

Gangaji Podcast
Being Yourself
Episode 96
Host Barbara Denempont
You Cannot Think Your Way Home
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GANGAJI: There are some people who are naturally blessed with quiet or sattvic minds who are at peace naturally, but most people in the East and the West, have become victims of their own thinking, of their own mind's power.

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

In our last episode we heard Gangaji share her own journey of finding Home through disillusionment, surrender and finally, meeting her teacher, Papaji. Now, in this episode, I want to turn that inquiry toward each of us and our own journey of finding Home. I know it's easy to believe that one more thought, one more insight or experience will finally bring us to the peace that we are looking for. The mind is always ready to keep searching and proving as that's just its job. But you cannot think your way Home, but in a moment of stillness, an instant of stopping, you can discover that you never left Home.

Here is Gangaji.

(Excerpted from: Online Meeting with Gangaji, August 3, 2024)

GANGAJI (monologue): Silence is really the crux of this teaching. I remember once when I was being interviewed on the radio back in the days after meeting Papaji, and, and coming back to the States and having interviews, and I suggested that we be silent for a few minutes, just two or three minutes before we started talking, and the host was appalled, "You cannot have silence on the radio," she said.

And I said, "Well let's just try it, let's see, we won't blow up," and, and it was beautiful, and it was beautiful because it was so unusual, as the natural beauty of silence, but in a place where there is an assumption that there can be no silence because it would be dead space, it was discovered to be actually quite alive, and really made the following discussion have more depth and more aliveness.

So at any point in this meeting you always have full permission to just stop and be silent, that's what this whole meeting is pointing to. I met my teacher thirty-four years ago, and after being with him for a short while he sent me out to meet you, to meet those who might be interested. And I remember saying to him, "What do I say, what

do I do?" because I hadn't studied the lineage, I didn't know the teaching in abstract or intellectual terms, and he said, "You just be yourself and people will catch fire, and those people who catch fire will ask questions, and then you will answer those questions."

So I don't know if you have caught fire yet, but there is a fire burning that is inviting you, and it is your own consciousness, it is the life force that is living the life that you call by your particular name, and it's that life force that is conscious, that I am speaking to and supporting, and, and training your mind to be subservient to. Our minds are totally powerful, and awesome, unimaginable, unthinkable power that we have to formulate thoughts, and deeds, and art, and music, and war, and suffering.

And we assume that it's just reality, or a commentary on reality, or a distillation of reality, or figuring out how to deal with reality, but really our minds are more like what we see as AI today, our minds are extensions of this intelligence that comes from the beingness that is who each of us is. And like the fears of AI, and maybe we have these fears about AI because we know our own mind's, we fear our minds can go, can take over, can start running the ship, can run the life force.

And that's generally actually what happens. There are some people who are naturally blessed with quiet or *sattvic* minds who are at peace naturally, but most people in the East and the West, have become victims of their own thinking, of their own mind's power. And when I met my teacher Papaji thirty-four years ago, and I asked him in all earnestness, and readiness I thought, "Please help me, please show me where freedom is," and he said, "Just be still."

Since I had practiced meditation for some years, I assumed in my mind that I knew what 'just being still' meant, and so I assumed a meditative posture, and I became quiet. And he said, "No, no, no, not that, closer than that." I recognized he was pointing me to the stillness that is already present, that the mind stream comes from, and ricochets on, and returns to in a moment of meditation, or between thoughts, a moment of falling into sleep, and he was pointing me as I am pointing you, to the possibility, and your own capability of actually stopping the mind.

Even in all of the mediation that I had attended, I had never considered stopping the mind. I was most enamored with Zen meditation, which was really becoming aware of the mind, and becoming aware of thoughts. But the idea, the thought of stopping the mind was totally foreign to me, and I assumed it was actually impossible until he said, "Stop, just be still, don't follow that thought, whatever that thought may be."

