

Edji Satsang Transcript



The Hundred-Room Mansion

June 11, 2011 –Online Satsang

Now these are two new chants from different tapes. Close your eyes. Feel the music. Feel it inside of you, if you can. Merge with the music. Let the energy of the music go through you.

[CHANTING “*Jai Ma, Kali Durge, Namoh Namah*”]

Well that was sweet, but boring. I don't know where these Jai Ma tapes are from. I think they could be Yogananda tapes too, the Indian variety. But you need to collect a wide variety of spiritual music and play it, and feel the mood impact it has on you. Close your eyes and listen to it. If you know the words, chant along with it until you get to a certain point where you can't chant any more and the music pervades you. If you are open inside and you are aware of the inner space, you will feel the inner spaciousness and that will be filled with the music. Your sense of presence will expand, and you will feel all kinds of feelings like ecstasy or bliss or love, or just an intense sense of presence.

So you have to find your own chants, and I highly recommend that you spend some time at least once a day listening to chants for about a half an hour. Maybe lying down or going for a run, walking... I used to walk with the Muktananda chants playing for forty-five minutes or so, then come home and listen to a few

more chants, and then sit and watch what was going on inside of me. There is another person here that does similar sorts of stuff.

This next chant is a little more pretty I think, and a little more energetic; we will see the impact it has on us. But try to close your eyes and identify with the music. Spirituality is all about your identity—what you choose to be, or what Being chooses you to feel or to identify with, and that varies. It can vary from moment to moment. So try this second chant and see where it takes you, if it takes you anywhere.

[CHANTING “*Jai Ma, Kali Durge Ma*”]

Wow, that one blew me away. It took me deep, deep inside.

I want you to join me for a minute, and do an introspection of your subjectivity along with me. Some of what I will talk about you will not find inside yourself, some you will; and a lot you find inside yourself I won't talk about. We come from different places, different experiences, different spiritual practices. But I would like to start... Can you close your eyes?

When I look inside myself, the first thing I see is emptiness. And by that I mean it's a pure visual space that contains everything and the body including the organs, muscles, bones—nothing of which I really feel. I feel energies and circulating sensations inside.

Now this space opens up and contains everything around me. The entire contents of the room and the sounds. It is self-illuminated, meaning that although the inner space when I look inside is dark, it is also illuminated. The space itself is lighted, and expands everywhere including inside me and outside into the rest of the room, and into space outside.

Besides that, where I imagine my legs to be—because my eyes are closed, I can't see them—I feel energies rising from my toes into my calves and into my thighs. And I feel energies arising in my abdomen, rising into the muscles of my back

and shoulders, into my face and my scalp, and into my arms, into my hands and fingers and then out into space. At least that's how it feels.

From that same space in my abdomen, slightly—four or five inches below the heart—I feel an uprising of energy. The energy has the specific colour of love, which fills the heart area and radiates out into the world. My face feels flushed with these energies. My body sometimes feels like a powder keg. This varies. It will change in fifteen, twenty minutes into something else, some other configuration.

But throughout that empty space inside my body and out is my sense of presence, my sense of being alive, of being sentient, of being aware. This is the so-called “I Am,” Nisargadatta's I Am. And this is what we need to meditate on: the I Am, in all its aspects and colours and permutations. The I Am contains the totality of our existence and of our consciousness.

If you look around inside, there are more things to find. There is the witness of all this; the witness of the I Am, of the sensations and of the void. Sometimes the witness feels like a “me”, sometimes it feels like impersonal watching. Go as deep as you can.

There are two things I can do with this witness, the watcher, which Nisargadatta calls the Absolute. The first is to look at it and witness it as an object, in which case it just becomes another part of the I Am.

The other position is to fall back into the witness, and become it. When we do this, suddenly the world appears extremely vivid without an awareness of the witness, because the witness has become the world, and its identity is the world. In other words, you can watch... you can isolate the witness inside of yourself.

You can turn around and look at the witness, which is very difficult. But you can look at it, in which case it becomes an object in your sense of presence. Or, find the witness and fall back into the witness. When you fall back into the witness you become the witness, and then all of a sudden the world opens up. With no mind.

