me.

GANGAJI: Yes, yes.

PARTICIPANT: But then this morning, driving here thinking, "Boy I got to get up there today. Boy, I got to, today I feel good, I am going to get up and talk to Gangaji." As soon as I sat down, all of the defenses came up and I did not hear a word. I kind of caught some of what this morning's *Satsang* was about

GANGAJI: But it does not matter, here you are. Because something has broken through the defenses. Something has broken through the story about "poor me", or "the victim", or "the really basic undeserving one". And that is what can be trusted, more than any words. All of my words are just in support of your attention to that. All of anybody's teachings are just in support of your attention to that, that force that has penetrated that story of self-betrayal, self-denial. The nature of grace, the mystery of grace is that it appears undeservedly. No one in this room deserves it. How could you deserve it? All you have to do is look at your life. I mean, you have done some good things, of course. But the many opportunities to be generous that we turn from, the opportunities to be kind that we turn from, to be loving that we turn from, to tell the truth that we turn from. And yet, grace has appeared in your life. Grace has never left your life. So it is not a question finally of deservability, but it is a question of meeting this Grace. And if your attention is on the story of how you do not deserve what is being offered, this is the continuation of the self-denial. Because there is an open door in this jail, in this prison, there is a door that is open. And yes, the red alarms go off, because you can walk freely through that door. And yes, we are conditioned to the alarms, and going back in our cells, and sitting down, and waiting for lock down, you know. But the door is open. Don't pick up your pack of stories, leave it where it is. Come out, come home. That is the deserving. You accept the hand that is offered, you accept the invitation of the open door. That is the deserving. You have turned from it many times, that is how you do not deserve it. But here it is again, in your heart, open. You use this form, Gangaji, or this teaching from Ramana and Papaji, to encourage you to go through the door, to be free, to leave the story behind. What are you experiencing now?

PARTICIPANT: For a moment, again, I slipped into nothingness, and then snapped right back.

GANGAJI: So, now you have had, at least for a moment, an experience of "I" slipping into nothingness. And then "I" being reborn. What is unchanged? What is the same, in both moments?

PARTICIPANT: Well, whatever is watching all of this, is....

GANGAJI: Yes, that is who you are. The "I thought" slips into nothingness, the "I thought" is reborn, You are always here.

PARTICIPANT: It is getting easier to get in there.

GANGAJI: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: It keeps spitting me back out, but it is easier to get in.

GANGAJI: That is right. That is right. There is such support, such encouragement from all corners of the universe, all linages, all teachings, all religions, at their essence, at their core. All of your grandmothers, all of your relations everywhere, all races, all cultures, such support to be free. Truly free. It is really the thrust of evolution. It is really the stepping out into the unknown. Each time you are willing to surrender to this open door, you recognize that is where ease is. That is where ease is. And the difficulty is trying to crawl back into some earlier state that is known, miserable but known. Four walls, a bunk, a bell, a closed door. Miserable, but known. This a Buddha's face now. Yes, goes with the belly.

PARTICIPANT: It is all my infantile maneuvering over Christmas to get food.

GANGAJI: It is a beautiful little belly, it goes with the smile, it goes with the smile. Such support, just in saying "yes", unbelievable support. That support brought us together. I mean, we could say a poster, or a friend, or a flyer, a TV show, or video *Satsang*, but before all of that, and during all of that, it is that unknowable support that is saying "yes" to freedom. Yes, to truth. Yes, to the full capacity to deserve what it is that you are being offered.

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BARBARA: You may not know that, just as Gangaji speaks to all of us about these mental prisons, she also has been serving men and women living inside of physical prisons since 1994, and her program now offers a monthly course by mail, a correspondence program and provides books free of charge. And so today I do want to take this moment to remind us all of those who are living in a physical prison to be able to support them in their spiritual inquiry. It's truly a lifeline this program. So you can go to the website, [Gangaji.org](http://Gangaji.org) to make a donation or learn more about the program. That's [Gangaji.org](http://Gangaji.org), gangaji.org. We welcome and appreciate your support and so do they.

Thank you so much for listening.

My name is Barbara Denempont. Until next time.