

# Edji Satsang Transcript



## Learning to Love

*October 1, 2011 – Online Satsang*

[Chanting—*I Will Be Thine Always*]

That second chant still blows me away...

*My Lord, I will be thine always. I may go far, farther than the stars, but I will be thine always. When I die, look into my eyes. They will mutely say, 'I will be thine always. My Lord, I will be thine always.'*

You know, around Robert, Sundays were nonsense satsangs. Just for entertainment. And we listened. We were not there for his words; we were there for his presence. There was very little presence with Robert. He was mostly absent.

When I was 12 or 13, I first read the book *In Woods of God-Realization* by Swami Rama Tirtha. That is when I really began my spiritual search, which later on, in

years by, became a search for truth. It crystallized, not around bhakti [devotion,] but a search for truth.

I had just finished a Master's program in Public Management in Cleveland, at Case Western Reserve. I was working in a building overlooking Lake Erie, with the boats going by. Doing population projections for 88 counties in Cleveland, 88 municipalities in the standard metropolitan statistical area of Cleveland.

And, boy, was that an incredibly dull job! Doing the population projections of 88 municipalities for the next 20 years... just various kinds of mathematical models that had to be reconciled.

I knew I could not stand this life anymore. There was no truth in it. There was no truth in the way we had to lie to the Feds about the size of the population of Cleveland down the line, in order to get monies.

Nobody really cared about the truth. It was all politics. Most jobs are that way, or at least most government jobs are that way.

When I was in Detroit, I was at Wayne State University, and I applied for a job when I was a PhD candidate. It was working for General Motors. I found out the job was in their tank division. They were going to build the M-60 tank that they used in the Vietnamese war.

My job, should I accept it, would be to try to guess what the government specs would be for that tank, as opposed to finding the best one possible. It was outguessing the government. And that is what jobs are about, generally. They call for continuous compromise.

I got a book at 18, in 1968, *Who Am I?* [by Ramana Maharshi], and a couple of other books, and started my real spiritual journey. I had fucked around for many years before coming to that point, seeing the uselessness and the hopelessness of academia; of jobs.

I knew very well what I should be doing, and that was Self-inquiry. I practiced Self-inquiry, beginning in 1968, very seriously—10, 12 hours a day—going inside, looking for who I am.

But I want to tell you a secret now. This is so, so important. The secret is: The mess that you are in now, the maya, the confusion, the lack of understanding who you really are, of attaining God, is because you are *your minds*.

The mind.

You think too much, just like I did.

I had the right method, the right intent in 1968. I practiced it for two years, and then I started practicing Zen on the West Coast with Sasaki Roshi and got lost in Zen, with all of its koans. Then I got lost in Muktananda and all of his koans. I had four Zen teachers at the same time. My mind was busy, busy, busy, busy; trying to figure all these things out.

Busy, busy, busy.

I was going to Maezumi Roshi at the time. I was living at the center of my teacher, Thich Thien-An. He was a bishop in the Zen church of Vietnam. Then there was Song Ryong Hearn, and Seung Sahn Sunim. They all came from various different traditions within the Zen tradition.

Each one had a different teaching! And all of us were going to many different teachers trying to struggle to find out, well, what is the truth? Everybody had a variation on the truth. We did not trust any teacher enough to listen just to that teacher. We did not settle down.

I wandered in confusion for many, many years, until I gave it up. By the late '80s, I had given up spirituality. It had gone dry—the search. Self-inquiry was not there anymore. It all had been lost, because I got diverted by so many different teachings and so many different teachers.

Then I met Robert, and I knew I had found my teacher. But it still took me three years before I trusted him.

Seung Sahn Sunim used to say, “You think too much. You’ve got to become stupid, like a rock.”

Robert said to me, “I think I know why you haven’t awakened yet.” After being with him for three years. “Because you’re too smart.”

