

Gangaji Podcast
Being Yourself
Episode 86
Host Barbara Denempont
How We Keep Identifying With Our Egos
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GANGAJI: If there is not vigilance then there is something to learn and what you can learn is the ABC of how you re-identify. You cannot learn the Self, you cannot learn Consciousness, you cannot learn Love, you cannot learn Trust, but you can learn how you deny that.

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

Today, I am bringing you an absolutely delightful exchange that dives into a central question, and that is, after a powerful moment of self-realization, of pure recognition, how do we fall back into the patterns and habits of identifying with our concepts of who we are? Who we think or feel or imagine we are? This exchange is a great exploration of the vigilance that is natural and possible in the wake of realizing your true face.

(Excerpted from: A Meeting with Gangaji, San Diego, CA, January 18, 2001)

PARTICIPANT: Just now you have been talking about, and I love the words that you use, the mind being cradled by the consciousness. But the question I have is, I know for a fact, I know it is certain that this personal entity, this individuality, is really nonexistent.

GANGAJI: Oh, how can you.....?

PARTICIPANT: That is one hundred percent known, but here is the thing...

GANGAJI: But wait! Before you do a "but", how is it possible to know, how is it possible for this to come from an apparent individual? This is the mystery, the beautiful resolution of this mystery of being. That an individual can say, "I know for a fact, the individual does not exist." This is thrilling, this is the paradox. So the mind will have it, "That cannot be," but the truth is, "Yes, it is." So wait, before you... Let's just

revel in that now. This is, you know this with such confidence, and such clarity, this, let this just reverberate out. Let someone else drink of this confidence. Because it is **known** in the core by everyone. And the role that we can play in one another's lives, is recognizing that, and confirming that, and deepening in that. So here comes the deepening.

PARTICIPANT: Okay. Now here is the dilemma, I cannot tell you my dilemma, but here is the...

GANGAJI: Dilemma.

PARTICIPANT: The thoughts that come into the mind.

GANGAJI: Yes

PARTICIPANT: Sometimes are very powerful.

GANGAJI: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: And I sometimes get completely carried away.

GANGAJI: Like going to a good movie.

PARTICIPANT: I completely forget everything that I have done all these meditations, and the thinking that I have done, completely forgotten.

GANGAJI: Yes, yes, then we are talking really a good movie. Or else it is just, you know, it is "aha, aha," you are watching it out of the corner of your eye. But this is like real theater then.

PARTICIPANT: Yes. It is a movie, but, you know, the things, because of the fact that I completely get carried away, and I don't like the things that sometimes that happens.

GANGAJI: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: And looking back at it, how could I have possibly done it? I mean, how could I have completely identified with, you know, my thoughts, or my desires are completely forgotten.

GANGAJI: Yes, how. This is what you have see, how. How did you do it? Because there is a “how”, like that. There is no “how” to surrender, but there is a “how” to how there is identification.

PARTICIPANT: I get it.

GANGAJI: Excellent. How?

PARTICIPANT: Yes, how did I get unidentified? Tell me how.

GANGAJI: So I can tell you pattern that would exist here.

PARTICIPANT: Yes, but here is also the question that I have. Is this identification also coming from Consciousness?

GANGAJI: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: It is?

GANGAJI: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: So it is not my fault. (Laughter.)

GANGAJI: It is your fault.

PARTICIPANT: It is my fault!

GANGAJI: It is your fault. Because fault also comes from Consciousness.

PARTICIPANT: Okay.

GANGAJI: That is the slippery way out. "Since it is all Consciousness, well hey! What do we want to do?" You know, it is not like that. That is a trick of the mind, you have a very intelligent mind. That is both a blessing and a curse. A blessing in that there can be a deep, deep drinking. And the curse, is that that deep drinking then there can be, the mind is trained to like be slippery. Find a way around to say, "Ha. So I still get to do what I want."

PARTICIPANT: Yes, exactly.

GANGAJI: So what do you want? What do you really finally want? Really.

