

Gangaji Podcast  
Being Yourself  
Episode 77  
Host Barbara Denempont  
Losing Your Enlightenment  
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GANGAJI: You overlook what you are which is much bigger than what you think love is. As peace is much deeper than what you think, peace is not an absence of conflict. Peace is the reconciliation of all conflict.

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

I have a clip for you today that I think is particularly relatable and I say that because we all have states of mind and emotion – that’s the natural phenomena of just being human – and in one moment we can feel oceanic and blissful and in the next instant we can feel sadness or anger or rage. And when we have a shift like that, often we have a thought or we imagine, we come to the conclusion that we have lost our enlightenment or we have lost our peace. But the good news is that peace is not a feeling and in truth, it cannot be lost. So let’s now take a listen to Gangaji as she shares Papaji’s revelatory instruction: find out what does not come and go.

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(Excerpted from: Satsang with Gangaji, Fuel for the Return Home, August 18, 1997, Boulder, CO)

GANGAJI: Okay, always good to hear from you. It’s always lively, wonderful.

PARTICIPANT: I always go for it.

GANGAJI: Yes, you go for it, it goes for you. That is the truth.

PARTICIPANT: I am so happy to see you right now. So in following with what you are talking about I want to surrender, but I am really having a rough time.

GANGAJI: This is wonderful. This is honesty. This is very important. Excellent. So good, it is not like, “I have surrendered, I am not having a rough time. I have surrendered. I am not having a rough time, I have surrendered.” “I want to surrender, I feel the invitation of surrender, and I am having a rough time.” So, what is this rough time protecting you from? What is the fear? It is always a fear at the base of it. Do you understand that? Whatever the strategy, when you get down, it is fear.

PARTICIPANT: It is really hard for me to find that. Like I have been thinking....

GANGAJI: What do you find, what is there?

PARTICIPANT: That I keep getting in my way. That I really want this that can die till I am just sick and fed up with it.

GANGAJI: Oh, this is another issue all together.

PARTICIPANT: This is what?

GANGAJI: Another issue all together. "I am sick and fed up of it," is still the mind speaking to the mind.

PARTICIPANT: Yeah, I can hear that.

GANGAJI: So, surrender all of that. Give all of that up. But not from being sick of it, not from hating it, because that is a trap. I mean, it is okay to be a little sick of it, it is natural. This is a little sickening. But if you dwell on that, then that very sickeningness becomes part of the drama, has a strategy to avoid just being still.

PARTICIPANT: This is what I would like to get to.

GANGAJI: Yes, but you can't **get** there. This is the good news. That may sound bad, you can't get there. Because it is not some place, it is already here. It is already here.

PARTICIPANT: So what happens to me is I am so close to this a lot of the time...

GANGAJI: How do you know?

PARTICIPANT: Because I feel it.

GANGAJI: Where do you feel it?

PARTICIPANT: I feel the peace, I feel when I am free and I feel when I am not.

GANGAJI: When you are not, where is the peace?

PARTICIPANT: It is under there somewhere.

GANGAJI: How do you know that?

PARTICIPANT: Because I was already there, I felt it. It hadn't gone away.

GANGAJI: Okay, then all of the rest is just conversation.

PARTICIPANT: This is what I want your help with.

GANGAJI: Okay, listen. It is the same thing I was telling your husband, last time when he spoke. It doesn't matter what you are feeling like. It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter you are not feeling so good, so what? So what?

PARTICIPANT: It hurts so much. I have so much pain lately from this, I don't understand why I am so lost. Somebody who is so aware, and knows this truth. How could I get lost so much?

GANGAJI: You like the entertainment.

PARTICIPANT: I don't think that is true. It doesn't feel like it is true.

GANGAJI: But it **looks** like it is true.

PARTICIPANT: I mean...

GANGAJI: If, in fact, what you are saying is true, that you know that peace is there. You know that it is always there regardless of what you are feeling.

PARTICIPANT: I have another way I can tell you, that maybe you can actually help me a little bit more. Because...

GANGAJI: No, no I am refusing to help. Because I don't think it matters if you are feeling hurt. If you are feeling lost. In fact, I want you to feel hurt and lost, because in feeling that all of the way that is the only way you will discover really what hurt and lost are. And as long as you think peace is somehow separate from hurt and lost, you are still going from one corner of the world to the other.

PARTICIPANT: I am getting this. I am really beginning to get this.

GANGAJI: Okay, but right now. Give up the hope of getting anything. That is my point.

PARTICIPANT: I can do that. I want to tell you, I mean I want to tell you directly what is going on. So maybe there is....

