

Gangaji Podcast
Being Yourself
Episode 66
Host Barbara Denempont
How Can Your Life Be Truly Lived
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GANGAJI: This is life, this is my life, how can it be lived in the fullest, deepest, truest way?

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: That's a very mature question.

PARTICIPANT: *Yes, and there's some part of me that doesn't want it.*

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

Last month I brought you a piece called *Facing Death is Facing Life*. It was a really wonderful monologue that points to what I feel is ultimately why we are on a spiritual path to begin with, is to meet death. And, in meeting death, meeting life. One of the things that I really loved about that piece was that it really spoke to where we are actually afraid to live and I want to follow that up with this piece which is an exchange. It is a wonderful representation of what it is to fear living a full and vibrant life.

(Excerpted from Retreat: "The Capacity to Open is Endless," Santa Sabina, CA August 18, 2022)

GANGAJI: Hi.

PARTICIPANT: *So, I just really wanted to look at you and be seen and I have been thinking about what I want and I thought it was freedom for a long time and I have recently realized that what I want is to live, to really live.*

GANGAJI: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: *This life.*

GANGAJI: Yes, I support you in that – fully.

PARTICIPANT: *Thank you because that's what I was going to ask for, sometime, no. I just wanted a word of encouragement, and support, and just recognition.*

GANGAJI: You have the capacity for that.

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: And the fact that you know that there's a possibility, that it's arisen in you, it's not just, oh movie stars live like that, or enlightened beings live like that, but you know this is life, this is my life, how can it be lived in the fullest, deepest, truest way?

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: That's a very mature question.

PARTICIPANT: *Yes. And there's some part of me that doesn't want it, I mean not that I'm suicidal, I mean I have been in my life but you know, that doesn't want to live, but now it's more like, "Oh I can't live, that's too much, it's too much to ask."*

GANGAJI: So what do you mean when you say live? Are we talking about living this big life or just breathing and the body staying alive?

PARTICIPANT: *Depends.*

GANGAJI: So, there's this, a spectrum.

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah. Right now, it tends to show up as, "Oh, it's just too much to ask!"*

GANGAJI: So that's a narrative.

PARTICIPANT: *Exactly.*

GANGAJI: Isn't it?

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: And that's a kind of despondent narrative which means there's some deep emotion.

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah.*

GANGAJI: Either generated by that narrative, or reinforced by that narrative. And you have the capacity, just as you overheard the narrative that said, "I want a big full life," and you could feel the energy that comes with that narrative, and I support that, yes, live a true life, a big life. Then there's this other narrative that's really kind of the polar opposite of that.

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: It's too much! I can't deal with it! And that comes from what? Are you aware of the emotion, or a ...?

PARTICIPANT: *Yes, there's some sense of it's too scary to want things.*

GANGAJI: Aha.

PARTICIPANT: *And it's not really things, it's more like experience, it's too scary to want vitality.*

GANGAJI: What's the worst that can happen in desiring vitality, in wanting vitality?

PARTICIPANT: *Disappointment.*

GANGAJI: So let disappointment come here now.

PARTICIPANT: *Right.* (Participant starts laughing)

GANGAJI: Yes, you see. That's not a trick.

PARTICIPANT: *No.*

GANGAJI: That's actually welcoming whatever you're afraid of.

PARTICIPANT: *Right.*

GANGAJI: That's really what Barb was talking about too, it's okay, it's this is my boogeyman, or this is...and disappointment maybe is a, a mild description of it.

PARTICIPANT: *Failure, failure yeah.*

GANGAJI: Failure, despair. Yeah, if you invite it all, not...I mean maybe there's a narrative that generates it, but it's an emotional experience. And we normally either indulge that, or cover that and deny it, because it is so intense, emotions can be quite intense. But to not indulge it and to not deny it, to not repress it and not express it, to actually open your attention, your capacity for living fully to this that has appeared in this life.

PARTICIPANT: *Yes, and I think what I'm looking for from you is to tell me that's safe, because I trust you.*

GANGAJI: Well it is absolutely safe, but not in the way you think.

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah, yeah.*

GANGAJI: Nothing is safe in the way you think.

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah.*

GANGAJI: But it, life is not safe.

PARTICIPANT: *Right.*

GANGAJI: I gave that example about the car stopped on the freeway to show we were doing it right, we were driving safely, but the one person in front of us decided to stop on the freeway. So as we know living here, a fire could come, fires kill people, destroy things.

PARTICIPANT: *We're not safe too.*

GANGAJI: Yeah, yes. So you're not safe, you will die.

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah.*

GANGAJI: And you don't know when. It'll be an easy death, or be a difficult death, be a sudden death, a long death, somewhere in between. But to recognize that this form will die, that 'me' will die, that's scary when it's really recognized, I mean that's what I was talking about Ramana to recognize that, then the invitation, and what Ramana showed us throughout time, is you can actually lay down, or sit there and, and open to that reality of the fear of death, because the fear of death is part of what it means to be an alive creature.