PARTICIPANT: Well, I was listening to a video of yours about a year or two, two or three years ago, and that is when I actually came to know about you. And it was very strange, the first time I saw your video, it was so attractive, the things that you said was, it was as if me talking.

GANGAJI: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: It was exactly like me, you know, talking, something was happening, but it was so beautiful. But anyway, I think you talked about being vigilant.

GANGAJI: Yes. That is right, that is what we are talking about here.

PARTICIPANT: Right, and you know, how can I be vigilant. Because, again, if I have to be vigilant, there has to be some effort involved.

GANGAJI: Only if it is YOU are DOING VIGILANCE. And then this is still the property of the mind.

PARTICIPANT: Right.

GANGAJI: But who are You? If you are not this individual, who are You?

PARTICIPANT: I cannot describe myself, I don't know how to describe myself.

GANGAJI: Well I will name you then, Consciousness.

PARTICIPANT: Okay.

GANGAJI: Awareness.

PARTICIPANT: Okay.

GANGAJI: Is Awareness ever asleep?

PARTICIPANT: During deep sleep, I am not aware that I am...

GANGAJI: You are aware that you are in deep sleep, because the next morning you can say, "I was in deep sleep."

PARTICIPANT: Right, but at that instant of deep sleep ...

GANGAJI: Well, there is no THING to be aware of then. Right?

PARTICIPANT: Right.

GANGAJI: In deep sleep, there are no phenomena appearing, there are no dream bodies, there are no body sensations, but there is a knowing that you are in deep sleep, because you can recall you were in deep sleep. Without any reference point to any phenomena.

PARTICIPANT: Okay. Right.

GANGAJI: So vigilance is the very nature of Awareness, keeping vigil.

PARTICIPANT: Right.

GANGAJI: The very nature, the moment that there is effort for vigilance, then the mind has co-opted the vigilance. And there is bound to be then the dropping of vigilance, they go together.

PARTICIPANT: Okay.

GANGAJI: There is still an identification of yourself with your mind activity. You are not separate from your mind activity, but you are **more** than your mind activity. The particular mind activity that you are speaking of appears and it disappears. But You, as you truly are, are always here. Always. So if you look back now, to one of those times, one of those instances where you got totally identified with the drama, with the movie.

PARTICIPANT: Right.

GANGAJI: Yes, and this is the answer to your question, too. And then you did not like the behavior that came out of that.

PARTICIPANT: Right.

GANGAJI: So in looking back, you just take a moment and look back, can you see the moment that you left the truth in your mind, and identified with the drama? There is a particular, well there are lots of moments leading into it. But there is a moment where there is a choice. It comes with the speed of light. But did you see in the paper today, they have even stopped light. So the speed of light is not what it used to be. So the ego appears, which is false identification, appears with the speed of light. But You are present as it appears. So You are present as it appears, so when you look back, in your mind, to that moment.

PARTICIPANT: Okay.

GANGAJI: What occurred?

PARTICIPANT: It looks like identification just happened, and I....

GANGAJI: I understand it looks like that. But I am asking you, are you a scientist.

PARTICIPANT: I am an engineer.

GANGAJI: An engineer, okay. I am asking you to look a little closer at the really small mechanism, because you look from the outside and it is like, "Oh boy, that just happened." Like the wheel just started turning, but if you look a little closer, you see, "Aha, the wheel didn't just start turning, there was a little thing here, and a little thing there, and that thing." And then the wheel, the momentum got it going. So I am asking you now to look deeper, what some pattern fueled by some emotion, accompanied by some thought.

PARTICIPANT: It is probably, it looks like the past tendencies.

GANGAJI: Then what is this past tendency?

PARTICIPANT: It is a habit that might have developed through the years.

GANGAJI: Yes, but I am saying, how did this habit get chosen in this particular instant? So maybe it just appears out of the past momentum, but there is a moment it seems like it is a sliver of time. But if you actually put your magnifying glass on it, which is Consciousness, you will see in slow motion there were many choices. So first there is the emotion, which is BIG. And then there is a choice to indulge that emotion or repress that emotion, and you have chosen both in different times. And you repress it, and then it squeezes out in some other time, or you indulge it and then you dramatize it out.

