

Gangaji Podcast
Being Yourself
Episode 61
Host Barbara Denempont
The Direct Experience of Certainty
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GANGAJI: The usual reference point is to, “What I am thinking”, and even the thought that, “I am **always** thinking”, this thought gets believed as if it is reality. It is not reality. You are not always thinking. But you **are** always aware.

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

The production on this episode of this episode of *Being Yourself* began a couple of weeks when I found this really strong piece in the archives that’s on the subject of certainty. It is taken from a meeting that was held in Maui back in the year 2000 and just as I began the editing process, the news of these tragic fires in Maui broke and that news has been devastating. It’s been heartbreaking and I want to take just a moment now to simply acknowledge what is happening in Maui and to send our love to all the people of Maui, to all of Maui. You are in our hearts.

Now I am going to bring you this very powerful conversation that took place upcountry. What does it mean to be certain of who you are?

(Excerpted from A Meeting with Gangaji, Maui, Hawaii, November 11, 2000)

GANGAJI: Hello everyone. Is the man here who I spoke with last night? Where we spoke of certainty. Oh good. It is such an important question or issue, this issue of certainty. Because I would say everyone in this room has had at least one experience that is undeniably an experience of the hugeness of being. You know, maybe it was lights going off, or disappearance of ego, or love bursting the heart open, choir of angels singing. Often the experience is formed by a particular nervous system, and as that nervous system is faced with what is incomprehensible, then the display that follows that is particular to the person.

But there is an undeniable quality of a particular kind of experience, particular level of an experience, a transcendent experience, a God experience, experience of Truth. And then this issue of certainty arises, because as I was saying last night, all experiences, even transcendent experiences since they are experiences and have to do with sensory phenomena, are subject to disappearance. So the issue or the question arises, “Did I really experience anything? Did that really happen? Is it really meaningful?” Because the conditioned experience is the most normal, and that is what has the most weight in our society, for the very reason of keeping society functioning, for keeping this wild aggressive animal called “human” in a way that it can actually congregate without killing each other again and again. Although we still do, of course, everywhere.

So this certainty arises **only** really after you have had an essential experience, before that the whole thing is abstract. Certainty about what? It doesn’t make any sense. But everyone in this room, am I wrong about this? Is there anyone in this room that at least, is anyone who doesn’t at least think, suspect, that somewhere at some point, remembered or not, there was **something** that happened

that was not definable in the usual terms of existence? You have never had that? Well come up here, I will prove you wrong. I know you have, because this is your second day in this room and it would be unbearable to sit in here, it just wouldn't make any sense. Doesn't make any sense just to the rational, conditioned mind.

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GANGAJI: Good, exactly. Exactly what?

PARTICIPANT: The rational, conditioned mind.

GANGAJI: And what about it?

PARTICIPANT: That is what I have.

GANGAJI: That is all you have?

PARTICIPANT: Well ...

How do you know you have that?

PARTICIPANT: I think, therefore I am.

GANGAJI: Yes. How do you know you think? There is something that is present when there is thinking, and can even observe that deduction, "I think therefore I am." That is also present when there is no thinking, there is no thought, "I think therefore I am." There is something ...

PARTICIPANT: But, I am always thinking.

GANGAJI: No, you are not always thinking.

PARTICIPANT: Oh yes.

GANGAJI: No. You are not. I know you **think** you are always thinking, because that is what the focus is. That is what gets reinforced. Your thoughts get reinforced externally and internally. And your reference, most people reference their lives, and their definitions of themselves on their thoughts about who they are and life. But there are many moments in a day when there is no thought, and at night when you drop into deep sleep there is no thought. Many moments, but it goes overlooked because the reference point is thought. So what our meeting has the capacity to reveal is that there is a reference field that is unthought, that every thought appears in. And that gets called Consciousness, or Awareness, of Self, or God.

PARTICIPANT: What I was trying to put into practice what I saw last night.

GANGAJI: What did you see last night, first of all?

PARTICIPANT: That the people that had various feelings, you told them to drop into that with your consciousness.

GANGAJI: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: So, I know that we weren't supposed to learn something, but I did learn something.

GANGAJI: What did you learn?

PARTICIPANT: Well I learned that technique, so I went home and practiced that technique, even though you told us not to.

GANGAJI: I don't mind breaking the rules, that is allowed.

PARTICIPANT: So when I do that, you know, I do have more peaceful feeling, but then it is like it is not this transcendent thing. And then I always pull back, because it is like ...

GANGAJI: Right, because it is a technique.

PARTICIPANT: ... you are asking us to jump off a cliff blind folded.

GANGAJI: That is right. But it is not really a cliff I am asking you to jump off, and I am not asking you to jump off blind folded. I am asking you to jump with eyes wide open into ...

PARTICIPANT: Blackness.

GANGAJI: Well, it may appear blackness, if you are thinking about it. If you jump open eyed, clear eyed, into that blackness, is it black? In order to jump into that blackness clear eyed, you have to leave the thought, "Omigod, this is blackness. This is death. This is off the cliff." That is all thought. That is the usual reference point, but I am asking you to leave those reference points behind. You can pick them up as you like. But for our purposes ...