Lastly, we can go deep into meditation, falling deeply until our heads get hard as a rock and thinking stops. We go deeper and it feels like we are going to sleep, and everything disappears including our self-awareness. We are entirely unaware of our own existence, or of the world. The next moment again we become the witness, and the world appears or sometimes our body opens up, and we become the entirety of the world. Just oneness.

However, increasingly we are aware that during the moment when we and the world were not conscious, we still *were*. We still existed as something, or better to say “some” and not the “thing,” because it is not an object—it is beyond objects. Consciousness only knows objects, but the witness is not an object to be known. It is a subject, and the subject is not an object—it cannot be an object.

That something, that witness, is not in this universe; but is entirely beyond it. It is not a direct cognition by consciousness which we can say we see or we know, it is *before* consciousness; and we know that we are That, untouched by the world, emotions or anything else.

When I was at Mount Baldy we would sit silently for many hours every day, and within five minutes of sitting in meditation—meditation becomes more and more powerful the more days you are there—by the first day at least, maybe the second day at the latest, body and mind would disappear after about five minutes of sitting. We would become the totality of the world around us, and seen as oneness.

Sometimes when a bird or an aeroplane flew overhead, we felt ourselves flying over the landscape as if we were that bird or aeroplane. Our identity was with the sound of the bird or the sound of the aeroplane.

Our identification changes. It changes from the void, from the totality of the world, to an aeroplane, to an emotion. It can change and change and change and change and not be stuck being Ed Muzika, or anybody else.

Sometimes after deep meditation when we were walking in the courtyard—there is a little courtyard in Mount Baldy—if we saw a tree, our boundaries would

disappear and we would become that tree. It was like there was no longer any space between the tree and I, and my identification was with the tree as the object in front of me. I was no longer Ed Muzika, I was no longer a body, I was no longer a presence here—but I was a presence over there, and that presence was me; and I was the tree which was being observed.

As I have said many times in the past few weeks, it is all a matter of identification, and what you identify with—even if you don't choose the identities, and the identities choose you. In other words, you can become anything and everything. Sometimes you are a person with personal problems, sometimes you are a samadhi state, sometimes you are an action figure driving a car, sometimes you become a cloud. At any time, with the slightest provocation, you can become empty space. If you want, you can identify with love itself and find a resting place there, as love.

Sometimes—and this was Robert's definition of awakening—you could be in a place I would call "You;" and you witness the coming and going of the various states of consciousness. When these states pass by, You don't feel any change whatsoever. It is not as if I woke up and was alive, or I went to sleep and I disappeared. It is that You stay the same and these states come over You like clouds—waking, dream, sleep—and I am removed from all of these.

You pass from sleep into dreams without You being affected. The sense of You does not change at all. You watch the dream state arise as witnessed by You, and then you see the waking state moving into and replacing the dream. And neither state has touched You. You are beyond both.

Then sometimes—this is more rare—you can pass from the waking sleep (the waking state is called the "waking sleep" by Ramana) into sleep, and again it does not affect You. You are still there, watching the transition from waking to sleep, and You are separate. Your identification is with that home state, so to speak; the *turiyatita* [the 'fourth state' described by Ramana Maharshi,] which witnesses all the comings and goings of all of the states and is not touched by them.

When you know this you know that no sword can cut you, no bullet can kill you. You are beyond that. The body dies, but that is not you.

And what is this? Being untouched. It gives ultimate freedom. Freedom by going beyond, to the other shore, as the Buddhists say. “*Gate, gate, paragate, parasamgate, bodhi svaha!*” Gone, gone, gone away, gone away to the other shore. Totally beyond phenomenality in the world.

Then comes the knowledge that you are That which is entirely beyond consciousness of the world. You witness the coming and going of the world, and the various states, from beyond the world. You are the knowledge that You are beyond everything—the Absolute; the witness beyond even the I Am.

So what? You have spent ten, twenty years in spirituality, and you have all of these experiences. Sometimes you are the void. Sometimes you are love. Sometimes you are a chump. Sometimes you are a hero. Sometimes you are emotion. Sometimes you are your body. Sometimes you are nothing. Sometimes you go beyond. But so what?

Using the analogy of a hundred-room mansion, what does this mean? There are so many places you can be, so many places you can go, so many emotions to experience, so many voids to experience, so many sensations, so much love and so many personal identities. What do these experiences and knowledge do for you? When do you stop? When does the seeking stop? When does the exploration stop?

