

Gangaji Podcast  
Being Yourself  
Episode 91  
Host Barbara Denempont  
Hopelessly Lost on the Seeker's Path  
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GANGAJI: So you're feeling absolutely desperate. Find who is feeling desperate. This feeling of desperation only continues because you assume that you, in fact, are desperate, that you are something that the feeling is hooked on to, that you are your brain stem or something.

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

Recently, someone shared on the *With Gangaji* Forum that he was at the quote, end of his rope, unquote, and that sparked my memory about this great conversation Gangaji had about being at the end of your rope. And it's a conversation that really has stuck with me all these years. So, I found the recording and this episode, I would say, is for anyone who has felt that sense of deep spiritual fatigue when the striving for awakening, for enlightenment, for peace or fulfillment has left you feeling utterly hopeless. That's what this conversation is about and in it, Gangaji speaks directly to this possibility that even despair and desperation can reveal what happens when effort falls away and the hope of getting somewhere, dissolves.

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(Excerpted from: Satsang with Gangaji, Boulder, CO, July 9, 1995)

PARTICIPANT: Gangaji

GANGAJI: Hi

PARTICIPANT: Ever since I saw you last January, on video for the first time, I've been hopelessly lost.

GANGAJI: I wonder what you mean by that.

PARTICIPANT: I don't know what to say really. I just feel like I've reached my last rope. I mean I've come to the end of the rope.

GANGAJI: Great! I hoped you meant this. When you said, “hopelessly lost,” I hoped you meant really, hopelessly lost. If you’re at the end of the rope, then you throw the rope away. Then you know the rope has been a figment of your imagination.

PARTICIPANT: I don’t know how to throw away the rope.

GANGAJI: You know how? Stop holding on. If you are really, hopelessly lost, instantly you are found. It is only when you can give up this shred of hope, hope of rescue, hope of being found, that you can recognize, “I am here.” So, when you say, “I am hopelessly lost,” find this I who’s lost.

PARTICIPANT: There is no I. I mean, there’s...I can’t say it.

GANGAJI: Well, you just did. There is no *I*, lost, right?

PARTICIPANT: Right.

GANGAJI: This is then what is called a false assumption. I’m feeling lost, or I’m feeling bad, and I’m having thoughts of being lost and I’m having thoughts of “end of rope,” but when I check, when I turn toward this *I* who is lost. **Who** is lost? I can find no one lost. Is this what you’re saying?

PARTICIPANT: Yes. It’s true. It’s true. It’s only that there’s experience of this more and more, but it seems like all the time there’s always something left somehow, and I just feel ever more desperate.

GANGAJI: So what. So what, something left. So you’re feeling absolutely desperate. Find **who** is feeling desperate. This feeling of desperation only continues because you assume that you, in fact, are desperate, that you are something that the feeling is hooked on to, that you are your brain stem or something. Right? And you don’t like this feeling. It doesn’t feel good. It hurts. There’s the experience of hurting; there’s the experience of suffering; there’s the experience of being lost. Yes, I understand this is a terrible experience, this experience of being separate. But check **who** is lost. Find this *I* that you imagine to be lost, and shout out the Truth. The Truth, then.

PARTICIPANT: Well, I can say the Truth, but it doesn’t...

GANGAJI: Say the truth. You spend so much time saying the lie, say the Truth. Say the Truth. We are totally conditioned and supported in saying the lie. Just say the Truth.

PARTICIPANT: I am free.

GANGAJI: Okay.

PARTICIPANT: But it feels like...

GANGAJI: Now find this *I* who is free. Find this *I* who is free. Then you will be done with both “lost” and “free.” Then you will recognize both lost-ness and free-ness or feelings or states that come and go in this truth of *I* that cannot be found any **place**, and cannot be not found any place. If you cling to this “I am free,” then every time this “I am lost” appears, you will go into, “Oh I must not be free, because here is ‘I am lost.’” Very good that you have the feeling, “I am free.” This is a very good medicine for, “I am lost.” I am lost. I am lost. I am lost. I am lost. I am **free**. They’re both finished. Finished. Then you say, “I AM.” And then you either say “I” or “AM”. But if you start thinking now. No, no. It’s good, because then you can see how you put it back together.