PARTICIPANT: Exactly.

GANGAJI: Exactly.

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: Yes, because this is not, it is particular in this case, but it is universal. Because it has seemed to be having its own momentum, "I am just being who I am." Then there is not a questioning of **really**, REALLY who you are is Radiant, Aware, Consciousness. You are now being who you **think** you are, and this thought of who you are, as you say, has been built up in the past, millions of years. So it has a force, it has a power, but you are Consciousness. You are CONSCIOUSNESS, so you can examine in the most minute detail the choices of acting out. Just like this man was speaking of listening to the same old thoughts. So here is this very familiar pattern. And it comes in blowing horns, you know it is coming in. You feel it in your body, you are starting to think those thoughts again, you are feeling either self-righteous or blame. I don't know what your particular pattern is, I am using a kind of anger pattern as an example. And then you are justified in doing whatever you do. Right?

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: Very familiar. Does this apply to anybody out there? And then in the looking back, it is like, "Well, I don't know what happened. It just happened." But when there is a desire to know what happened, and that is what I am hearing you

speaking and that is what you wrote me about. Then there is the possibility to see, there was a choosing of Consciousness to re-identify with some old, dead movie. I say it is old and dead, because you don't have the desire to identify with it any more. It really doesn't thrill you any more. Except maybe in the moment. You see the destruction of it, you see how it bleeds the life energy from you and people around you, and you see how it uses up the creative force of your life. So it is old and dead, that is where your power to see exactly where you are choosing to re-identify comes from.

PARTICIPANT: So at a certain point in time, I do have a choice?

GANGAJI: Yes, don't you? Look

PARTICIPANT: If I am very vigilant, I am extremely vigilant.....

GANGAJI: Well forget that, because we are not talking about you being very vigilant. But we are talking about you **weren't** very vigilant.

PARTICIPANT: Exactly.

GANGAJI: Which it is very skillful means to assume you won't be very vigilant.

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: So then you say, "Okay, I was not vigilant, let us see how it was there was a re-identification." Because there is not re-identification if there is vigilance, and if there is not vigilance, then there is something to learn. And what you can **learn**, what is learnable, is the A, B, C, of how you re-identify. You cannot learn the Self, you cannot learn Consciousness, you cannot learn Love, you cannot learn Trust, but you can learn how you deny that. Because there are techniques, there are strategies, there is either indulgence or repression. And with both of those, there is an avoidance of simply experiencing the immensity of the moment, the power of the moment. Where everything in your past is saying, "Attack." There is this **power**, this **force**, that if it is **experienced**, is then a force of Light. A force of Love, a force of Consciousness, meeting Itself Here, deeper than ever. If it is denied or repressed, it is just the same old habit. If it is indulged, it is just the same old violence. This is, you were speaking of addiction.

PARTICIPANT: To a certain extent.

GANGAJI: Yes, a certain kind of addiction, a kind of addiction to a pattern.

PARTICIPANT: Right.

GANGAJI: And with addiction there has to be a point where you see perhaps the desire is out of your control. Maybe it is physiological, maybe it has been practiced for so long that it has its own groove. So that is out of your control. I am not saying that is in your control. But what **is** in your control, absolutely, is this willingness to not move when it appears. This willingness to not indulge. This willingness to not repress. This willingness to be in the FIRE of this impulse of thousands of years. It is certainly at least all of the years of this lifetime. Have you ever experienced that?

