

Gangaji Podcast
Being Yourself
Episode 57
Host Barbara Denempont
Chasing Desires, Overlooking Fulfillment
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GANGAJI: When you know, without a shadow of a doubt, that you are this stillness, that you are this awareness, then it doesn't matter what is on the surface.

BARBARA DENEMPONT, HOST: Hello and welcome to *Being Yourself, Self-Inquiry with Gangaji*. My name is Barbara Denempont.

I want to start a little differently today and share a letter with you that Gangaji shared with me:

Dear Gangaji, while I am not behind bars, I am now restricted by my body dealing with MS. Still, I call this my lucky life as I have had five decades with exceptional Buddhist teachers who are all legends now. When one would die, I would look for the next clear voice, and I always found it. My only American Buddhist teacher was Joko Beck and she was the last of my formal teachers. She said that Ramana and Nisargadatta started where Zen left off. She had Ramana's book with his beautiful face on the cover sitting on her bedside table during her last years. She never said a word about it but when she died, I knew to look within to find the clear voice of self-discovery, and it has led me to listening to your tapes.

These last few years your words and radiance have helped me fill in the blanks. Thank you so much for bringing Ramana's realizations to us. I am so glad you went to India to meet Papaji and I am glad you have had such good success teaching these liberating truths all over the world.

Maybe we will meet one day in a Gangaji Foundation Zoom meeting. But even if we don't, please know that there must be many others you never get to meet face-to-face but who are listening deeply.

Gasshō,

Deb.

I love that. First because it relates to all of us – because here we are, all listening. And you too might not have had the opportunity to meet Gangaji face-to-face yet. But we do have this podcast and we do have each other. And we can take these few minutes to dive into a very powerful inquiry.

This exchange I am going to share today is such a direct demonstration of how we can overlook what is already here when we chase our desires.

(Excerpted from Maui, Hawaii, A Meeting with Gangaji, November 10, 2000)

PARTICIPANT: *I have this question about wants.*

GANGAJI: Wants like desires?

PARTICIPANT: *Like desires, and what to do with them.*

GANGAJI: What do you want?

PARTICIPANT: *I want to not be so wanting.*

GANGAJI: Yes, and if you got that, what would you have then?

PARTICIPANT: *More peace.*

GANGAJI: More peace, so maybe you just want peace.

PARTICIPANT: *Yes.*

GANGAJI: Where is peace?

PARTICIPANT: *Anywhere.*

GANGAJI: Oh great, then you have what you want.

PARTICIPANT: *That was easy.*

GANGAJI: It is easy.

PARTICIPANT: *Yes. I noticed when my mind talks about these wants that I leave the present.*

GANGAJI: You leave the peace

PARTICIPANT: *I leave the peace, thank you.*

GANGAJI: To go in search of peace.

PARTICIPANT: *Yes.*

GANGAJI: Or something maybe just looking for more peace, or permanent peace, or certain peace, or.....

PARTICIPANT: *The illusion of.*

GANGAJI: Go in search of the illusion, that is right. That is it, that is what maya is, that is the play of mind. That is right, that is right. You just said it, this very thing.

PARTICIPANT: *Okay, this is getting easier.*

GANGAJI: Yes, that is the secret, it gets easier and easier. The challenges get harder and harder. And the willingness to meet each challenge, no matter how difficult, I mean, what is harder than the challenge of death? Really peace is the death you are speaking of.

PARTICIPANT: *I just noticed my mind doing this very funny thing.*

GANGAJI: *Yes.*

PARTICIPANT: *That I, when you were talking just a minute ago, I got it, it was all very clear, and now I am trying to, re-get it.*

GANGAJI: Recall it, yes, hold it, remember it.

PARTICIPANT: *Yes, because I, it makes sense, but....*

GANGAJI: So what is it you want?

PARTICIPANT: *Peace.*

GANGAJI: And where will you look for that?

PARTICIPANT: *Anywhere. Nowhere.*

GANGAJI: Yes, so you know where you have looked for it. Will you stop looking?

PARTICIPANT: *Will I?*

GANGAJI: Yes, right now, just as an experiment.

PARTICIPANT: *Yes.*

GANGAJI: Just for this moment. Because I am only talking about this moment ever, nothing else is relevant. Just right now, will you stop looking? Is peace absent?

PARTICIPANT: *No.*

GANGAJI: That is right.

PARTICIPANT: *Great.*

GANGAJI: Anything else?

PARTICIPANT: *No.*

GANGAJI: Great.

PARTICIPANT: *Thank you.*

GANGAJI: You are beautiful. Peace is beautiful, isn't it? So vibrant. People are afraid of peace, because they, as somebody said the other day, boring. Perhaps it's boring. Yes, that is a fear of beauty, and a fear of peace, and a fear of love, and a fear of truth. And a desire for peace, and a desire for beauty, and a desire for love, and a desire for truth. Anything? Something? What is it?

PARTICIPANT: *Well, it is basically the same question.*

GANGAJI: Yes, let's go at it again, maybe this time we will really penetrate.

PARTICIPANT: *Okay. So, I do have desires, and I don't think when I have them that they all lead back to peace, but they might.*

GANGAJI: You mean following the desires will take you to peace?

PARTICIPANT: *No, that that is what is underlying the desire.*

GANGAJI: Yes, that is right.

PARTICIPANT: *It is actually likely. So I have these illusions that if I attain certain desires, than I will have....*

GANGAJI: So what is the solution to that? What did you just discover?

