

Gangaji Podcast
Being Yourself
Episode 68
Host Barbara Denempont
Consciously Opening to Emotional Pain
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GANGAJI: We can diagnose jealousy and why it shouldn't be or why it should be, but say it's there just as part of the human experience. Jealousy. Feel it. I'm jealous. I hurt. I'm fearful. I love. Now what am I going to do? Withdraw, hate, close off? Or just hurt and love? I recommend hurting and loving.

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

Last month I featured a piece on physical pain, and this month I wanted to turn our attention to emotional pain. How can we consciously open to emotional pain? Well, to do that, you might first have to see how you are closing to your emotions and how that actually creates and perpetuates unnecessary suffering. I found this wonderful exchange that goes all the way back to Marysville, Australia in 1999. I think we can all relate to it.

(Excerpted from: Retreat, Marysville, Australia, April 25, 1999)

GANGAJI: Nice tee-shirt.

PARTICIPANT: *Thank you.*

GANGAJI: What does it say?

PARTICIPANT: *Two sisters.* (Laughter)

GANGAJI: Two sisters, here we are. A mother and a daughter.

PARTICIPANT: (Laughter) *I'm not that young*

GANGAJI: I'm that old.

PARTICIPANT: *Namaste.*

GANGAJI: Namaste.

PARTICIPANT: *My question is, I feel a bit embarrassed actually, I can easily cut off and withdraw and be separated and um, the question is, How do I stop myself doing that?*

GANGAJI: This is a power that you have learned, right?

PARTICIPANT: *It is very powerful.*

GANGAJI: It is very powerful and perhaps it was appropriate at some time. The power of disassociation or the power of withdrawal, it's very powerful. Certain people are given this power. Then the question is are you willing to surrender this power, are you willing to give it up?

PARTICIPANT: *I certainly am willing.*

GANGAJI: You are willing, wonderful. Then when the temptation arises to reclaim that power, you don't touch it. It's that simple. The complication is in, "Well umm I'll reclaim a little of it, just save it just in case, I might need it." This is what is spoken of in all the spiritual literature, the necessity to give up, to surrender the powers that have entranced you. So, with pleasure and the power of this power, also comes the suffering. That's what you are aware of. That's the maturity that is necessary, to see that the power itself is limited and that what is wanted is deeper than the power to separate oneself. Because this power requires some, you may not even be aware of it, perhaps you are, some doing, some steps.

PARTICIPANT: *Oh yeah, jealousy, comparison.*

GANGAJI: Okay, there is comparison that arises, then there is jealousy and then?

PARTICIPANT: *Inadequacy.*

GANGAJI: And then a story of inadequacy and a story of insecurity and insecurity means some fear I would suspect and then? Then what's the step? Because all that's fine so far, that's fine. No problems so far, painful yes, but there is no problem with pain. There is to be pain. If you are seeking anything to avoid pain, that's the suffering. That's the search that must be called off. The seeking to avoid the pain. There is nothing wrong with pain. You will see when you stop seeking to avoid it. So, so now what happens?

PARTICIPANT: *I guess there is an avoidance of feeling the hurt.*

GANGAJI: So, the avoidance of feeling the hurt and now let's go into that. What are the steps in that avoidance to feeling the hurt? What do you tell yourself? There's got to be some mantra with that.

PARTICIPANT: *To avoid that, to become defensive, to hit out.*

GANGAJI: What do you say inside yourself?

PARTICIPANT: *You know it happens so quickly, I don't even think about it.*

GANGAJI: Yes, but we are slowing it down, slow motion, so that you can see it very clearly. It happens quickly because you are very practiced at it, you very adept at it, so you know, you drive the car you don't think about what steps go, you don't think about

that. Except when you are teaching somebody how to drive a car you realize, aha, this has to happen, this has to happen, this has to happen. So I am asking you to teach me how it is you withdraw. I want to learn how to withdraw. What are the steps? Yes, so now you have to examine, okay, it seems so natural to me it just happens, but it doesn't just happen because you've seen the leadup to it.

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah, I can just say to myself I want to go blank here.*

GANGAJI: I am going to go blank here.

PARTICIPANT: *And I am going to withdraw and move back.*

GANGAJI: And I am going to withdraw and move back and then what has to happen, what do I do internally?

PARTICIPANT: *And then I want to run away. Internally?*

GANGAJI: Yes internally. So I get all that, that's good, that makes sense, yes I can do that and then?

PARTICIPANT: *Good, good (Laughter). And then you get lots of adrenaline.*

GANGAJI: Lots of adrenaline. Where does that come from? How do you generate that?

PARTICIPANT: *Um, I'm not sure.*

GANGAJI: Well, let's see! You're teaching me.

PARTICIPANT: *Okay! You get really angry.*

GANGAJI: Angry at someone who is causing me to run away? Okay, now I got this story about me and inadequacy based on some comparison and some feelings of jealousy and worthlessness, but now I have to involve somebody else who caused this story.

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah, because they deserted me.*

GANGAJI: They deserted me. Now the story, yeah, I can start to feel it right in there. They deserted me.

(Laughter)

PARTICIPANT: *They did!*

GANGAJI: And then?

PARTICIPANT: *This is not hard after all guys (laughter) Oh dear, right, now where were we?*

GANGAJI: So we are unwinding the story that was wound so tightly that you didn't even know it was there. It just seemed like something that just happened. We're unwinding it and we have gotten to the point of where I'm victimized in two ways. By this feeling of jealousy that arises in me and this person who causes that feeling. So I've got to escape. Now I want to know is, how do I make the next step to escape? What happens physiologically, what happens in my body, what happens in my emotions, how do I go blank? How do I withdraw, how do I hide?