I had a very strong mind. I was used to understanding everything—mathematics, atomic theory, nuclear theory, all of that, cosmology. I was relying on that one instrument that had always given me understanding before, which was the mind. But it is the mind that has constructed this mess that you are all in, and that I was in.

The Bible says to be still and know that you are God. [“Be still, and know that I am God.” Psalms, 46:10]

That is all you have to do. Become stupid like a rock.

Whatever experience presents itself, you become empty; and let that experience take you over and go through you. You do not try to figure it out. You do not try to compare what one teacher said with what another teacher said.

All of you have so many conceptions about teachers and spirituality. All of you are trying to teach me what real spirituality is like. You know, if I had not been so fucking smart and smart-alecky and filled with myself and trusted my mind so much; instead of trusting my direct experience of reality without the mind interfering, I could have attained awakening when I was 25.

But my mind kept getting in the way, because I trusted my mind, and I did not trust a teacher. I trusted the method of Self-inquiry, but I lost it by all these other teachers saying, “That’s no good. That’s a bad way. Instead, try my way.” And I tried their way, and I got lost.

One teacher, one method.

If I had only been more simpleminded, and not trusted my mind so much. You see, inside of you, you are already enlightened. That deepest level of Self within you, the one you wake up with in the morning before any thinking comes, where everything is so fresh and open—at least if you get enough sleep—that base consciousness—that is you.

Everything else is added on a moment later, when the mind arises; when the shakti fills up the brain and creates the world—the world of concepts.

The first awakening most people have is when they see that the world that they have been living in is not real. It is a network of thinking, of learned thoughts, of learned behaviors. Concepts—it is all concepts.

When you see this you laugh, and you laugh, and you laugh; because you see the world that you have lived in is an illusion, a bunch of concepts that hang together with other concepts. The central concept is 'I'—and when there is no 'I,' there is only emptiness. When there is only emptiness, there is only space—inner space and outer space; and they are both the same.

But it is your *mind*.

And you have so many concepts about spirituality, about living, about morality.

Give them up.

*Don't-know* mind, *stupid-as-a-rock* mind.

You know, I made this discovery over and over and over again, and I said, “How can being as dumb as a dog help me find God, or find ultimate truth? How can being stupid, and not using my mind... how can that give me truth?”

But truth is not in the mind.

Truth is deeper than the mind. Truth is deeper than emotions. Truth is deeper than the world, and it flows continuously; once the mind goes.

The real world is deeper. 'He,' as some refer to it, is deeper than the ecstasies. It is deeper than bliss. It is deeper than the energies. All these are sustained by that ultimate emptiness—which you are.

You have to be good-for-nothing—really accept that you are less than dirt, at the feet of someone else.

No understanding. Utter humility.

When I was with Robert, I did not have that humility. I loved being the right-hand man of my guru, my teacher. It was a role I played. It filled my ego. Robert kept trying to destroy it by talking behind my back, telling everybody what a nutcase I am. So they reacted to me as a nutcase to keep my ego at bay. So it did not get too out of hand.

But it is hard to be the right-hand man of your guru, and not feel some sense of pride in it—some sense of power, and control. That is one of the problems.

It is better to be a nothing at some teacher's feet and somewhere in the background. Like Robert always said, he was always in the background when he visited teachers. Not right at their feet.

There are so many of these teachers that have websites... if they go around and visit another teacher, they are right there at the teacher's feet; or next to him on a chair, next to him as an equal.

So much pride.

But if you are humble, really all that you do is you see grace when you are with a teacher. Not even the words are important. The concepts are not important.

Nisargadatta had only one concept that he said guided him, which his teacher, Siddharameshwar Maharaj, said: *You are not the body. You have nothing to do with the body.* And he says that was his guiding concept. With that, he had another concept: *Find the 'I am.'*

He spent three years doing that—nine months before he found the 'I am;' and another two years before he awakened, when the 'I am' released him.

