

Gangaji Podcast  
Being Yourself  
Episode 24  
Host Barbara Denempont  
Exploring Our Natural Integrity  
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[00:00] MUSIC

[00:04] GANGAJI: You know if you want a life of just pleasure, integrity and vigilance are in the way. If you want a life of just gain, they are in the way. If you want a life of Truth, regardless of the cost, then you discover, as you open to Truth, what integrity and vigilance are.

[00:32] BARBARA DENEMPONT, HOST: Hello and welcome to *Being Yourself, Self-Inquiry with Gangaji*. My name is Barbara Denempont. In the last two podcasts we shared a conversation between me and Gangaji on the subject of racism. And one of great experiences that I personally had was a very deep humbling—by what I don't know, or what I don't understand, or what I can't control.

I felt—you know I really want to follow up on that particular topic, because we have to actually be willing to be humbled. And I knew Gangaji had probably spoken on this topic, and indeed, when I looked into the archives there was a recording from 2014 that really speaks to humbling as an aspect of vigilance.

Let's take a listen.

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(Excerpted from Rancho Santa Fe, CA Retreat with Gangaji, November 09, 2014)

[01:26] GANGAJI: Who wrote this? I don't usually take anonymous ... oh, okay. You want to come up? So the—basically the question here is “can you please speak on integrity and vigilance in relation to the subconscious and conscious mind?”. I say it's a moving target.

You know we hear “vigilance” and “integrity” and we have these—either learned or idealized— notions of what that means and what it will look like, but that is useless finally. When you recognize that you are *whole*, that's integrity. Doesn't mean you don't have the capacity for making mistakes in your life, but when you recognize you are whole, you are more free to recognize mistakes. And the truth is we don't even know if they are mistakes. There is no knowing. You know, trying to capture integrity or vigilance in a way that—okay, now I know this will be integrity, this will be vigilance—is still trying to manage, the conscious and the subconscious management.

So, you know, this is a radical teaching because it used to be—actually before Ramana and really Papaji—really you weren't given the non-dual teachings until you showed that you were a good person or that you had integrity by the Indian standards of that time, which probably

allowed beating your wife but ... because it is finally relative, really. I mean, if you think of God killing us all, how much integrity is there? Giving us birth and then killing us.

So when we talk about integrity or vigilance we are usually talking about cultural conditions. Nevertheless, cultural conditions are very useful. They allow us to be with one another in a way that hopefully evolves through cultures that is respectful and non-harmful, that's really what it gets down to. But then what is non-harmful, you know, is—I grew up in the South and no matter how you felt about anything, you just made nice, you just talked so nice, you just “Oh, you look so good, oh!”. And it was so stifling, it was so closed. Not that you should go up and say “Wow, you look really bad, now I am free”, you know, but it was dishonest.

And so I think finally integrity means honesty, but honesty is a moving target because we *are* conditioned and so we have to be willing to be humbled in the recognition of what we *perceived* as being honest or truthful and what was *revealed* as being just a conditioned version of truth. And that humbling is essential for the thinking mind, it must be humbled. And it is humbled every day but we are, you know, we quickly cover that and hope that it can direct the show this day. So, first of all, in your willingness to be humbled, this is vigilance. Just the willingness to recognize “whoa, I thought that was one way but it is not that way at all” and then to recognize that that can be corrected the next day. There is no ground there to stand on and when you are not standing on a ground, you begin to fall. And because we are so deeply conditioned to be upright, we don't want to fall.

But if you are willing to fall, you know, even when you physically fall, if you really just fall you are more likely to not get hurt than if you brace yourself. I have two broken wrists that I can tell you that both times I really braced myself, I didn't fall and that's true mentally and psychologically, in your willingness to recognize that falling is a part of being an animal. I mean, I watch the squirrels a lot, we live in a really wooded area and squirrels fall! And they forget where they hide their stash! It's like—what, what? Or somebody steals their stash or they steal somebody else's. So we with our developed mammal-ness and really, watch chimpanzees, you know, go on YouTube and watch chimpanzees, they are like us in—they have no integrity, they have no vigilance, they are just surviving.

But we have this capacity to actually reflect on our survival and to ask this primary, essential, usually unasked question, deeply unasked, “What do I want?”. You know if you want a life of just pleasure, integrity and vigilance are in the way. If you want a life of just gain, they are in the way. If you want a life of Truth, regardless of the cost, then you discover, as you open to Truth, what integrity and vigilance are rather than having this ideal of what they are, what they look like, what they will behave like.

Someone asked me once in an interview about teachers, this was early in Boulder, someone was asking me, can a teacher be an alcoholic? They were talking about Trungpa. I said, well, you know, if a teacher can be a mountain which is what Ramana's teacher was, surely a teacher can be an alcoholic. And Trungpa was a great teacher, and he had failings as a human being. And he either didn't care about those, or he cared about those and was unable to correct them. So we look for—in a teacher or in ourselves—we look for some kind of static ideal and we idealize, we assume that, I almost said Buddha—well, Buddha was a mess too just like

everybody else—but Ramana and ... Ramana stole money when he ran away to Arunachala. It is not like “I stole money” but he had to get to his guru, the mountain. And he did and he was a runaway. He was gone for a long time before his mother found him, and she begged him to come back to take care of the family and he couldn’t do it. In integrity, he couldn’t do that. Did that cause suffering? Yeah, it definitely caused suffering in his mother, and she ended up finally surrendering and coming to him and being his devotee and getting enlightened. So that suffering itself served.

So if you just try to locate it and pin it down, that’s the mind’s attempt to, to know. If you are willing to discover and discover even more deeply, then you recognize the discovery is the vigilance, the humbling is a vigilance. When we lock it up, that is when we turn our backs on vigilance. When we are open, it’s our nature to discover. So it’s not easy, because we want to know, but it is simple in that we can’t know. So in our willingness to not know there is something that is *known* that cannot be objectified or located or listed, its attributes or levels, or ... So that’s the short answer.

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[11:02] BARBARA: Before we go, I wanted to share with you some really great news that we received last week. An anonymous donor stepped forward to support our Freedom Inside Prison Program. This donor is offering us a matching gift of \$25,000, which means as the community matches this \$25,000 dollars will raise up to \$50,000 dollars for our Prison Program.

The Prison Program offers men and women in our community who are living behind bars an opportunity to receive free workbooks and monthly newsletters from Gangaji. It’s really a great lifeline, especially in these very tumultuous times. There are some very difficult circumstances in prison, so we’re naturally thinking of them, and this donor really wants to be sure that we can put this program into the hands of anybody who wants it.

So if you’re interested in joining this matching campaign, visit the website [gangaji.org](http://gangaji.org). You can go there and learn more about the program, its benefits, and you can also read the prisoners letters and reports of their experience and their awakening. Isn’t that why we’re all here—to support each other wherever we find ourselves.

Thanks for listening. Until next time.