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: Yes, so you know the beauty of that. So you **know**, then there was a willingness, in that moment actually there is a willingness to die. Because an addiction can be so strong, and certainly the addiction to mind or habits, is so strong that there is the sense, "I will die. I will die if I don't strike out. I will die if I don't attack." That is what an attack is about. Right? Protecting "me" from dying. And so there is a willingness, because of maturity of the soul, "Okay, if I die, I will die. But I am not going to follow this demon again, down this road, again." So this is the mind, but it is the mind being in service to what was betrayed. The vigilance was betrayed, so it is the mind being humbled. And it feels like a descent into hell, because with any addiction the impulse is so strong to get **rid** of the craving, to get rid of the fire. HOW, HOW, HOW. And there are millions of ways how. But instead, to not get rid of it, not go numb with it, to let it BURN, BURN, BURN. This is the fire, this is what Buddha goes through with all of the temptations. This is Christ in the desert, this is **everyone** has to experience this. "Omigod, I am dying. Okay, I am dying, I surrender, I surrender." And there is peace. And there is freedom. And you recognize what never left, always here. And there is also a break in a habit pattern, it does not have the hold on you. It may reappear, but there is something bigger than the habit pattern. Do you follow this?

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: Yes, because you had an experience of it. So still, I want you to recognize that there are many moments before the acting out, **many** choices. They happen very, very fast, but if you will slow them down, in your mind, just slow the film down of this movie. You will see, "Aha, yes." And there is a justification that comes. And there is a kind of thrill of the adrenaline, and the power that comes with it. And there is a kind of quick excuse making, and, "Well, so-and-so did." Or, "It doesn't matter." Or, "We are all one." "It is still Self." Or, "My guru did." Or, "Da, da, da, da." All of that, that is all thought. To not follow any of it, because it is all the sirens saying, "Come, come, come back. Back into where you were all powerful, where you were in control, where you are God, where you get to say what happens." You don't move. DON'T

MOVE. And there is an exquisite experience that can never be taken from you, that is revealed.

PARTICIPANT: Yes, but those moments have happened. You know, those things have come back.

GANGAJI: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: It can be a pattern, as you said. It is a conditional pattern that is coming back.

GANGAJI: Yes, **good**. Then it means there is something that is still is unseen, which is even more deeply humbling for the mind. Because this is all we are speaking of, is the humbling for the mind. That is what the fire is, the fire is the resistance, the friction of the mind constantly seeking control of this particular situation. And the refusal to follow the mind, then creates a certain fire, burning. And if it comes back, well good! "I must, there must be more here to see."

PARTICIPANT: But there is a lot of suffering at that moment.

GANGAJI: YES, but it is conscious suffering. It is **conscious** suffering, this is very different than from **delaying** the suffering, and following, indulging, and discharging the suffering. And then the suffering is spread out over time, then there is still the suffering of the misidentification. Someone was telling me, I have never really read Dante's Divine Comedy, except in pieces. But they were telling me about, over hell is, "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here." And so I used to say that to people, and then I said, "Where does that come from?" And somebody said, "Well that is over hell." And I thought, "Oh I had better stop saying that, nobody is going to understand what I am talking about." But that is the truth. To get to paradise there has to be a descent into the hell that has been created by mind. Let's say not even your mind, your parent's mind, the genetics that set into the creation of this particular hell. The descent into that, so that you recognize you are MORE than that. This is a scary descent. And there is the tendency to go, "No, no, I don't have to do that. It is all Self." "Oh no, no. It doesn't matter, it is all just a movie." Well that is great if it is true, but if that is just a strategy, or a covering, and the habit patterns continue, then what have you got to lose? It is all Self. What have you got to lose? Discovering, that in fact, in the midst of hell, there is God, radiant. Then hell, itself, is liberated. But your past demons, your hungry ghosts, that have been haunting you, and waking you up at four in the morning, and criticizing, and self-hatred, and torture. They are liberated. That is what gets liberated. Self is not liberated. It was never bound. What gets liberated are the demons of your mind, as well as the gods of your mind. Set them free. You are sick of them, you are sick of playing with them, and being played by them. Set them free. That is all I am saying. And the way to set them free, is to be willing to not play the game. And this willingness takes enormous resolve. Huge resolve. It is a little

different from vigilance. Because resolve comes after vigilance has been betrayed, after re-identification has set in. But it is the mind's resolve to recognize the hell that has once again been created, and to be here, to burn. And in that burning, there is redemption. Naturally, not somebody coming in and redeeming you, but naturally redemption. And you recognize, it was ALL a movie, it is God's movie, it is a HUGE movie. And it has corners, and surprises, and slopes, that are undreamed of, unheard of, that no movie, even our greatest movie makers, and playwrights, have never even touched. They catch a coattail of it, and OHHH we fall-out in AWE. This is your life. This is your life.