What these experiences do and the knowledge does is free you from the places that you are stuck as a person, in a place or a situation. You can accept many identities, many situations, many experiences, without leaving your house. It’s freedom!

Freedom.

Freedom.

If you go into the void or into the witness, you can gain freedom from emotions, pressures and stress. If you go into emotions, you gain intensity and freedom

from boredom. If you identify with love, you can be the lover or become love itself. Freedom.

But I want to address an important problem that affects many of you out there, who are in relationship with another. If both of you pursue the same path, that is wonderful and your resonating energies can make your path so much easier and enjoyable. Yet some of you have differing, and apparently conflicting paths. But they are only conflicting if you rigidly hold onto one method or dogma, such as advaita, or bhakti approaches, or any other approach—raja yoga, hatha yoga... whatever.

I want to read a portion of a letter sent to me, and my response. This is from a man in relationship with a woman that has a different path, so to speak; and he is talking about the conflicts. It is a long letter. I have cut it down to about half the size:

Dear Edji, I have been doing marvellously. Every day another layer of onion peels away, so to speak. It is really amazing. Thank you so much for your sage council to find my sense of Self and don't budge, and to trust my own experience. After so many years of seeking verification through books and myriad other outer sources, it has been refreshing and revelatory to finally trust the guidance that continuously wells up from the guru within my own heart.

I do, however, continue to find myself faced with an issue that has been plaguing me for quite some time now. I am a bit sheepish about asking for your advice concerning this issue not only in light of the comments I just made, but also because I know the guru is not a marriage counsellor and I do not wish to put you in such a precarious position.

Actually, at one time I was a couples counsellor, and I was a miserable failure. I think I had a total of about seven people that I counselled, and five of them broke up after I did it. So, you know—don't listen to me! But that was a long time ago.

Maybe I am worse now.

Nevertheless, because I do not know anyone else I can turn to for advice on this matter, anyone else who would understand the context of sadhana that frames it, and because my wife has repeatedly implored me to see if you, as my guru, can shed any light on the situation, I have decided to place the issue before you.

As I've mentioned to you before, sadhana is the number one priority in my life. Over the past year, I have been engaging in more and more formal sitting meditation. I do two to three hours each morning, another two hours in the afternoon, and if possible when my wife is out of town, another one to two hours in the evening. The depth to which I've been able to plumb my inner being during such extended sessions has been really remarkable.

And I can attest to that. When you sit a long time, you gain experiences you never otherwise would, unless you do formal meditation.

I must say, however, that I feel a little remiss in calling the length of these meditation sessions "extended", as Himalayan yogis would probably scoff at such minute scraps of time. Moreover, Michael Langford, in his book, "The Most Rapid and Direct Means to Eternal Bliss," refers to the many days he spent meditating for twelve or more hours a day, suggesting that if one is serious about reaching the goal, one has to quit fooling around and devote all of his time to this endeavour. I so often feel like somehow I should be doing more, but for now this is about as much time as I can find for meditation, given that I am married and have a job as a teacher.

As you can imagine, my wife has found my meditation practice to be a bit obsessive. Nevertheless, she has been pretty supportive of it. In fact, she has even said that she doesn't mind how much time I spend in meditation as long as when I come out of it, I am fully present with her.

As you can imagine, in order to most effectively maintain this state of awareness throughout my daily activities, I tend to see through the drama of situations and don't necessarily say or express anything a whole lot. Given this focus on my part, my wife's main complaint is that even after I have emerged from my meditation room, I am still rarely, if ever, fully present with her. She says that I act as if I don't want to be on this earth, that I am a hermit, and that

I have a responsibility as her husband to come out of my shell and engage in a more active relationship with her. In essence, she said she is lonely.

She also says I am very selfish, and that I place my path above hers and only care about taking care of my spiritual needs.

My wife, I should tell you, is a XXXXX who has been initiated as an elder in a YYYYY tradition, and she also sees auras. She has blended these three areas of specialty in her work. This being my wife's profession, she often engages me in conversations about spirits and energies and chakras and auras and whatnot, and how these are in various states of imbalance, and so forth. From my point of view, all of this is merely illusory mind-stuff. I don't want to get mixed up in it, and I don't see as having any reality or validity outside of the mind's habitual tendency to give it such.