I mean you look at all kinds of creatures in all kinds of kingdoms, and they're all afraid of death, and they will...flies, spiders, birds, animals, humans, gods, demons, nobody wants to die, except those people who hope death will be a release from the misery of life. Either way the misery is here to be met.

So if you open to this reality of the worst, however that may be framed, what do you experience? (Laughter) It's so quick!

PARTICIPANT: *It's okay.*

GANGAJI: It's okay. That's maturing, that's what's required for maturity. We can't know that, you can learn that, you could write that in your journal, 'if I open to it, it's okay', and you can even memorize that, but it's useless, it's the direct experience. It's here, it doesn't feel good, I don't want it here, I hate it, when will it go away? Okay, it's here, I'll open to it. Maybe it's a superficial level, maybe it's the most profound level, your capacity to open is endless, endless.

(deep sigh)

GANGAJI: What's that?

PARTICIPANT: *Relief.*

GANGAJI: Ha, yes, it's a great relief.

PARTICIPANT: *And a sense of knowing that you're right.*

GANGAJI: You know that from your own experience.

PARTICIPANT: *You're telling me the truth.*

GANGAJI: Yeah, you don't have to figure out, "Is she right?" you knew it immediately because you have experienced that before, this is not a, an experience that's happening for the first time here. So this is encouragement for your, you to be willing to experience whatever is appearing to you without the old narrative, because that's where our conditioning is, it's some kind of link up with the narrative and the emotional states.

The narrative, you have the capacity just to stop it for a moment as an experiment, not because it's a bad narrative, or you should stop, but you just put it aside, and open to what that narrative is either narrating, or trying to keep you away from, or indulging. Yeah.

PARTICIPANT: *So that's it.*

GANGAJI: Yes, without a narrative it's very simple, isn't it?

PARTICIPANT: *Yes. That's, that's why I'm here because you're simple.*

GANGAJI: Yes, I'm simple (laughter). You see it, that's great, thank you, I take that in, I mean...

PARTICIPANT: *Because I've, I've done a lot of not simple so.*

GANGAJI: Yes, yes.

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah.*

GANGAJI: We will try everything but the simple, because it's, it's unbelievable it's so simple, it's so immediate it couldn't be, it's too simple. And we are complicated creatures, and our survival has depended on a lot of complication, and a lot of complicated learning. So in a moment of this willingness for utter simplicity, there can be an experience that your survival is at risk. That's the beauty of a retreat, not being on the freeway, of being here, of being able to take a moment, of giving yourself this moment.

You know it's, it's intelligent that this apparatus operates as it does, there is, there are enormous threats to survival, but because we have become so adept at surviving, we've taken over the planet, and now our very survival is threatened by our very drive for survival.

PARTICIPANT: *Yes.*

GANGAJI: Yeah, what a conundrum! And so we meet that normally with figuring out what to do. It's a heresy to say just take a moment and be still. Discover where this life is that you want that is full, and truly lived.

PARTICIPANT: *Thank you.*

GANGAJI: I'm so happy to meet you, what's your name? You have...

PARTICIPANT: *Oh, Dena.*

GANGAJI: Dena, from Austin.

PARTICIPANT: *Yes.*

GANGAJI: Oh, great to see you.

PARTICIPANT: *Thank you. And this is my brother with me.*

GANGAJI: Oh great! Aha. There were some great times in Austin, you weren't a part of the Austin meetings were you?

PARTICIPANT: *No, no I wasn't.*

GANGAJI: That was, you were just a child.

PARTICIPANT: *I wasn't, it wasn't time yet I guess.*

GANGAJI: Yeah, that's right, but here you are, oh.

PARTICIPANT: *Thank you so much.*

GANGAJI: So happy, because it's like when the fruit is ready, it drops.

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah.*

GANGAJI: That was it, I did nothing, right? Everybody saw.

PARTICIPANT: *You gave me just what I asked for, thank you.*

GANGAJI: I had my usual conversation, and you just, yeah. So happy.

PARTICIPANT: *Thank you, thank you.*

GANGAJI: And it's catchable. You know, you hear yourself laughing, or you (inhale sound), or what, it's contagious, we, we are so limbically connected, that we don't even have to understand what's happening to catch it. And normally we catch each other's suffering, and that gets compounded, but to be able to catch this opening, and deepening.

BARBARA: One of the things that I particularly love about this exchange is that it really demonstrates how important it is to meet what is arising without judgement, to meet what is appearing with curiosity, with an open mind. That's the possibility for all of us. I want to mention before I go that Gangaji is continuing to have her monthly online gatherings and forum. If you'd like to join the global community there to dive into spiritual inquiry, we'd love to welcome you there. And, of course there is the free community video screening. There's also more podcasts and video clips that you can access on the website, that's Gangaji.org, that's g-a-n-g-a-j-i dot o-r-g.

It's such a joy for me to be able to bring you these recordings out of the archives. I always welcome your input too. You can always write to us at info@gangaji.org and maybe there's a topic you would love to hear about or some theme that is of great interest to you. So please do feel free to write to me with that.

And in the meantime, I am just going to thank you. Thank you for listening. Thank you for participating. My name is Barbara Denempont. Until next time.