PARTICIPANT: I want you to nail me. I want you to just totally cut me down..

GANGAJI: I am doing that. (Audience laughter)

PARTICIPANT: I want to hear about... It just sounds too much like affirmation. Just like, “I am free. I am free. I am free.”

GANGAJI: So don’t say it. That’s exactly what I said. That’s exactly right. You have lived in denial. “I am lost. I am lost. I am lost.” Then affirmation arises, beautiful affirmation. “I am free. I am free.” Oh, what a feeling. Bring them together. **Who** is lost? **Who** is free? Can you find one who is lost? Can you find one who is free?

PARTICIPANT: There is only...

GANGAJI: Yes, there is only. Very good that you cannot attempt to even put that into a word. You see this is the direct gift of Ramana in self-inquiry. This cuts through all practice. It cuts through all affirmation as useful as practice may be and as useful as affirmation may be, it cuts through it. If you cry out, “I am unenlightened,” Ramana says, “**Who** is unenlightened?” If you cry out, “I am enlightened,” Ramana says, “**Who** is enlightened?” You will find no thing at all free of both enlightenment and bondage, free of whatever feeling arises, free of whatever thought passes through. Free. Free that has nothing to do with bondage. Only the freedom that has to do with bondage is relative. The absolute freedom is untouched by freedom or bondage. You are That. I would nail you if I could find you (Audience laughter). Since I cannot find you, I only find another aspect of myself. And I am quite certain that **who I am** is untouched by either bondage or enlightenment, and I recognize myself here.

You cannot figure this out. You can try, as you can attempt many things, and maybe you will have great intellectual success. Maybe you have a great *siddhi* of a powerful intellect. It is a beautiful thing, of course. But this is beyond the power of the intellect to grasp. It is, in fact, that which gives the intellect its power. The intellect is humbled, prostrate, floored at the feet of this. And in that prostration, serves, flowers, sparkles. The intellect is quite happy to be a servant to this, cannot be a master. It may wear the cloaks of a master, but it cannot be.

So, when you don’t look to your intellect, when you don’t look anywhere for confirmation, or affirmation, or denial, tell me then. Speak to me there. This is what must be spoken. It cannot be, and it must be. This is the assignment. Speak what cannot be spoken. Speak what has never been spoken What good use of the vocal cords, for the intellect, for the life experience. Keep the mind **totally** at the feet of That,

so that it may serve That at a moment's notice, and it will be used. Relax. Relax. You're trying to let go by squeezing tighter. You see? It doesn't work. You can squeeze tighter and tighter and tighter as a yogic trick to see, "Oh, really holding on!" Then, your squeezing tighter has served you. But to squeeze tighter to let go...

PARTICIPANT: I wish I knew what to say. I just don't know what to say.

GANGAJI: That's a good beginning. You cannot know what to say. That's right. At That then, your mind is humbled. Right? I don't know what to say. Stay right there. Don't go searching for something to say. I'm not asking for you to say something in particular. I want to hear what has never been said. And you can use whichever words you like. I'm not even talking about about words. I'm talking about that which uses words. Let it speak for itself.

PARTICIPANT: I don't know if you remember, but I was the one who wrote you a letter about psychedelics, about a few months ago, and you wrote back.

GANGAJI: But you're not from Sweden are you?

PARTICIPANT: Yes, I am.

GANGAJI: Oh, you're from Sweden. How wonderful! Oh, you're here. We've had a beautiful exchange. You've written me more than one letter, right?

PARTICIPANT: Yes.