PARTICIPANT: But then I usually close my eyes, and then I am in darkness, right?

GANGAJI: Are you? There is no ... there are no forms perhaps there, and there is maybe the darkness.

PARTICIPANT: It's spooky.

GANGAJI: Well keep them closed just for a minute. But there is awareness of this darkness. Are you, can you get that, there is awareness of the darkness. Is that dark?

PARTICIPANT: No, that darkness doesn't mean anything.

GANGAJI: Doesn't mean anything.

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: Does that mean it doesn't exist?

PARTICIPANT: No, darkness is not ...

GANGAJI: Darkness doesn't mean anything.

PARTICIPANT: ... a characteristic of knowing this.

GANGAJI: Yes, this is great. That is right! That is very simple, isn't it? It is pretty obvious.

PARTICIPANT: What did I just say?

GANGAJI: You said that darkness is not a characteristic of awareness.

PARTICIPANT: Right.

GANGAJI: Yes. So I am asking you, with eyes wide open, to let your individual, focused awareness, that is usually focused on thought. Jump, fall back into its source, which is this awareness of individual awareness. The field of awareness, the ground of awareness.

PARTICIPANT: Tell me that again, I mean, what did ...? I don't like to fall backwards, because ...

GANGAJI: I can't, because ... How come?

PARTICIPANT: I might not be caught.

GANGAJI: Yes, that is it, that is the issue, "I might not be caught." And that is the ... Well, that is the really the faith, if we are using the word "faith" based on this that I was earlier speaking of. That everyone in this room has had **some** glimpse, some moment, remembered or not, that draws you to this room, and drew you back to this room, and drew you to practice these techniques.

PARTICIPANT: Okay, I am trying to get to where you are.

GANGAJI: Yes, but you wouldn't even be interested in where I am if you didn't recognize somewhat where I am. What, I mean, many more people who see me on a day who absolutely are not interested in where I am at all. They are too busy thinking about where they are, or where I should be. Do you understand?

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: So there is some recognition, or resonance that says, "I want that", or even if it is just out of curiosity, "I would like to know what that is like." And that is already present. That is why I was saying to you, I will prove you wrong, because you are back here. I mean, you could come once just because a friend invites you.

PARTICIPANT: Oh, I have seen all of your videos.

GANGAJI: Oh well then we can just get right down to it, I'll stop being so nice.

PARTICIPANT: I just wanted to see you in person.

GANGAJI: Yes. And what do you see? Same?

PARTICIPANT: Just like the videos.

GANGAJI: So what do you see in the videos?

PARTICIPANT: You're cute.

GANGAJI: Wait until you get to know me.

PARTICIPANT: No you have, you have the certainty. I see that.

GANGAJI: So I am saying, that in order to see that, that seeing comes from the same certainty. That wants itself, that recognizes itself. I am not speaking rationally or logically. I am speaking to the certainty. I am bypassing or going through the rational. Maybe it is not irrational either.

PARTICIPANT: So you are saying because I see your certainty, that which sees the certainty is ...

PARTICIPANT: ... what?

GANGAJI: You tell me. You now, just drop your personal awareness into that which sees the certainty within yourself.

PARTICIPANT: That is me.

GANGAJI: That is you? Is that your body?

PARTICIPANT: No.

GANGAJI: Is that your personality?

PARTICIPANT: No. But there was no ...

GANGAJI: No?

PARTICIPANT: Seems too easy. There is no blackness, there is no ...

GANGAJI: That is right. That is right.

PARTICIPANT: ... big expansive ...

GANGAJI: This is really the edge now, it is easy. Because it is who you are. It is right here. It has always been right here. The great tragedy is because it is so easy, and because we are so conditioned to what is difficult, because thought is really difficult, it takes a great deal of training and practice. That our attention, our belief, our trust, our reference points, are to the thought rather than to who you are. So then the challenge, the falling backward, is actually allowing it to be this easy.

PARTICIPANT: Well if it can be this easy here, I guess it can be ...

GANGAJI: This is, well this is HERE, it is this easy. That is right.

PARTICIPANT: But it wasn't, it didn't seem that easy last night.

GANGAJI: Because you were trying to do something. You were trying to get somewhere. You were trying to remember something. And all of that was based on the thought that you weren't already there, that you don't already know this in your being, you have never really forgotten this. And so then to try to remember it is a superimposition on what is NEVER really been forgotten. **Thought** to have been forgotten, and experienced to have been forgotten, but **really**, we are speaking really here. In the core of cores, cannot be forgotten. And the ease, which you just demonstrated.

PARTICIPANT: But you were just talking about some transcendent.

GANGAJI: I never talk about anything transcendent.

PARTICIPANT: So.

GANGAJI: Transcendence is beautiful, it is a transcendence that appears and disappears. I am talking about what is always **here**.

PARTICIPANT: If I went with that knowing, it would bigger more pervasive.

