

Gangaji Podcast
Being Yourself
Episode 18
Host Barbara Denempont
Opening to Fear, Opening to Yourself
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[00:00] MUSIC

[00:04] GANGAJI: May our meeting really serve for all being everywhere, to recognize that in the heart of what is not wanted, in the core of what is always here, there is love and peace. That's the message from this lineage, and it is my great task to translate that into a relevance to you, to your life, and to your life at this very moment in time, this actual moment in time.

[00:48] BARBARA DENEMPONT, HOST: Hello and welcome to *Being Yourself, Self-Inquiry with Gangaji*. My name is Barbara Denempont. Today I'm bringing you an extra podcast this month, because here we are, together, in the face of a pandemic, something none of us has ever faced, something that is unknown.

The opportunity for each of us is simply, in this moment, to be in support and to be supported by others. Gratefully, we have this technology to be able to connect with each other. Typically there are over 10,000 people downloading and listening to this podcast each month. So we really are all together in this. I know that that can begin to sound like a trite statement, but it really isn't, at least not in my heart. I do mean it 100 percent.

The recording that I want to share with you today was taken from Gangaji's live online meeting recorded last Sunday, March 22nd. You can watch the entire recording on Gangaji's website. But today I wanted to bring you this particular segment for the podcast because it includes a guided inquiry.

I hope this serves and supports you today. Let's take a listen.

(Excerpted from Special Live Meeting with Gangaji, March 22, 2020)

[02:08] GANGAJI: We can grieve the circumstances that bring us together, and yet celebrate that we are together. So with the circumstances happening all over our globe right now, I do experience grief for that, and I do find the celebration that we are able to meet, that you are interested in meeting, that we have the technology to meet, and may our meeting really serve for all being everywhere, to recognize that in the heart of what is not wanted, in the core of what is always here, there is love and peace. That's the message from this lineage, and it is my great task to translate that into a relevance to you, to your life, and to your life at this very moment in time, this actual moment in time.

I want to lead you in a, a self-inquiry meditation, exercise, but first I wanted to just bring a couple of questions that came up before this meeting, just to set the context, and really the context is this potential catastrophe that we are facing, this bad news of this virus. You know the virus itself if you see microscopic pictures of it, is quite beautiful, it's radiant. But the harm it causes to many, many human beings all over the planet is, is not beautiful.

And so we can actually hold both at the same time, the beauty of form, and the destruction of form, and we can discover what it is that holds it all. But not as something to remember, and not as something to learn, or to know, but something that you directly experience as your own Self, not a "some thing" at all. You, I'm always talking about you.

So a couple of questions came in, and I just want to read just little parts of them so that you can see if it relates to you. And if it doesn't relate to you, you can see how many people are experiencing this particular time in history.

"Dear Gangaji, being with my family now that we are bound to stay home at the same time, my nervous system easily goes into overdrive, and I have the urge to control my environment."

I'm sure a lot of people can relate to that. You can recognize that, and you can recognize that really, what we are dealing with now has nothing to do with your control. You, you do have control in terms of being able to abide by what is your responsibility in terms of protecting others, protecting yourself, but if you try to control what your emotions are, as you know from your own experience, that just makes the emotions more uncontrollable, more unpleasant.

So I'm not teaching you to control anything, I'm inviting you to recognize what is at the core of everything, what is in the heart of the heart, that has nothing to do with control, or not control. You can try to control, you can experience control, and this that is in the heart of all is still here. You can fail at controlling, you can be out of control, and this that is in the heart is always here.

And here's another question:

"How can I feel fear without controlling the moment?"

I don't know that I understand that question, this is not an English, a mother tongue English speaker, so maybe it's the phrasing. You, if there is the impulse to control, there is fear, so I believe what she's asking is "how can I face the fear, how can I directly experience the fear?"

Fear is an uncomfortable emotion, and panic is a dangerous emotion, so we don't want to contribute to panic. But we have to be able to be willing, we have to be willing - we are able - we have to be willing to open to the fear that is natural in a moment like this. It's the unknown. We think we know and then something happens, like this virus, that is proof we don't know, even though there were predictions of this for a long time. So just the very willingness to not know, the willingness to fear, and then in that you recognize where you attempt to control. You never succeed really in controlling, even if you are successful in putting yourself into a trance of denial. You know you're in a trance because your system is shut down, and you are free to be in

that trance, it may be quite useful to be in denial at certain points. But if you are interested in experiencing fear, then you just recognize that that in itself is a vulnerability, and an openness. And there's actually no *how to* do that. You can recognize what you do that avoids that vulnerability, that openness, that experience of the core.

And then someone wrote:

"It feels quite impossible to say 'yes' in this situation. How can I find a way to say 'yes'?"

Well if "yes" is the goal, then we are trying to get there, and if "no" is the reality, then we are denying the reality. There's nothing wrong with saying "no". If you are willing to say "no", then you're actually saying "yes" to "no". "No, I don't want this. No this isn't happening. No I don't, I don't believe this." If you are willing to say "yes" to that, then it has no power, then you get to actually tell the truth. "What *is* happening? What, what *do* I see?"