During our many discussions about the issue, I have expressed quite directly my feelings that perhaps she and I are not compatible in relationship any longer. I have told her that if it is true that my spiritual practice is causing her as much pain as she says, and that I am as selfish as she says I am, then it would be best for both of us if we split up, divorced, went our separate ways.

However, the idea of divorcing is completely unacceptable to my wife. She says it is my responsibility, having taken the vow of marriage, to stay with her no matter what. She also maintains that if I left her I would be interfering with her life's purpose and casting her adrift in the world of relationship, because she says it's unlikely she would ever meet anyone else who would understand and accommodate her work, and it would leave her vulnerable in her role as a spiritual teacher to romantic overtures from students and clients with whom it would be immoral for her to have a such relationships.

Besides, she adds, the bottom line is, she loves me. I love her too, but I don't want to hurt her. But...

And then there are several redacted paragraphs that go into it, but it is not necessary.

I admit that my practice is intense and it is my top priority—even more than marriage, if it must come down to a choice. Ideally, however, I would really like to resolve the issue in a way that enables me to meet my wife’s needs, while at the same time neither dampening nor impinging upon my sadhana, and perhaps even strengthening it. From your perspective and experience, is such a solution possible, Edji?

(That’s me.)

Now, this is an extraordinarily well written letter. I mean, it really points out the problems in couples, one of which may be in two people that have different spiritual journeys. And the solution is suggested that I have been presenting for the last few weeks... I think this is a perfectly compatible couple, if they can open to each other.

My answer to this writer was as follows:

“The short version is that you are a perfectly complementary couple. You need to be able to immerse yourself in the experiences of her world, and vice versa. Together you can build a much larger mansion of openness, intensity and experience than if you had stayed separate, and stuck in separate agendas and ideologies and concepts.

From her spirituality you will gain intensity and the ability to initiate activities, you will gain flexibility and practical insight; from yours she will gain meditation power, samadhi, spiritual insight and stability. It might take each of you longer to achieve the individual ends you had conceived for yourselves from where you are now—you finding the Absolute, and she finding her spiritual Heart—but *both* journeys can be enriched and deepened.”

In other words, let’s say that this person has explored twenty rooms in the mansion—the hundred-room mansion of spiritual experiences—while his wife has explored thirty rooms, and there is an overlapping of ten or fifteen rooms. He, I found from another letter, is caught in some old concepts about how spirituality was supposed to be—the pre-Buddhist concepts of making

extraordinary effort, devoting yourself full-time to your practice, of understanding the Absolute, understanding the I Am; understanding everything, seeing through it visually. Then there were prescriptions against certain kinds of behaviours and certain ways of eating, whether to have sex or not... all kinds of concepts that sort of prevented his advancement.

She, on the other hand, I have not spoken to, so I don't know. But I would assume from his description, that she is a woman that... I don't want to say anything more. I will wait till I see her. But she could benefit from the stability that he could present her in his life, and also in his samadhis, in his sense of presence that he radiates having developed all that meditation power.

Because, you know, it is not words so much that exchange between couples, but their energies—and by that I mean their sense of presence, how they are perceived, what wavelengths they give off, so to speak. How we perceive them. Whether there is a resonance, or there is a lack of resonance.

He would resonate that emptiness; he would resonate with samadhi power. He would resonate as stability. A lot of anger though, a lot of other things too, on a personal level. But the spiritual qualities would be of power, stability, straightforwardness, purposefulness, persistence, effort.

She, on the other hand, appears to be a lighter being who is more aware of her body, more aware of energies—a New Ager, so to speak—who probably has a lot more practical insight into everyday life, a lot more accurate grasping of emotions in people and sensing what their emotions are. She is probably a healer. An empath, possibly. So many things she could be, I have not spoken to her.

They can learn from each other; and by that mutual interplay enrich their own spirituality, put power into their own spiritual path, expand their path in their own direction that they were going, and also build a wider base in their relationship to the other. So, I would say that the couple can give each other power to go where they were going and also at the same time to broaden the base of their spiritual experiences to include those of each other.

Rather than the fear of slowing down one's progress, I think that there is such an enrichment here that it is worth losing your concept of where you are going, because when you enter spirituality—even if you have been in it for many years—you really have no idea where you are going.

