

Gangaji Podcast
Being Yourself
Episode 81
Host Barbara Denempont
The Great Discovery Inside Self-Hatred
Released April 18, 2025
www.gangaji.org

GANGAJI: I would look into myself. I didn't like what I saw. But really what I was looking into was my personality, and it was a mess. You know, there were wounds and concrete blocks...

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

And today is a super special edition of *Being Yourself* because I have a special guest here to help me introduce today's wonderful clip, and that is Gangaji herself.

BARBARA: Welcome Gangaji.

GANGAJI: Thank you.

BARBARA: This is so great. I love that we have you here live, and there is a really special reason, again, special, that we have you here live and that is because we wanted to announce and let people know about this new, very potent series about your life that you and Hillary Larson have been working on. Can you share a bit about it?

GANGAJI: Well, it's been surprising, I would say, to really stop, and through Hillary's skill, reflect on what my life has been – and I have actually discovered quite a lot. I love Hillary's programs, especially her *Epiphany* programs and so this really takes off from there. And, with this program, of course, the main invitation is to discover within your own self what your life has been about, or is about. And if you are listening to this, if you are at all interested in what is presented here, somehow, somewhere, your life is about freedom or the desire for freedom. And so, my life story and your life story then become stories about what are the obstacles to that or how is it we know that or don't know that. And so, it is an exploration, hopefully an exploration that will invite exploration.

BARBARA: One of the themes that comes through in the very first episode – because it really begins all the way back in Mississippi, the earliest moments of your life and your childhood – and one of the potent themes that I think we can all relate to is the theme of self-hatred came through.

GANGAJI: Yeah. When I reflect on my early life that was both my curse and my motivating factor to somehow face, well first to run from this hatred that I felt for

myself, that I could explain by certain circumstances later, but at the time, I just felt worthless and that I had missed something and I was not right for something. I felt out of place. And Hillary, with her skill, really brought that out in the events of my life and in my interpretation of the events of my life - which I believe is similar for everyone.

BARBARA: Well, I know it's similar for me. I remember reflecting actually myself that the very first workshop in trying to self-improve, what I said to the leader of the retreat when he asked me, "What do you want to get out of this?" and I said, "Well, I would like to be a little less embarrassed about myself." And that was just the top, you know, that was just the, it was like embarrassed, like that was kind of a strange thing to say looking back on it, but it was true. I just felt a certain kind of way about myself and wanted to feel either more included and so I really do feel that my journey is similar in that self-hatred was really what was cooking underneath of that, and then it was all revealed over time. And I sometimes feel self-hatred is, maybe it's the root of all unnecessary suffering, at least.

GANGAJI: Maybe, and also in that same sense, maybe it's the root of all searching which then, if we truly search and we tell the truth about it, and we allow it to mature, really reveals freedom and love. So, I know I always wished that I had had a wonderful home life, and a beautiful loving mother who cherished me, that I looked a certain way, that I just flourished – is was what I would have wished for and what I did wish for and always sort of blamed my life circumstances for my hatred. But in these years of speaking to people, I have found is if you just scratch the surface, often we hate ourselves because we are human, or because we aren't some ideal version of perfection. So, I believe it is everywhere, to different degrees.

BARBARA: And it creates enormous pain.

GANGAJI: Yes. And, it creates a certain grist for really telling the truth about what you want, what you are looking for, what you hope that will give you.

BARBARA: Well, there's the blessing, really.

GANGAJI: Yes.

BARBARA: Because I can attest to that for myself. So, in this first episode, and there are six episodes (at least so far).

(Both laugh)

GANGAJI: Growing all the time.

BARBARA: Growing all the time. But, it's six episodes and as I said, the first episode is your early life and at the end of the piece, Hillary featured a fantastic and really powerful clip on the subject of self-hatred - you kind of bring it home. And so that is what we are going to share on this podcast today.

GANGAJI: Oh good.

(Excerpted from: Silent Retreat with Gangaji, Hudson Valley, New York Garrison Institute, September 22, 2010).

Often when I advise people or invite people to trust themselves, what gets touched on is self-hatred. Because they feel they have failed themselves or failed others. They have failed the test. We have failed the test so many times. I know when I would look into myself, I didn't like what I saw. But really what I was looking into was my personality, and it was a mess. You know, there were wounds and concrete blocks... there was just all kinds of stuff there, it was like, "Oh my God." And so the thrust was for me to escape that or fix it. To get help for it, to fix it. And I spent years both escaping it in many different ways and fixing it. But however I fixed it, there would always be something sort of bubbling up from the depths that would destroy it. And I had to recognize that it was my own self-hatred. And by self-hatred I meant hatred of this body and its limitations, and its – what seemed to me – inherent ugliness and filth. Even though I liked it sometimes, you know, if it got fixed up in particular mirrors... But that was there, this hatred.