GANGAJI: Yes, yes. Beautiful letters. Beautiful letters. But you don't have a Swedish accent.

PARTICIPANT: *I am American, but I've been living in Sweden for the past fifteen years.*

GANGAJI: Aha. I've been very happy to here from you. I'm very happy to hear from you now. Then you... Listen! You stop all of this nonsense! You be true to what you have recognized as Truth and stop this eternal discussion. I was just speaking with somebody about certain substances. I don't know if they were psychedelic, but certain substances that they felt had really assisted them in recognizing the Truth, and then, because they somehow linked the substance with the Truth, then they made this slight veiling, "Oh, that was just 'on acid' or "Oh, that was just 'on ecstasy' or "Oh, that was just that..." And I was telling her, "You know what happens, or can potentially happen with certain substances, is that the whole known universe collapses, the mental configuration of what reality is collapses, and through that collapse there can be an instant, an instant, of the reflection of pure Truth.

Normally, of course, there is a covering of that, immediately, with a whole other fantastic universe or another version of the other universe. But for an instant, before that configuration occurs, there is a window, and you have written me very clearly that this has been your experience. Very clearly. Now, I am saying to you, "Be true to what, through grace, has been revealed." Who can say how this substance LSD came into being. But for a number of people, at a certain point in the universe, it assisted. Now, you be true to that. Who can say how Ramana's Presence comes into your Presence.

But at a certain point, in a certain life, it has come. Be true to That. Or, you will postpone Truth. And each time you postpone Truth, it gets harder to surrender. Each time. Each time you make some justification or some “Oh, well. I’ll get more tomorrow,” or “Oh, well. This has to be handled,” it gets harder and harder. You have **no** excuse. Stop making excuses. That’s all. That’s mental activity. Then you have the opportunity to check it out for yourself. Don’t take it because I say so. You just stop making excuses. You stop agreeing with me, or disagreeing, and see what is revealed. It’s nothing I can tell you in words. Nothing.

PARTICIPANT: There’s one thing I think, maybe one reason why I’m having this feeling of desperation is because I think of all these people who have become enlightened, like Ramakrishna, and Ramana...

GANGAJI: Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Whatever thought arises, let it go. Don’t follow it to think upon thought upon thought. You can get back to it in ten years if you like. But for right now, given the depth of your experience, let it go. Whatever thought justifies desperation, let it go. You understand what I’m saying? Be naked of thought. You are very, very lucky. Something bigger, before thought, has revealed itself. Let it do its work. Stop second guessing. Stop figuring. Stop circling and see. Check it out. Give yourself twenty-four hours. Surely you have twenty-four hours where you can be thought-less, to see what is before thought, and see if in fact, not immediately running back to thought, see if That which is before thought doesn’t give you the Thought that has never been thought. You see, for yourself. I can’t do that for you. But you have no excuse. Stop making excuses. Stop everything!

This is the challenge. The rest you know very well. You’re very bright, intelligent, intellectual. You know that very well. Nothing wrong with that. It’s beautiful. But there is something else, unknown. Let it use your mind to reveal itself. It can use your mind if your mind is waiting to be used, not if it’s off spinning, regurgitating the same old obsessive thinking. Yes, you have no excuses. I’m very glad you’re here. Very glad.

PARTICIPANT: I’m very glad to be here.

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BARBARA:

I am so glad to be here, and I am so glad that you are here. Thank you for listening today and diving into these really essential conversations.

If there is something in this episode that really spoke to you, I invite you to stay connected. You can become part of the *With Gangaji* program. I mentioned the forum earlier and that is an incredible place where we are exploring these themes and topics and questions that are deep in our hearts—in community—with Gangaji.

You can find out more about that on the website [gangaji.org](http://gangaji.org), that’s g-a-n-g-a-j-i dot org where there is also a lot of podcasts, blogs, video clips that are there for you.

My name is Barbara Denemont. Thank you for listening. Until next time.