PARTICIPANT: *That I already have it.*

GANGAJI: Yes, but now you remember that, and where is it in the memory? Then that memory becomes a superimposition of, "Well, I am peace. Well, I have peace. Well, I am always peace." But you are not, you are lying. Right?

PARTICIPANT: *Right, because then I go right back to desire.*

GANGAJI: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: *And I am frustrated.*

GANGAJI: Good, now we are getting to, this is good.

PARTICIPANT: *Well, I've been there a lot.*

GANGAJI: Yes, that is right. So this is now getting closer, so the frustration, can you let that get bigger?

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: Really bigger, and just let your consciousness fall into it. Frustration or anger is usually defending something, some other emotion.

PARTICIPANT: *Fear.*

GANGAJI: Okay, so fear, this fear, can you let your consciousness fall into this fear? Right now? Good, what is under that?

PARTICIPANT: *Fear.*

GANGAJI: More fear? Then go deeper, all of the way in.

PARTICIPANT: *There is that still place.*

GANGAJI: Still place, is this still place that is flat, or is this the still place that is vibrating?

PARTICIPANT: *It is alive.*

GANGAJI: It is alive. Excellent. Good. If it were a still place that were flat as in depression, or despair, because this often appears under fear. Not always, as you just showed, but the hopelessness, this kind of existential angst. Then it is possible also to experience that, just as you experienced so clearly frustration, fear, despair. Now in this stillness that is revealed, is there peace?

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: Are you there?

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: Excellent. When you know, without a shadow of a doubt, that you are this stillness, that you are this awareness, then it doesn't matter what is on the surface. It can feel good or it can feel bad, there can be confusion or there can be absolute clarity. What's that?

PARTICIPANT: *So when there are these choices to make.*

GANGAJI: Like what?

PARTICIPANT: *As being a human.*

GANGAJI: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: *You know, whether to say yes or no.*

GANGAJI: How do choices get made?

PARTICIPANT: *Well, sometimes I am very unclear sometimes.*

GANGAJI: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: *So I want clarity.*

GANGAJI: Yes, excellent.

PARTICIPANT: *So...*

GANGAJI: So you know, just as this man spoke up, you have looked lots of places for clarity. But you can stop and look directly into the unclarity. Can you feel that, experience that unclarity, that cloudiness? Right now?

PARTICIPANT: *Yes.*

GANGAJI: Excellent, so just, this is kind of like death. Like the experience of death, only now it is cloudiness, unclarity. So forget whatever you have learned about that, or what it means, or how to transcend that, or how to get around that, just BE that unclarity. So that you will know directly what unclarity is, in this moment.

PARTICIPANT: *I am there.*

GANGAJI: So you drop your consciousness fully into it, there is something still, still like "me" and unclarity. So you just let unclarity have you totally.

PARTICIPANT: *I kind of go back and forth, like I'm in the unclarity and then I sort of drop down and I was looking for clarity again.*

GANGAJI: Yes. So, because unclarity was not there. Right?

PARTICIPANT: *Right.*

GANGAJI: Yes, this is exactly what happened to you. Because the experience of what is always here, is so unconfirmed in our culture, in our lives, and in our churches, that we don't believe it. We don't think it could be that easy. So then we begin searching again for, "What's wrong?" So in an instant of actually unclarity be there, there was no unclarity. And then you got busy to find it again, and then there would be an instant, "Okay, I found it, great." And then there is none. Do you follow what I am saying?

PARTICIPANT: *Yes.*

GANGAJI: Yes, because what happens is this. This is it! Who you are is always here, clearly here. Peacefully here. In stillness here. Whatever appears to obstruct that, whether it is frustration, or fear, or despair, or doubt, if that is met, whether than tried to get rid of, then the spaciousness, not the spac-i-ness, but the spaciousness of who you are is clearly here. Is this true, or am I....?

PARTICIPANT: *Yes, yes.*

GANGAJI: Are you sure?

PARTICIPANT: *I just had an experience of it.*

GANGAJI: Great. Good. Because I don't want to start feeding you lines. Do you follow this?

PARTICIPANT: *It is great, thank you.*

GANGAJI: Yes. It is deeper too now. I was speaking the other night about deeper, and somebody said, "What in the world do you mean, deeper?" And that is really a good question, because I don't mean what you think I mean by deeper. I don't mean like heavier, or more still. (Laughter) What I really mean is spacious, but not spacy. Because we have tried to be spacious and we get like woo-woo. Spacious. Not getting like anything. Less. Less present to who you think you are, more present to who you are. That is deeper, and that is endlessly deep, because then you find yourself everywhere, in every mind state, in every emotion, in everybody. Naturally.

BARBARA: I think this might be one of the most relatable exchanges I have shared on the podcast and I am very grateful that I can pull it out of the archive. So let me take a moment now and just acknowledge all of those who have participated in making these recordings, starting with Gangaji's husband, Eli, recording Gangaji on audio cassette in the very earliest days and ultimately then coming to the point where we moved through Hi-8, VHS, DVD, DVCAM to Blu-Ray and now the cloud.

It's a remarkable treasure that we can make available to the world and I am happy to share it with you. And you can share it with others by writing a review and I also want to be sure you know that you can meet with Gangaji live, in person or online, and you can learn about all of those offerings at Gangaji.org that's G-a-n-g-a-j-i-dot-o-r-g.

This is Barbara Denempont. Until next time.