GANGAJI: Well you have to see for yourself. Then you don't have to guess. Then you know for certain. Then your reference point is not what you think about yourself, or any mind state that appears, transcendent or otherwise, it is what is always here. It is about who you are. And this is, belongs to everyone. Everyone. This is not earned. This already belongs to you. This can never be separated from you and can never be given to you. It is already who you are. Everything in our culture conspires to the overlooking of this. That is part of the game of Leela. Let's don't even make a judgement on that conspiracy, it is actually quite a wonderful game. There is nothing wrong with the game or the conspiracy. Because in the moment of discovery, what a **sweet** return, what a **sweet** opening.

PARTICIPANT: Wasn't scary at all.

GANGAJI: That is right. That is right.

PARTICIPANT: Didn't have to ...

GANGAJI: Didn't have to... ... ?

PARTICIPANT: Submit.

GANGAJI: Submit. That is right, you certainly didn't have to submit to me, or doing tricks, or proving yourself. All you had to do, all that is required, is in one instant, surrender to yourself. You are right here where you are, so there is distance that needs to be travelled. You already ARE, so there is nothing that has to be done to become yourself. Just surrender to yourself. And this surrender simply requires that you for a moment withdraw your attention from who it is you think you are, or should be, or were, or will be, or could have been. That is where attention usually is. Just withdraw that and let it naturally, happily, easily, fall back into the embrace of one's own self.

PARTICIPANT: I fell forward.

GANGAJI: Okay, okay fall forward into ... And you really didn't even fall, this was just using that, because it is a word that sometimes works. It is not a falling, it is not a moving at all. It's nothing.

PARTICIPANT: It is a recognition.

GANGAJI: It is a recognition. And the truth is, that recognition is already here. And that is what I was saying earlier, it is already here without your knowing **how** it is here, or when it came in, or what. It is already here. It has nothing to do with deservability, or destiny, or karma, all of that goes on in what is already **here**.

PARTICIPANT: Thank you.

GANGAJI: Oh, I thank you so much. I have even forgotten what the conversation was about that got you up here.

PARTICIPANT: I raised my hand.

GANGAJI: That is all it takes. Yes, this is a perfect demonstration of the usual reference point is to, "What I am thinking", and even the thought that, "I am **always** thinking", this thought gets believed as if it is reality. It is not reality. You are not always thinking. But you **are** always aware, because you **ARE** Awareness. You may not always be aware of what is happening in the moment, which is called mindfulness, but awareness is always **aware**. And mindfulness is a beautiful trait, that some people have naturally and some people learn. But even to confuse mindfulness with the truth of one's self is a huge mistake. You are Awareness, Itself. So if you are aware of some past misery, or some fantasy of some future success, or the sensations in your body, finally, you are aware. Period. I mean, you are Aware, Aware is You. **AWARE IS YOU**. And this very simple, basic, truth gets overlooked in all realms of life, worldly, spiritual, doesn't matter. So the essential trusting of what is finally true, what is always true, gets overlooked. And then even when one is mindful, there is still a "doing" to be mindful. And if there is a moment where there is a awareness, travels to some other realm, past or future, there is a, "Omigod, I wasn't aware." But you cannot help but be aware, because Aware is who you are. Awareness is who you are. Universal, absolute Awareness, is who you are. Localized in a particular nervous system is called incarnation. Beautiful, wondrous, experience. But if you believe the thought, "I am this body. This is who I am", without checking out what the field is that that thought arises in, then the experience of incarnation will be one of a ground of suffering. Some great pleasure, some great pain, but a ground of suffering, because it is a lie. You can say, "I am this body." But say first, "I am Aware." Then you say, "I am this world, I am this body, and this body and this body. I am all." Because Awareness is **in** and around every body. Nothing escapes Awareness. Do you follow this? Are you with me here? Of course you are! No matter what you are thinking. So if the reference point becomes what you just demonstrated, this characteristic-**less**-ly BEINGNESS. This is an altogether different experience, than the experience of living life referenced by what you **think** is happening, or what you think should be happening, or what you think did happen.

(Bells chime loudly in the background.)

That is the Holy Ghost Church, right? So I sometimes talk badly about religions, it is useful to talk badly about everything sometimes, you know? Sometimes talk badly about the body, or thoughts, but present in everything, and what those bells were chiming about is this Mystery that is uncatchable by thought, or by mind activity. And yet, never separated from any thought or mind activity. So every religion, every spiritual movement, maybe even every political movement, maybe every drive comes from this exaltation of this Mystery that is forever present and forever uncatchable.

So to surrender to the paradox of forever present and forever uncatchable. Well, I highly recommend it. It is as if the mind then just explodes. Ever uncatchable and forever present. This is a very intimate embrace. And intimate embraces can be scary, as a falling forward, or a falling backward, or falling into. And everyone in here has had at least the, at least the first intimation of intimate embrace. And then the mind gets busy circling that, trying to keep it controllable, but when it is controllable it is not an intimate embrace. So the great, good news from Papaji, from Ramana, from your own Heart, your own Self, is to return to this embrace. Fall into Yourself and you fall into Love.

BARBARA: It's so hard to find the words to wrap this all up today but it's simply said, I want you to know we are here to support you in your spiritual inquiry. You can go to Gangaji.org, g-a-n-g-a-j-i dot o-r-g.

Thank you for listening. My name is Barbara Denempont. Until next time.