

Gangaji Podcast
Being Yourself
Episode 69
Host Barbara Denempont
Dare to Give Up Your Self-Denial
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GANGAJI: You are free to discover yourself as Truth. You are free to rest in that Truth. You are free to be happy, regardless of body, thoughts, emotions, or circumstances.

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

I met Gangaji in the early nineties in Boulder, Colorado, and during the summers, she was sometimes offering meetings four and five times a week and I had the great privilege to be able to attend many of those meetings. And there was a particular meeting in those summers that has always stayed with me. It had a really big impact on me, and I was telling somebody about it and I thought, "Well, my God, why don't I share it on the podcast, of course". And what I think moved me so deeply during those meetings and during that time was that I felt the dare to stop, coming from Gangaji. And so I am so happy that I got to listen to this again, and that I get to share it with you.

(Excerpted from: Satsang with Gangaji, Boulder, CO, July 26, 1995)

GANGAJI: If this is your first time in Satsang, let me tell you what *Satsang* is. *Satsang* means, in Sanskrit, *association with Truth*. The Truth that you are associated with when you attend formal *Satsang* is the declaration and the witnessing that you are that which you have searched for in every other thing. Whether that thing has been some event, some accomplishment, some philosophy, some experience, some other. The truth is, you are that which you yearn for, which you hunger for, and that which is always present. It is very simple.

When I say *you*, I am not referring to your body. Your body is *in* that which you are. I am not referring to your thoughts. Your thoughts are in That, who you are. I am not referring to your emotions. Your emotions appear and disappear in That, who you are. And I am not speaking of your circumstances. They too appear and disappear in That, who you truly are. Bodies and thoughts and emotions and circumstances change. They appear and they disappear. They are good or they are bad. They are pleasing or they are displeasing. The truth of who you are is permanent, unmoving.

This is not *new*. You have heard this, if you have been listening, throughout time. All the mystics, all the great sages, all the saints, all the saviors have pointed to this. The great good news is that however you imagine yourself to be, still you can recognize who you truly are. That regardless of your experience of yourself as a body, or as a thought "I am this body", or as an emotion "I can feel this body" (or a

physical sensation); regardless of all of that, you can discover the direct transmission of the Truth, from your own Self. And *Satsang* is the meeting of That, the association with That.

I don't have anything to teach you. You have learned enough. Nothing wrong with learning, but this is not about learning. I am not asking you to remember anything. I am not asking you to *do* something to *get* this realization that you are That already—what you want and have wanted forever. I am simply suggesting, as my teacher suggested to me, and as his teacher suggested to him, that you take one instant, one millisecond, to be absolutely still. I don't mean to go into a stupor. I mean to be alertly still, to allow the mind to stop. And in that millisecond—what a discovery! In that millisecond, you actually receive the true and deep invitation to surrender to that which is revealed when there is no thought, when there is no attention on somebody or some emotion or some circumstance. This is a momentous instant.

The whole of human conditioning is to be thinking about the past and speculating about the future, and analyzing the present in relationship to the past and the future. It is called conditioned existence. Nothing wrong with it. What could be wrong with it? The problem with it is when it is identified as reality. And in that, you become misidentified with body, thoughts, emotions and circumstances. And the result of that misidentification is enormous suffering, because in that identification you must notice that bodies come and go, and there is great fear that since you are a body, that means *you* will go. Right; you know this. Well I am telling you—you *don't* come and go. Bodies come and go, that is very correct. In an instant, a body is gone. You have the opportunity, in an instant of silence, to discover what is permanently here. And what an instant! It is an invitation for true refuge, true retreat, true peace—regardless of comings and goings.

So I welcome you to *Satsang*. It *appears* that *Satsang* is happening in this building, in this location. The reality is, *Satsang* is happening in consciousness. And somehow, by some stroke of luck, your individual consciousness has been directed to the *Satsang* that is appearing in consciousness where you *at least* hear the words, "You are Truth. You are free to discover yourself as Truth. You are free to rest in that Truth. You are free to be happy, regardless of body, thoughts, emotions, or circumstances."

So, last Wednesday, someone asked me for help in this pursuit. And, although my master's master and my master give help freely, I said I had a price, that I was charging something. And I gave him one week to come up with the price. In order for this help to be given, that he has cried out for, I asked that he turn over all of his self-doubt, self-hate, and—what else?—self-denial. Good, he knows what he has to pay. Okay, let's have the microphone, I want to hear a report. This is the letter you were writing, but I want to hear it from your words. Should I toss this one away too?

PARTICIPANT: I'd rather you read it and go from there.

GANGAJI: (Reading the letter):

“A week ago you demanded that I sell the farm and give it all up in payment for your continued help. It seemed like you really wanted to extract a pound of flesh from me, in the form of my utter renunciation of self-doubt, self-denial and self-hatred.”

A pound of flesh? It's the whole universe I am asking for.

(Reading the letter):

“I see clearly that my doubt is conditioned, learned from parents and all the rest, but especially from the influential ideas passed to me by spiritual teachers, therapists, and writers of books on consciousness and psychological development. None of these ideas touches who I really am. Since our last encounter, I have been keenly aware of my self-denial in the form of avoidance, thinking in dualisms, obsessive busyness, self-indulgence, and greediness in material activities which at some superficial level, I believed would bring happiness and satisfaction, but which, at a deeper level, I know the opposite to be true. For example, I was planning a trip rather than accepting the opportunity for help **now** and not postponing my awakening. I was even run over by a car while bicycling to *Satsang* ...”