There's a tendency, and it's very strong in spiritual groups, or people who are attracted to spiritual inquiry, and that's to know the meaning of something so that then I can say "yes" to it, so that if I know that the meaning of this virus, and this global pandemic is actually for the good, then I can relax and, and say "yes". And so then there are many teachers who are supporting you in that, and saying, "Yes, it's ultimately for the good", and may it be ultimately for the good, but what I'm inviting you to is really not knowing the meaning of it, or anything that's out of your control, not knowing the meaning of death, not knowing the meaning of birth. And when you don't know the meaning, then you have a possibility to directly and freshly discover what is your experience in this moment, something that is deeper than "yes" or "no". Something that is here regardless if you are saying "yes" or "no". That's the nature of inquiry, to actually take a moment, and see for yourself what is still here.

"What can you say to the people you are challenged by the dynamics and relationships with the people they're now quarantined with?"

Well I, I, I'm, as I said with the earlier question, I'm sure that there are many people in that situation, and the truth is we're all quarantined together here on earth, and we see that that's often quite dysfunctional, and is perhaps the source of the war, we feel that there's not enough of *our* earth, so that we have to, that we have to share it with others. So this is a great opportunity to actually be willing to discover where you are making war with others, or with yourself for making war. Where is the tendency for war arising, and is it possible to allow it to arise, to allow the feelings of agitation, or anger, or fear to arise, and to actually open to all of those feelings? It is possible, and I'm here to support you in that possibility.

So let's just take a moment now, just if you are listening with friends you just distance yourself from your friends or your family, whoever you may be quarantined with. If you're by yourself you just go more deeply into yourself. If you're chatting on one part of your computer, you just stop the chat for a moment.

You allow your attention to come back home, without even needing to know what that means. You allow yourself to experience the relaxation of all your internal organs: your heart, your

lungs, your kidneys, your intestines, your pancreas, spleen, liver, all your muscles, all the capillaries, all the blood that is flowing through your body is actually able to relax. You may feel a, a deep sigh coming from the depths of your, your belly. You can even put your hands on your belly, and allow your belly to expand, taking a deep breath in, and then releasing it, just as a means for these few moments of retreating, so that you can ask yourself these relevant questions.

When you're relaxed, when you're ready, ask yourself, "What do I want? What do I want?" You don't have to censor or edit any of the answers, just let the answers come up. "What do I truly want? What do I finally want?" If you only get one desire, what is that desire? Just for this moment, consider "If I get what I say I want, what will that give me?" What will getting what you say you want give you? That's how you discover what you finally want. Ask yourself, "Where have I looked for that? Where have I searched for that?" And without judgment, just be aware of all the activities, and places, and relationships, thoughts that have been directed in that search for what you truly want.

Just taking a moment. You may see pictures, you may remember events, it may even be blank, it doesn't matter, you're asking yourself, "What do I want? And where have I looked for that?" In this moment here together, as an experiment, are you willing to stop looking for what you want any place, just in this moment to stop looking?

Is it possible? If it's not possible, you tell yourself the truth of that, and you recognize that there is something unfinished to this inquiry. "What do I want? Where have I looked for that? And in this moment, just for this moment, am I willing to stop looking for that, that which I want most, any place, in any activity, in any body, in any event, or in any event stopping?" If out of curiosity, you do stop looking any place for what you truly want, what do you find? What is here?

I don't know how you will incorporate this into your life going forward, but I know that if this has been a true inquiry for you, it will be incorporated, the how is secondary. The recognition of how it is incorporated, and how it grows, and how the possibility of true inquiry, really taking a moment to stop, and asking the true questions, in this case they were questions about what you want, and where you have looked for it, and what is here when you stop looking.

But inquiry can take any form. It can be the inquiry of experiencing fear, or the fear of fear, and taking a moment to not do anything with that, to actually experience it as it is. When fear is experienced as energy, as feelings, without a story attached to it, without thoughts defining it, when it is not fought, or made war with, what is it? What is it in your experience?

So just let yourself open to the possibility of inquiry. And when I use the word inquiry, I'm speaking of using your natural intelligence to actually investigate, and that investigation has no outcome in mind. It's a free investigation, we're not inquiring into fear so that you feel better, we're inquiring into fear so that you discover what is at the root of fear, or what is the ground that fear appears in?

The same could be true of anger, or love, happiness, unhappiness, whatever you're experiencing in your daily life, you have the opportunity to take a moment. How long did that

take? I didn't think to time it, but a few minutes, three minutes? Just to give yourself a couple of minutes to open your mind to not know, and to be willing to investigate, "What is here? What is here when I'm not looking for something I think should be here?"

That's the gist of the invitation from Ramana, and from Papaji, and from me. So I offer that to you in the deepest connection.

[22:58] BARBARA: Before I sign off, there are a couple things I want to mention. First, Gangaji's website has a wonderful library of free content that's there for you: videos, audios and blogs. Go to gangaji.org, that's gangaji.org. Just look under the "Browse" section of the site, and you'll find some wonderful resources.

Also, Gangaji is continuing her monthly live online meetings. That's where you can connect with a global community and speak to Gangaji from your own living room. Starting in April, we're going to begin a series called *Facing the World We Live In*. Originally we designed this series as a response to the crisis of climate change, and now of course this focus on the pandemic is where our attention is right now, but many of the same aspects of human suffering are still at play. We've really designed this series to serve us all in discovering directly what it means to live from the ground of love in the wake of very difficult circumstances.

Gangaji and the entire staff here in Ashland sends our love to you and to your families. Stay well, take care of yourself, take care of each other. Thank you so much for listening. Until next time.