GANGAJI: What is going on, you mean the drama? The story?

PARTICIPANT: No, no I don't want to tell you that. That is not what I want the answer to.

GANGAJI: Okay, let's see if this is really that which you are saying it is not.

PARTICIPANT: I wake up in the morning, and I just dwell there, and I can feel what is real. I really can, I know this place. It is not a mystery to me. And it is so beautiful, and I just wake up and walk downstairs, and damn if the first thing that happens... I am not, and I don't even want to say the word here. I am just, I lose it. And I don't understand where I just went.

GANGAJI: I don't understand what you are talking about.

PARTICIPANT: You don't?

GANGAJI: You are telling me about some phenomenal event that comes in. First of all it is blissful, and then second of all it is not blissful.

PARTICIPANT: This is what I don't understand either

GANGAJI: And where in there is the source of both the bliss and whatever...

PARTICIPANT: Here.

GANGAJI: Okay.

PARTICIPANT: And I am just wondering what happens.

GANGAJI: Nothing. It appears, and it disappears. But the source, does this appear and disappear?

PARTICIPANT: No.

GANGAJI: So if you want something that appears and disappears, you will be caught in the drama of that. If you want the source of all that appears and disappears, in other words, if you want yourself, then feeling good, feeling bad, is just feeling.

PARTICIPANT: I know I am not the only one who goes through this. And I am wondering what happens to all of us. You know, what goes on between knowing...

GANGAJI: I will tell you what goes on.

PARTICIPANT: ...where do I not know?

GANGAJI: I will tell you what goes on, it is called rejecting what feels bad and trying to cling to what feels good. This is very simple.

PARTICIPANT: Ugh, I just can't believe that is where, how it happens.

GANGAJI: Oh, really?

PARTICIPANT: I mean...

GANGAJI: Well, maybe you have discovered a new thing, let me know.

PARTICIPANT: Because you make it sound so easy that to just stay there, and I know it is not easy.

GANGAJI: No, no I am not saying to just stay there. YOU ARE IT. That you are trying to stay there, and not stay there. And **It** which is universal, limitless, consciousness, has no problem with feeling bad, feeling good. As individual consciousness, you have identified yourself as some object. And when that object

shines, you like it. You like yourself, you like the world. And when that object is dull and dark, you hate yourself, you hate the world.

PARTICIPANT: I just would like to see me have a little more consciousness.

GANGAJI: Who is this “me” that you would like to see? This object?

PARTICIPANT: No this...

GANGAJI: Oh yes it is, that is what you just said.

PARTICIPANT: This energy, this like you say, this lifestream. It is such beautiful lifestream, I can't believe it gets into as much trouble as it does.

GANGAJI: Well, there is a real addiction to thinking. And believing thoughts, and using those thoughts as some kind of technology to reject or to cling. To cling to the good part, which you are unsuccessful at, to reject the bad part, which you are unsuccessful at. Wouldn't you say this, it is an universal success and failure formula?

PARTICIPANT: Are you saying it doesn't matter whether I am feeling good or feeling bad?

GANGAJI: Yes, oh, thank you. Thank you. And making it matter, creating it mattering, in your mind, this is called suffering, drama.

PARTICIPANT: With other people, I mean, I am so unpleasant to be around some times.

GANGAJI: Well, it matters to them, definitely. But there is an irony here.

PARTICIPANT: But wouldn't you say, you are in peace most of the time, wouldn't you say that you...

GANGAJI: Yes, I am in peace always. That is the truth.

PARTICIPANT: Well, why can't I be.

GANGAJI: But that doesn't mean my personality is always peaceful.

PARTICIPANT: What is it that I am not doing so that I can have peace more of the time?

GANGAJI: What is it **not** that you are not doing, it is what is it that you are doing. And that what I am referring to.

PARTICIPANT: It is rejecting what I don't like.

GANGAJI: And the clinging, to what you do like. And it is, and you are clinging to something that is bound to pass, and you are rejecting something that is bound to

pass. But both the clinging and the rejection work in the opposite way. It is quite amazing. If in this bad feeling, this ugly, horrible, witch woman appears, you simply, for a moment, don't reject it, don't compare it to the last version of beauty, goddess, wonderful one. You simply experience it. I don't mean experience it as acted out, when you act it out it is usually some form of trying to reject it, discharge it, or which is also to indulge it. But I mean, you just experience it.

