

Gangaji Podcast
Being Yourself
Episode 12
Host Barbara Denempont
Doubting the Vast Simplicity
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[00:00] MUSIC

[00:07] GANGAJI: *It is so simple. It is so simple and that is the biggest challenge to our arrogance of our complicated minds and our capacity to see through complexity. We're very proud of that, because it is an accomplishment. But in that, we doubt this vast simplicity.*

[00:33] BARBARA DENEMPONT, HOST: Hello and welcome to *Being Yourself, Self-Inquiry with Gangaji*. My name is Barbara Denempont. Last month I brought you a monologue that I called *The Last Obstacle to Discovering Natural Fulfillment*. And in that piece, Gangaji really spoke to how the last obstacle can simply be a thought. I wanted to follow that monologue up with an exchange. Because sometimes hearing another person speak to this issue in a conversation with Gangaji can really be supportive to all of us. So I found a piece that was recorded in Amsterdam in 2008. And what I particularly love about this exchange is that it helps us see how the smallest thought can become the greatest obstacle.

Let's take a listen.

(Excerpted from Amsterdam, Netherlands Retreat May 20, 2008
Transcript file: "05-20-08.doc")

[01:29] GANGAJI: Good morning.

SATSANG PARTICIPANT: *I don't know what is important, what is not important.*

GANGAJI: Well take a moment, just take a moment and, really, close your eyes. What's the most important? Just close your eyes for a moment, relax. What's the most important? As if this was your last day on earth, what would be the most important? Either a question or something you have to report and share. That's what we want.

PARTICIPANT: *Well, there is one thing I think I have all my life that, I see lots of suffering.*

GANGAJI: You see lots of suffering?

PARTICIPANT: *- of suffering - animals and people. And I cannot, you know, I cannot be happy when I see all this and I (How do you know?) know I'll have, to, to do something about it, that's-*

GANGAJI: How do you know you cannot be happy, even in the midst of suffering? If you don't have this thought: "I cannot be happy with all this suffering". This thought, if you just let that thought go.

PARTICIPANT: *Then it's okay, it's -*

GANGAJI: Well ...

PARTICIPANT: *But then I encounter suffering, I walk on the streets, I -*

GANGAJI: Yes, so then the thought arises again because it's a core thought. (*Yeah*) So, does your suffering help that suffering? (*No*) It adds to it, right, doesn't it?

PARTICIPANT: *Sorry?*

GANGAJI: It adds to the suff-, makes more suffering.

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah, yeah, it's stupid but I cannot help it.*

GANGAJI: "I cannot help it." That thought right there, "I cannot help it". Is that true? You just showed us that in an instant you could stop the thought, or you could stop following the thought. (*Yeah*) What does it matter if it comes back?

PARTICIPANT: *Because it will come back, every day.*

GANGAJI: "It will come back everyday", stop that thought, stop following that thought, because then you're suffering before it even comes back, right?

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah.*

GANGAJI: So this is the nature of being aware of what you're thinking, taking responsibility for what you're thinking. Because it does in fact create your reality, creates the way you see the world, the way you see suffering. And in this case, it is causing you to suffer, more than you need to suffer, at the very least. So, if you would just slow everything down and you are very aware, before you even see suffering. You don't see suffering here, right now, right? (*No, no*) But already you were suffering with the suffering that you were certain you were going to see when you leave here, right?

PARTICIPANT: *Because it's what I have experienced all my life (Yes, well) and try to get away from it, but -*

GANGAJI: But the point of this retreat is to shift, the way you have lived your life.

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah, I'd love to shift!*

GANGAJI: Good! So, this is, this is the thing. You have to take responsibility for recognizing how you are creating your suffering with what comes to you. So whether suffering comes to you, or happiness comes to you, how you are suffering with that, and to take a moment and just stop

following the thought, and experience what is here. In that moment what was here was it was okay, maybe there will be pain here.

PARTICIPANT: *There is a lot more, there's many things here.*

GANGAJI: What? Tell me. What else is here?

PARTICIPANT: *Well, I ... the other day we did this "going in" with the anger, and then I get more in and then I feel some kind of fear or sadness and then I, it was like I was imprisoned in my body and then I left it and then there was, there was a space. But somehow I didn't believe it or something, and then I get into this body and then I get angry again. "I'm imprisoned in this body, I don't want this."*

GANGAJI: So you got to see the cycle. So you didn't believe it, you doubted, you doubted your freedom. You doubted yourself as space. That's normal, people doubt it. Because it was very simple, right? It happened too easily, too quickly, too simply - it can't be this, and so then we're back into our doubt, self doubt. What Ramana said was "it's the last to go". Self doubt is the last to go. So if it's the last to go, approach it right now. Make it the one to go now. So when that self doubt appears that is a thought that has a chokehold on you. You know what a chokehold is?