PARTICIPANT: So if it is Consciousness, Itself, playing this movie, you know, why is Consciousness making me go through this suffering? (Laughter)

GANGAJI: Because Consciousness picked up out to hate. Why not? You know, in all movies somebody has got to suffer. What kind of story is it if there is no suffering? Would you really be interested if there were no suffering? So what happens then, but the suffering, and the resistance to the suffering, are one and the same. The resolution occurs when **there is** suffering. Isn't this what the Buddha said? "Life is suffering. And there is a way out." And the way out is IN. Directly, consciously, MEET the suffering. Even Christ said this, "If you know how to suffer, you do not suffer." So if you will know how it is you suffer, you do not suffer. But this must be known, rather than, see, even the question, "why?" Is an avoidance of knowing, HOW it is this continues. HOW IT IS. Right here, in this universe, patterns of war still appear. Because that is what we are talking about, war. Right? Even though you have tasted peace, even though this universe has tasted peace, peace on earth. How is it that conflict still has its way. This is true of every mind-stream, especially humans. War is inbred, and it has gone unmet. What has happened is war has been made on war. And the child of that is more war. So to meet that war, within yourself, consciously, awake, refusing to budge. Meeting war, you will find peace. If you have tasted it, then you know it is so. If you have not, it may seem impossible, but taste it and see. Just take one moment in the midst of ONE attacking pattern, and don't budge. Because under the behavior, there is the energy of an emotion, and that emotion is fueled by some thought of protection, or being wounded, or hurt, or not seen. In the willingness to experience that being wounded, or hurt, or not seen, to **really** be wounded, **really** hurt, **really** not seen, then it is no big deal. Then the wound is nothing. The hurt is nothing. And not being seen, you cannot be seen, you are the Self. You cannot be SEEN. You are not an object. Do you understand?

PARTICIPANT: Yes, yes I do. I do need that strength to take that resolve.

GANGAJI: Give me your hand. Just take the strength from me to you, and with this strength I give you the strength of my teacher, and his teacher, and his teacher. And because I am emboldened I give you the strength of all teachers, throughout all time, dead and alive. Past, present, and future, it is your own Heart. It is a hand being offered you throughout time. It is always there for you, I promise you this.

PARTICIPANT: Okay.

GANGAJI: You let me know, okay. You write me a letter or something, you let me know. You remind of this conversation in a letter, or you send me a little picture. Yes I will.

GANGAJI: And you will see, it is very courageous to ask for help. But even in this action, often what is neglected is checking to see, is help here. So you have asked for help, the next thing is to see, is help here? In this moment of the need for resolve, it is here, it is here. There is a hand out reached to all of you. Out reached to all of us, throughout time. We have great and wondrous teachers from the past, the highest order of teachers. And they are alive in you, they don't die. They are the Self, as are You. Then the question is, is the help accepted? It is dangerous to accept this help. You lose the capacity to deny it. What a loss, holy loss.

PARTICIPANT: Thank you.

GANGAJI: I wish you the absolute best. My teacher would always say, "Good luck."

BARBARA:

I just love that Gangaji ends this piece reminding us to ask for help. I certainly did. And so I am so happy I get to share this material with you, and as I sign off, I want to remind you that you can find more content, more material, at gangaji.org, that's g-a-n-g-a-j-i dot org. It's all there to support you in deepening in your inquiry.

We just released episode five of *Finding Home*, the six-part audio documentary about Gangaji's life. And episode five is really about Gangaji's deepening as her life unfolded after meeting Papaji and she began meeting with people. It's called *A Raging Fire* and it's a remarkable story. You can watch the trailer on the homepage and, of course you'll find all five episodes that have been released inside the Media Library and you can join that any time.

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