PARTICIPANT: *Stop talking.*

GANGAJI: Stop talking, okay.

PARTICIPANT: *Clench my teeth.*

GANGAJI: Clench your teeth, okay. What happens to the eyes?

PARTICIPANT: *Like stone.*

GANGAJI: Stone eyes.

PARTICIPANT: *Very cold.*

GANGAJI: Very cold, and my body itself, is there a posture that goes with it?

PARTICIPANT: *Um, I'm not quite sure now.*

GANGAJI: Well, put yourself in this situation I'm in.

PARTICIPANT: *Yes, slumped, I guess like a victim, really slumped, round shouldered.*

GANGAJI: Well, I'm telling you this takes some effort.

PARTICIPANT: *And it does.*

GANGAJI: It does!

PARTICIPANT: *Yes it does, and I'm very tired of fighting this depression.*

GANGAJI: You use a lot of energy!

PARTICIPANT: There is a lot of energy that goes into it.

GANGAJI: So, then, what's the solution, what?... You see all the steps, I'm sure there is many more other steps, but those at least are enough to see at any point along the way, you have seen it now, at any point along the way, you can say stop. I'm giving up this power to close down. So, you sit up straight. You open your eyes. You say hello, you have hurt me or I'm feeling hurt and I'm blaming you. Or just, I'm feeling hurt, I hurt or I love you.

PARTICIPANT: *Thank you.*

GANGAJI: Oh, you see how easy. Isn't this easier?

PARTICIPANT: *It is.*

GANGAJI: It is! This is the truth that we hate to tell because we have so much invested in these powers that we have developed. And we think they are so great and special. And to give them up means I will actually be unprotected. I will actually have to experience this pain. But you see that in protecting yourself you still experience the pain. So what a bad joke you have played on yourself. If this protection actually worked it would be another matter. But the protection augments the pain, turns the pain into suffering. Pain is pain and yes, so let's say there is jealous pain. We can diagnose jealousy and why it shouldn't be or why it should be, but say it's there just as part of the human experience. Jealousy. Feel it. I'm jealous. I hurt. I'm fearful. I love. Now what am I going to do? Withdraw, hate, close off? Or just hurt and love? I recommend hurting and loving. There is a beauty then to the hurt, and to this most human emotion, I don't know if other animals are jealous, maybe they are, they probably are.

PARTICIPANT: *If they are humanized.*

GANGAJI: They probably are anyway you know, we think the negative emotions are limited to humans but people have studied animals a lot now and you know, there is this one man who has studied ants a lot. And we had this idea of ants being well, you know, ants. They aren't just ants, I mean, they have personalities and they have certain ants that are hiding because they don't want to work like the other ants. (Laughter) Then they have these other ants that go and find them you know and bring them back. And if they examine them closer, they will see they probably have comedian ants and tragedy ants, just like with the Gods, it's the same thing. So let us say that these emotions, these feelings are just part of the theatre, then the...

PARTICIPANT: *It's funny you mention ants, because I work as a zookeeper at Healsville sanctuary, I don't know if you know that. We have an ant colony and there is one classic bit where they take their dead to a little cemetery. So they take them, but sometime there are some still half-alive and it reminds me of that movie with John Cleese you know? "Bring Out The Dead". You know that?*

GANGAJI: I don't know it but I'll have to watch it.

PARTICIPANT: *I've forgotten what it is called, does anyone know it? It's yeah, Life of Brian.*

GANGAJI: *Oh yes, Life of Brian.*

PARTICIPANT: So, bring out the dead, and there are these ants have been taken to the cemetery and some of them are still alive.

GANGAJI: Yes, yes that's what you're speaking of, a life, a precious life that is being lived in avoidance of hurt and the suffering that is a result of that, it's a dead life then. I'm not saying totally because I know there are aspects where you don't avoid, but we

are speaking specifically of this scenario where there is a closing down, a blanking, a collapsing, and a story. A story of hurt is very different from an experience of hurt. An experience of hurt is an experience of hurt. Maybe it was generated by a story, but it's directly the experience. And in that then the love is not covered, you have to go stony, you don't have to collapse, you just, you love and you hurt. Good, good. And when you see those ants carrying off the alive ones, you know, you just pick them up you put them back and give them another chance.

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah.*

GANGAJI: That's Satsang for the ants then.

PARTICIPANT: *I'll tell them that, thank you.*

GANGAJI: Oh good.

PARTICIPANT: *Thank you.*

GANGAJI: Namaste.

GANGAJI: We think we are so unique with our suffering. You know? Listen, I was a world class sufferer, so I can speak from authority here and even if the scenario of your life is not that bad. You know you could find others whose lives were worse your suffering is unique and special and no one can really understand it. So, your suffering has become your power, your city. I suffer.

So are you willing to give up that power? Are you willing to give up the power of suffering? Are you? What an investment, what a definition to give up the power to suffer.

This is a real question. It is very important to tell the truth and if you aren't willing to give it up to really tell the truth about what you imagine it gives you, what your suffering gives you. If we had time, I'd make you do that repeating question. So that can be your assignment. What does your suffering give you? Just ask this question. What does my suffering give me? Can I give that up? What does my suffering give me? Will I give that up?

It's very direct then.

BARBARA: Wow, what a question! Potentially, a life-changing question really.

Now there is something I actually want to ask you and that is to share this podcast with anyone who might be interested. You can share it or review it on Apple podcast or wherever you listen that naturally just brings it to others. And you can also support

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As always, I thank you for listening. My name is Barbara Denempont. Until next time.