PARTICIPANT: *Yeah*

GANGAJI: Yeah. I don't have to even show you, do I? It has you, squeezing your life out. Self doubt. So, to take responsibility for that, is to really recognize that and to say "no". Self doubt is a question. So, the doubt is, "This can't be true". (*But there's this image of ...*) The question is "Is this true?" You see the difference? "This can't be true, it's too simple." "Is this true, is it this simple?" And then with that, you get to examine again what's here. I'm imprisoned in my body, and you experience that, the rage of that, the hopelessness of that. You experience it, you discover it for yourself, rather than letting your thoughts lead this life, be the master of this life. It's a false master, it's a false god, so you have to kick it out. And if it comes back, it comes back, but you know how to examine what's under that.

PARTICIPANT: *It's so simple.*

GANGAJI: It *is* so simple. It's so simple and that is the biggest challenge to our arrogance of our complicated minds and our capacity to see through complexity. We're very proud of that, because it is an accomplishment. But in that, we doubt this vast simplicity of ...

PARTICIPANT: *Yes. I now realize that I often have this feeling of vastness but then somehow something pulls me back, you know.*

GANGAJI: This is beautiful, so that's, when you - this is so great. Now you are telling a bigger truth "I often have this feeling of vastness". Very different from what you said when you first came up here.

PARTICIPANT: *I don't remember what I said ...*

GANGAJI: You didn't mention that you often have this feeling of vastness. (*Oh no, no, no*) Yes, that should be the first thing we mention. Say it like "oh yeah, actually I do often have this feeling of ...".

PARTICIPANT: *But I am concentrated on problems I think.*

GANGAJI: Exactly. So stop. If you concentrate on problems, you will discover more and more problems.

PARTICIPANT: *I see this now, yeah.*

GANGAJI: If you let your concentration be on this vastness, or on this peace or whatever is under the problem, then - there will be problems, but they're not problems the way they *were* problems. They're, they're opportunities, or they're, they are ways of inquiring. I'm not saying that suffering will disappear, but your approach to suffering does not have to be *at all* like it has been. You can actually be open to suffering.

PARTICIPANT: *I was very afraid of that, you know but ... ooooh!*

GANGAJI: Yes, of course, of course.

PARTICIPANT: *I don't want that.*

GANGAJI: And that makes you suffer. "I don't want that", get no suffering, then you are suffering even more. It's just the reverse of what we think to actually open to suffering, you suffer less and you're available for some kind of assistance to the suffering that's there, even if it is just as being, being space. So in the exercises that we did here - your partner, the role of your partner was just to be space asking you a question. And maybe suffering would come up and the role of your partner was to be the space. If that could come up in a - ahhhhhhh - so there is a clearing that could happen with you, naturally. That's your relationship with yourself and your relationship with the world. Which is also your Self. It's clear? Is it clear? (*Yeah*) It looks clear.

PARTICIPANT: *So clear, yeah. Thank you very much, thank you.*

GANGAJI: Oh, thank you. Show them. (*laughter*) You have this capacity, you have the capacity to be free because simply you already are free, the Truth of who you are. All the rest has been learned.

[12:10] BARBARA: Isn't it extraordinary how these doubting thoughts can simply hide in plain sight - I'm not enough, I'm stuck, I can't help it. Those are all the kinds of things that become obstacles, and what a great opportunity for all of us to recognize and become aware about what those thoughts are that we're entertaining and empowering, unnecessarily.

Now on a program note, next month I'm going to have a conversation with Hillary Larson. Hillary brought us into the world of podcasting with *A Conversation with Gangaji and Epiphany*. She's

just returned from a trip to the Amazon rainforest, where she experienced a deeper confirmation of Gangaji's teaching, including what it means to be fully available in what many would call a chaotic world. I'm really looking forward to that conversation.

And finally, if you would like to know more about how you can connect to Gangaji through her online programs and her in-person retreats, I encourage you to visit the website: gangaji.org. That's gangaji.org. I'm so grateful for this opportunity to share these recordings with you, it's a real privilege.

Thank you for listening. Until next time.