You should drop any ideas about accomplishment, or some end that you are going to achieve, whether it is unity with God or unity with the Absolute. Drop all of these concepts. Explore yourself. Explore yourself and any other that you are open to; but this is only going to work if you can open deeply to that other person. That is another thing all together, because if you have a long history together, it is really hard to do that.

In the meantime, those of you who are not couples or do not have a spiritual counterpart, you have your teacher, whoever that is; and within that teacher's experience is probably all that you seek, whether you consciously seek it, or it is something you unconsciously seek. Whether it is an experience of the Absolute, the void, energies, being able to witness the coming and going of states of consciousness from the witness state to any other state; whether it is love, whether it is emotionality—it is all there in some teacher or another, some person or another. It does not have to be a teacher.

All that you are looking for can be found in the presentation of someone else, and looking into that presentation, that energy, that sense of presence that is projected, the unconscious knows what it wants, where it is lacking, where it is fulfilled. And it can empathise, it can identify with that spot in the other, and through that identification and communication, find that spot within itself.

Look into that presence. Find what you were looking for. It is there—just look for it, and you will discover it in yourself.

Can we have *He Bhagavan* now?

[Lengthy discussion with Jo-Ann about which other chant to play, while the requested chant is being enabled.]

Again, this is a powerful chant. Listen to it—let it move through you, let it take you away. Do not hold on to your place, just be flexible. Let it sweep you away. Go inside, go into your depths, go into the darkness within, or the lighted awareness—whatever you have.

[CHANTING “*Govinda.*”]

I want you to look at the people on the screen. Notice that Ryan has gone the opposite way: he has become endarkened. (Laughter.) Ted seems to be sinking into an endarkening environment too, and Sharjeel is also endarkened. Come into the light! (Laughter.)

Does anybody have any questions? If you do, or any suggestions, or want to make a statement, raise your hand—anybody on the camera.

Anybody else?

We have reached our limit. The personal is no more. Time to do some more chanting, and go deep. How about the *He Bhagavan*? And then we will mediate after that.

[CHANTING “*He Bhagavan,*” followed by long silence.]

You know, spirituality is all about identities—which identities choose you, or which identities you choose; but in order to identify with anything you have to first experience it. To identify with the void you first have to experience it, and explore it, and expand it. To see the clear light of the void, that takes longer. And in that void, to find the witness, look at the witness and fall back into it—that takes a little longer.

To go into the samadhi states, you can do it by yourself like this guy in the letter—by just endless practice, Self-inquiry, going deep; or by being with a teacher, like I did with Robert. I gave up Self-inquiry when I was with Robert, and just hung around him. I got it by osmosis. And those are the traditional spiritual traditions of the East: Advaita, Zen.

Or you can go the other way, the way of the Bhakti—of emotions, energies and love. Either takes you to a resting place inside of yourself. When there is no hindrance in love, either giving or receiving, you can become completely love—you identify as love; complete, at rest. No need to do anything. This satisfies what almost everybody is looking for: complete unconditional acceptance and love. From this state, anything that is brought to you is okay. But this is a state of phenomenality.

There is another resting place—the resting place of going beyond this world, Nisargadatta calls it—what did he call it? —turiyatita; and staying there for a while. It is what this guy in the letter was talking about—becoming the Absolute, staying there for a while, and then coming back; bringing the Absolute with him, and the power of meditation.

Yet both these paths together—Jnana [wisdom] and Bhakta [devotion]—creating a jnani and bhakti both—is so much richer, so much more complete.

But there are dangers to each of these paths. The danger of the jnana path of Advaita and Zen is to become lifeless, seeing the world as illusion and not wanting to be here, staying in the Absolute; dying out, so to speak.

The path of the bhakti on the other hand is dangerous too, because there can be a total immersion in the immediacy of day-to-day life, and you can get sort of lost there—forget the transcendent, forget the void, not know it exists, not know that there's a resting place there, too. And being so caught in the absolute moment, you can miss love, too.

All these states in the bhakti's approach—they come and they go, they come and they go—they are very changeable, while the states of the jnani are very secure, solid, and they don't come and go much.

So you have a dynamic tension between the activity and the silence, love and knowledge. And what a mansion is in between!

What a wealth to explore.

Goodnight.

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