And at first there was a kind of struggle because we are profoundly conditioned to follow our thoughts, or to go to war with our thoughts with other thoughts, and to, to fight our thoughts with other's thoughts. So I had never considered it really in the way he was saying it, just immediately in this moment don't follow the next thought.

And when I actually allowed that in, and when I met the fear that arose that if I didn't follow my thoughts I would be in trouble, or in danger, or in regression from the place I was in, which of course all of that was composed of thought. When I just was willing for a moment to not follow the next thought, I recognized that who I am doesn't need to be thought, it's here, it's already free of thought.

And the thoughts that come from that may be beautiful, and enlightened thoughts, and complex earth shattering, or earth giving, life giving thoughts, or they can be horrific thoughts, thoughts of punishment, and torture to yourself or to others, war-like thoughts because they are our artificial intelligence, and as thoughts they have no soul. The soul is where you are. When you believe your thoughts to be true, and they can of course reflect the truth, but you believe them to be true in and of themselves, then you are worshipping a false god, and the worship of that false god will turn into, has turned into unnecessary suffering.

So whether you cognitively understand that or not, somewhere you must know that I am speaking to you about your possibility to recognize the truth of your inherent awakensness, of your inherent freedom, of the inherent love that certainly you have tasted and, and perhaps realized, but if you rely on thought to keep that alive, it will fail you, it will turn that pure truth of yourself into an image of yourself, and an image of yourself that has reams of thoughts following it, positive and negative. And in that will be some war-like tendency, either toward yourself, or toward other.

So I've been interested in peace for many many years, and I have looked for peace in lots of places, I never considered until I met my teacher, the discovery that peace is already here. Likewise I looked for love in lots of places, lots of ways of being, never considering that love is actually already here.

And I looked for my version of enlightenment, which I thought would just make me happy all the time, in lots of places, never ever considering that true enlightenment is already here, it's the light of your own nature. And your mind, the generator of thoughts, can recognize that, and surrender to that. So it's your mind that awakens to the futility of its thoughts, and returns home to the source of it all.

I never know what I'm going to say to people, because really Papaji didn't tell me words to say, he said just, "People will ask you a question and, and see where that takes you, just speak from your own experience," and so for these thirty-four years I have been doing that. I want you to know that it's always fresh for me to meet you, and, and I look forward to that. It deepens my realization, and it deepens or awakens anyone who is listening closely to what you say, and what you realize.

That's why conversation, questions, and answers, and, and seeing where that takes us is an essential part of this teaching. We don't have rule books, you can't memorize how to be, but we have conversations which clearly involve our minds, but are made from the point of view of enlightening our minds, allowing the mind to stop so that it can re...it can recognize where this light is coming from, where this light always is, can recognize Home.

So I welcome you here as part of what Papaji promised me would occur, people would catch some spark and appear with questions. Of course, if you have no questions that's fine too, then you have all of the rest of us to invite you to a deeper discovery of yourself, to fall into yourself while awake, not waiting for tonight when you go to sleep, but fully awake to fall into yourself, to recognize the spaciousness of your own beingness.

BARBARA:

What stays with me in listening to this monologue is the utter simplicity of this invitation from this lineage. Gangaji has always said it's remarkably simple but not easy. It does require a willingness and an open mind and a brave heart.

So if you would like more support in your own inquiry, you can join *With Gangaji*. It's an ongoing space to meet with Gangaji live online with her, to bring your questions to her, to participate in the daily Forum with a global community and explore a library of teachings that supports you wherever you are in your journey. We are in it together as Gangaji says.

You can learn more about Gangaji at gangaji.org that's g-a-n-g-a-j-i dot o-r-g.

Now, at the beginning of this episode, Gangaji shared a story about being on the radio and the experience of dropping into silence while they were on the air. So, why don't we do that here, too. Wherever you are in the world, without forcing anything, without any particular method, we can simply fall into the silence that is here.

[a minute of silence]

Thank you for being here. I am Barbara Denempont. Until next time.