(Audience laughter)

Why are we laughing at this? (with laughter)

(Reading the letter):

“...on Monday, and rather than be still I became more busy. Today I woke early and was not dogged by the usual doubt and denial. I am not aware that I have actively been doing self-hatred for some time.”

PARTICIPANT: It doesn't feel that way.

GANGAJI: “This morning ...”

But you were, but look what you say...

(Reading the letter):

“Today I woke early and was not dogged by the usual doubt and denial ...”

Oh, you are not including self-hatred. But doubt and denial *is* self-hatred, you see? It is just cleaned up self-hatred. Yes, it is.

(Reading the letter):

“This morning, I took an early hike in the foothills, listened to the tape of our last meeting. Later, even though I was engaged in apparently unavoidable worldly business, I was focused not on the avoidance, but on realizing the truth that I do not deny. Everything else today came in second. In fact, they were all inconsequential. Later still, I sat alone by Boulder Creek. I know it is the Ganga, flowing in the West, the same as you. Please help me to be still and surrender to that. From your tributary, Mitch - from Boston.”

From Boston! From Boston. Well the secret is, that the instant you are quite willing to give it all up—all of the self-hatred, however it is disguised—it can often be disguised in self-aggrandizement.

PARTICIPANT: I know that one.

GANGAJI: Yes, well you just look a little deeper and you will see there is some *proving*; proving to your mind, proving to the mind of others, that you are worthy, that you are *something*, that you are *somebody*. When at the base of that is this thought “I am worthless. I am nothing. I am nobody.” In your willingness to actually see that very painful thought, to experience the suffering that has been generated from that thought—both in your own life and how it has touched other lives—as you have proved that you are *not* nothing, that you are *not* nobody, just to experience for a moment this pain that you have run from, this grief that you have tried to hide from, this despair at suspecting that you are nobody, that you are nothing. Because you can recognize it, no matter how many your accomplishments, how much denial of that pain, it still nags at you. When you are willing to face it, then you are willing to give everything else up. But facing this dreaded perceived reality—“I am nothing, I am nobody”—in that instant you can finally discover what has been calling you. You can finally discover *what is nothing*. What is nobody. When you are finally willing to say “Yes, I am, in fact, nothing, nobody.” First of all, what a burden is released! All of the effort to prove that you are *not* nobody is finished, and you are simply nobody, nothing. You see, right away, you get a glimpse of really what no-thing, no-body *is*. And it *is* true, you *are* that no-thing. You are no thing at all. In the core of consciousness, you radiate no-thing.

So this cannot be understood intellectually. It is the understanding of it intellectually that has provided the impetus for all that effort to prove that it is not so. I am pointing you to direct experience of what you have feared *might* be true. It is a divine fear, because it *is* true, but it is not as you think it to be. It has nagged at you and pulled at you, and awakened you at four in the morning—how many times? No matter what you did, no matter how many sand castles you built, still—nothing. The invitation is to meet that. Okay? This is my help you asked for.

PARTICIPANT: You said you’d know what to do with, um, my self-denial, et cetera.

GANGAJI: Yes, if you give it to me. (He gives her a package) This is your self-denial? Is it alive?

PARTICIPANT: It’s a pound of flesh.

GANGAJI: A pound of flesh. (Laughter)

PARTICIPANT: It was baloney.

GANGAJI: It *is* baloney! That’s right! (Laughter) What you do with baloney is you toss it aside, no matter how well it has been preserved! It is poisonous, no matter how much you have become accustomed to the grease of it, to the slime of it. Yes, it is slimy, isn’t it? Really, when you tell the truth. It is baloney!

PARTICIPANT: And it stinks!

GANGAJI: It stinks. Very good. I am happy to toss it aside. It will decompose as it will.

PARTICIPANT: Even though I gift wrapped it.

GANGAJI: You what?

PARTICIPANT: Gift wrapped it.

GANGAJI: Gift wrapped it. Yes. Wonderful. (Laughter) I am happy to receive it. Just don't try to take it back, okay?

PARTICIPANT: I promise.

GANGAJI: Good! Because otherwise, you will find yourself looking through some garbage pail—"where is my baloney? (Laughter) I know it's baloney, but still it's **mine.**"

PARTICIPANT: I think that all the time.

GANGAJI: So I have it now. You have to come to me if you want it, okay? Good. You write me from Boston and let me know, okay? I will look for that letter. Very good, very good. You know what this means? It means *namaste*—I am your own Self. I am the same as you. Here, I wear this cloak. There, I wear this cloak. Same Self.

PARTICIPANT: I know.

GANGAJI: *Namaste, I know.* Good, very good. Okay, that is the report from our last session. If at any time you have a question, please feel free to speak—or a report—but no baloney, please! Only the real thing, which is no thing.

BARBARA: I have to say before we go, I just love the moment when Gangaji takes this package that he is handing, the pound of flesh—which is really baloney wrapped in butcher paper—and she throws it over her shoulder. That was such a memorable visual along with this really potent conversation that she was having about self-denial.

So, I hope this is as meaningful to you as it was to me in my spiritual path and journey. And of course there are more podcasts, more video clips that are available for you if you would like to check them out at the Gangaji website, at gangaji.org, that's g-a-n-g-a-j-i dot o-r-g. And of course, Gangaji is continuing to offer meetings both online and in person. Her Ashland events and her online gatherings are all posted on the website. You can learn more about how you can participate there with the global community. We would love to see you there.

My name is Barbara Denempont and it is my joy to bring you this podcast. Thank you for listening. Until next time.