And so like the fear of death or non-existence, this self-hatred is a horrific gift, and it seems to come with most humans who were raised by most parents. It just gets inbred in there: bad girl, wicked girl, stupid girl, mean girl, selfish girl. And it's like, "Well, that's right", you have the proof of all of that. And so the trust, when you trust yourself, is actually willing to penetrate that to discover what is underneath it. And the by-product of that penetration is the liberation of this wicked, bad, ugly, filthy little girl. Bad seed. Throw back. However we formulate it, and whatever support we have gotten for that formulation. That is what gets liberated. And the trust is still opening to what is underneath that. But to get underneath it, there has to be a penetration of what the barrier is. The disbelief, the fear, the self-hatred. With all of our proof of how that is so.

So I have shared with people before... finally I didn't see myself as an image, I just saw dark murky energy. And I had already met the frantic, hysterical, crazy energy. This was under that. The frantic, hysterical energy was an attempt to escape this dark, murky stuff. And it's like, "Oh my God, not that." But here it was. And for much of my life I had spent avoiding it, circling it, dramatizing it, fixing it, hating it, and I just opened, as I invite you to open to it. I experienced it. And it felt like it moved through my body. Like it was maybe a curse. So let's say we have all been cursed, and you could feel this demonic curse moving through, and then it was gone. It is a self-exorcism. It's what a priest does, right? Brings the light of the spirit. Or it's what a rabbi does. Brings the truth of God. So that the dybbuk can be released. And God knows we are carrying around centuries of curses. Curses on our family, curses our family did that then ricocheted back on them. And we know we have cursed, we have wished the worst for other people, and other people have wished the worst for us. And so as a metaphor, there is a sense of this huge hatred coming and going.

So to open to hatred? We mostly just want to get to love. Great, get to love. That is the refuge. And from the refuge, you can actually open to whatever else is here. And if there is hatred, or if there is dark, murky energy, you can very simply – although it

may be extremely challenging – very simply open. And it is a great discovery. The only thing that stops that opening is a continual discussion. Internal discussion. “What will happen? What will be the result? Yes, but... Yes, why is it still here? Da da da da da...” Just recognize that discussion. Recognize the complication of the discussion, and then you are open. And you will see, it is trust-worthy. Opening is trust-worthy. It is not like I walk through parts of town, or downtown Manhattan or any place, opening to whatever may be dark and murky. I don’t advise it. But there is an intelligence then that is freed of the body. I don’t need to do that. I used to do that, you know? “Oh, hi!” Because I was trying to escape this. And I thought if I could make enough friends, make enough allies, make enough people love me, then that would cleanse this. I would be rescued, I would be saved, Jesus would save me, or a teacher would save me. But my teacher, he said, “Stop searching.” And I heard that as, “Stop running away, stop running toward, stop hiding.” And then, oh boy, this is serious. This is big. It is not child’s play. It is for an adult. It is sober. It is ruthless. It is rigorous. And it is simple.

And I can’t even begin to explain the by-product of that. The self-confidence. I don’t have confidence in my personality, or confidence in my ability to speak what can’t be spoken, but absolute, total confidence in the Truth of who I am. And that is available for you, because it is the same I Am. Whatever distortions of your personality or dysfunctions of your physical, mental, emotional life, the ground is the same consciousness. Radiant in itself.

BARBARA: As always, I hope this podcast today speaks to your heart and soul. It certainly touches mine. Gangaji is always inviting you to the possibility of discovering what is free of any thought.

And I hope you will join us in the media library for this new audio series that we were speaking about called *Finding Home*. It’s a beautiful, remarkable, dynamic conversation between Hillary and Gangaji and I am excited about it.

And, if you are already a member in the media library, you will be able to listen to the first episode on May 5th - we’ll be releasing episodes each month for the next six months. And, if you are not a member, I invite you to learn more about the media library at gangaji.org, that’s g-a-n-g-a-j-i dot o-r-g.

Thank you, Gangaji, for joining us today and thank you all for listening.

My name is Barbara Denempont. Until next time.