The horror that is also part of this incarnation. The ugliness, the filth of being human. The collective mind that has given rise to the most horrible events imaginable. Just for an instant, to actually not say, "Oh that couldn't be me." Or, "Oh that is me, and **why** is it still me?" Just to stop all of the dialog, the commentary, and actually experience it. It is a great humbling, it is a humiliation, it is a recognition of this object of who you thought you were. When it is experienced, is realized to be simply energy. And energy which is rejected or clung to, rejected in this case. Energy that is rejected haunts you, waits when you are least expecting, and grabs you by the neck. It is a hungry ghost.

So what this liberation, Leela, is about is in fact liberating that hungry ghost. Not liberating you, you are freedom itself. But you have identified yourself as some thing, and that gives way for a hungry ghost to attack. Well good, that is why I say good. You don't feel bad, feel **really** bad. Give up trying to escape feeling bad, give up trying to get back to that moment yesterday, last year, eight years ago, whatever, where you just felt bliss. Give it up, it is all in your mind. And be where you are. Experiencing what is arising, fully and completely. Without indulging it, without ignoring it, without trying to suppress it, and there is a tremendous discovery.

You are That which is unaffected by feeling good or feeling bad, by horror or sublime a experience. This object of who you are is made up in the mind, it is called ego. Ego means "I". It is a made up "I". And you know there is nothing wrong with making it up. It is entertainment. But this entertainment takes a very ugly turn when you believe it **is** who you are. And that is why spiritual work, spiritual meetings, is about bringing who it is you **think** you are to the surface. Because mostly it operates subconsciously, underground. So bringing it to the surface so that it can be investigated directly, so it's power to haunt or power to direct is defused. Because it cannot survive direct investigation, because it is unreal, it is made up. It has been worked on, augmented for at least this lifetime. But when it is exposed to the investigation of simply experiencing directly, can it be found?

So when you suffer, when you know, this is what Christ said, when you know how to suffer, you do not suffer. Not, you do not suffer because, "Boy, I want to know how to suffer, so I won't suffer. So I will feel good all of the time." As a strategy of clinging to not suffering. That is not knowing how to... You already know that one very well. You have worked it in so many different angles, so many different dealings, unconscious or conscious. So many, "Boy I got a new technique, I got a new thing." I mean, Advaita says, "I am nothing, so it doesn't matter, it doesn't matter, it doesn't matter." And yet, it is mattering. Because there is an unwillingness to surrender. So surrender when you are in bliss, of course. But to surrender in this moment, because the surrender in the bliss when you wake up. And you are dwelling in the truth of your being, is actually is an invitation for every hungry ghost that is attached to this object to come to *satsang*. And when you are dwelling in the truth of your being, you are

*satsang*. You have put out a broadcast an invitation, all who would be liberated come here now. And that, you know, some ugly things show up. And you say, "Oh, except you."

PARTICIPANT: What I am hearing is that my thought that I should be this essence of love all of the time, and that when I am not, it is something to feel bad about. Is really...

GANGAJI: Just a thought.

PARTICIPANT: Um, I can't believe that is not what I am supposed to be. That is so hard for me, I really believe I am supposed to be love all of the time

GANGAJI: In believing, that is what you are supposed to be, you overlook what you are. Which is much bigger than what you think love is. Peace is much deeper than what you think, peace is not an absence of conflict. Peace is the reconciliation of all conflict, and in that is the invitation for all conflict to arise. Peace is not some like boring, stiff...

PARTICIPANT: Always loving thing.

GANGAJI: Like that. Love can be very ferocious. Love gave rise to the whole universe, and takes it back in an instant. It is ferocious. And to think that it is just like a smile, what a basically, an infantile safe idea of love. Love is not safe. It is not safe. You know this if you have tasted love at all. You know this. No safety there, no hope of safety. And what truth that is.

PARTICIPANT: That is amazing to think I have lived my life really thinking I was a misfit because I wasn't more loving. That something was wrong with me. And I am listening to you and thinking, "Wow, you know, this could lighten things up a bit."

GANGAJI: Good. Good. This word "love", you know, I understand the feelings of love, and oceanic feelings of love, and the beauty of that, the particular kind of sensation in the body, and the expansion of the mind. This is wonderful, this is a kind of *samadhi*, but to limit what true love is, to any feeling, to any emotion, is to limit what God is. And a limited God, is not truly God. A limited Self, is not truly Self.

PARTICIPANT: I get it.

GANGAJI: Well, great.

PARTICIPANT: That is good. This morning I got the joke for the first time. You know how you always say, "That is the joke." I am always sitting here, "I don't get the joke." But I really got the joke this morning. I woke up with this amazing dream, and I got the joke. What had happened was I was getting ready to do a TV show in this dream. And they had invited me, and everything was all ready, and everything went wrong. I got stuck on this boat, and I didn't have the right clothes, and I was, I lost my jeans, and the they gave me this suit and it didn't match, and I had a red shoe and a blue shoe. And then they didn't remember my name, and everything was wrong. Everything. And I woke up from this dream, and I went, "That's the joke." The joke is

I think that something is supposed to be a certain way. And every time it isn't, I get upset. And I go through life upset all the time, like somehow it is supposed to work out perfectly all the time. And I went, "I got it."

GANGAJI: This is so good what you are saying. This is ego, this is ego. Ego is a point of view that has been constructed, been created, by some great mysterious power of self. It is a point of view. And that point of view assumes it knows the totality. Therefore, it can say what should be, what must be, or even what is. Yes, what a joke. I mean, you know this teaching story about the blind man and the elephant. It is that. One blind man finds the tail, and assumes... I don't know the story. But assumes that that is what the reality of this animal is. So, no person knows what it should be. And there can be great fear and trembling in this. Because at this moment, there is the possibility to surrender to not knowing. Not knowing what it should be. And when you surrender that, what you know is unspeakable. And it has nothing to do with should, has nothing to do with appearances. And yet, it is not separate from appearances. And it has nothing to do with you.

PARTICIPANT: Everyone else always seems so much better than I am at this thing.

GANGAJI: Nobody is any good at this. Thank God. Nobody can own this, learn this, have this. Thank God, it is free, free of ownership, free of doing.

PARTICIPANT: Why is it that some other people seem, like you know people, and you go, "Oh this person is so good."

GANGAJI: Well, you know, they have two blue shoes in their closet or something. So what? Yes, people can look like they have it together. People can write beautiful letters, but the truth is, how is it lived? And you know what, nobody knows that but yourself. That is the power you have, is to tell the truth. Because it does not have a particular face, smiling, or frowning. You know you see some pictures of Buddha smiling, you see some pictures of Buddha frowning, you see ferocious Tibetan deities, you see sublime virginal deities. All is included. Every look. And the power in not knowing, is to know when you are lying, when you are defensive, when you are trying to cling to something, when you are trying to reject something. This is your power. So, you tell the truth, tell the truth, tell the truth. And you see. Finally, you see the truth is, "I am That which is always free, regardless of identification, regardless of feeling state, regardless of understanding state." And when you realize this, and that is what you are here for, because most of you have definitely experienced it. When it is realized it doesn't even matter if you are experiencing it. It just doesn't matter. I mean, people have all kinds of ideas about how Gangaji walks around in her day, or floats around, or flies around, or meditates all day. Really missing the point. That is what we have always done, we have some idea of what it should be like. "It should be like our Sunday School pictures of the Virgin Mary, or of some saint, or some holy person. It should be like what I think somebody else is like." It is not LIKE anything. It is free of likeness. And when you stop trying to be like, and when you stop trying to think someone else should be like, you can see what is. All inclusive, totality of being: sweet, sublime, safe, ferocious, horrible, vast.

PARTICIPANT: I am very grateful for your answer, for your discussion.



GANGAJI: I am always grateful for your questions. They always bring forth...

PARTICIPANT: I am really grateful for what you have just shared with me.

GANGAJI: That is beautiful.

PARTICIPANT: Thank you.

GANGAJI: Very good, thank you. Now to be grateful when this ghost comes to your *satsang*, this hungry ghost, this is... I mean, sometimes you do have to kick the hungry ghost out. But at least you give him a chance, you know, you say, "What is it you want? What is true, what is real?"

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BARBARA: I think one particular piece in this exchange that I found very powerful was: you are not supposed to be like anyone else. And that is so much of what we are often wrestling with on this path and so I am so grateful that we have this recording and I get to share it with you.

And today I want to tell you, and of course we are in the middle of our year end fundraising event and the Donor Collaborative group has stepped forward to provide a matching fund, and you can, before the end of the year, December 31<sup>st</sup> 2024, you can make a donation. It will be doubled until the fund is completely match, which is thirty-one thousand dollars. And so, there is still some matches to be made so I hope you will contribute there on [gangaji.org](http://gangaji.org), that's g-a-n-g-a-j-i dot o-r-g.

And while you are on the website, I invite you to go see the *Moments* page, just to really appreciate the beautiful stories and realizations that people have shared with us over many years. Be sure to check that out. And always, there is a lot of content and material there to support you in your spiritual inquiry. And I hope this program today is truly supporting you as well. I know what it means to me and I know what you mean to me, so I want to thank you for being here for this year.

My name is Barbara Denempont. Until next time.