It is very simple, no complexity. Just two concepts: You are not your body; you are not your mind; you are not the personality—*neti neti* [the spiritual technique of negating all phenomena—"Not this, not this"—until only the ineffable Absolute remains.]

And the other concept was to go into the 'I am' and find out what that 'I' is—which is the same thing as Self-inquiry. It is a form of Self-inquiry, of looking into the inside; into your presence, into that sense of existence—holding onto it, letting it expand, loving it.

You know, it is so easy to love yourself, once you can find your Self.

Just look inside; find your sense of presence. And love it. Love your sense of presence. That love will grow, and grow, and grow. If you are lucky enough, you have somebody outside you that you can love. And that love fills you, and fills your sense of presence.

Filling yourself with love is so easy if there is somebody outside whom you love. Then you can feel yourself as love in this ecstasy.

But even that is a trap, filled with shakti [dynamic life energy.] Shakti becomes the focus, not you, the perceiver and experiencer of the shakti; the vital force, the vital breath.

It is so easy to get distracted, by the mind, and by experiences; by love, by hate. Everything can be a distraction from that utter, inner emptiness with peace beyond understanding—the ultimate Silence from which everything comes.

You know, you create the entire universe every time you wake up in the morning. Your consciousness creates the entire universe. The consciousness that comes out of your body and mind creates the entire universe. Then the mind gives it form, gives it substance, gives it depth. Soon you wake up and you are living in this world of illusion, and it seems real.

But what *you* are, which is the emptiness that perceives all of this—none of this touches you. Yet you get absorbed in the drama... in the books, in the search, in the experiences, in the knowledge.

Just give up.

Just look.

I guess the principal concept I would say to you, is that *you are not of this world*.

You are beyond it. You are the witness of it. All the drama that comes with spiritual seeking—that involves the ‘I am,’ not you.

The first step is to disengage from your body as the seat of your belief in yourself; to become identified with the ‘I am,’ with [universal] Consciousness. In which consciousness of the body is a small part, and you see you are not the body.

Eventually you see you are not even Consciousness. You see Consciousness coming and going. You see waking consciousness coming and going; sleeping consciousness coming and going; dream consciousness coming and going.

And none of it touches you. You see one day that you are beyond it.



I think they call it in Zen, “the man of no rank.” The “Unborn” is another term used, because it is not born in this world. What is born is the ‘I am’ sense. Everything you see, hear, taste, touch, and understand is in Consciousness, is in the ‘I am.’ And it is very entertaining!

I entertained myself from the time I was 12, or 13, to 1995; which would make me—too hard to figure—50? I entertained myself for 38 years with all these concepts and books. And I absolutely ran out of gas in the 1980s—utterly frustrated, utterly lost—because I trusted my mind.

The good part is, now I know that there is a better guide than the mind; and that is the heart.

This is my new direction that I have been teaching: *Follow your heart.*

But that can easily be confused with following your mind, and your inclinations. The heart is unerring. It loves the ‘I am.’ It loves the ‘I am’ in other people.

It is compassionate. It is highly accurate. It is highly motivating the shakti. It can take you till you have filled yourself with love for the ‘I am.’ And then you see it is *you* that loves the ‘I am;’ that you love the show that ‘I am’ is putting on—the ‘I am’ that is born from your body, which you identify with the body.

But you have nothing to do with it.

This way of love, the bhakti way, is so much harder than the way I followed. It is more intense. It is more gripping. And it is unerring. It has got so much power.

But the mind is always there, ready to fuck it up.

Can we have *In the Temple of Silence*, so we know what Silence is like? And then *O God Beautiful*, so we know where God is.

You know, I play chanting a lot because chanting can just still the mind and fill you with bliss, fill you with ecstasy. That was how I discovered my own way after Robert left, after Robert left town; was just to lie on a couch and listen to Muktananda chanting, and Yogananda chanting.

And I became filled with happiness and bliss. Anybody who says you cannot learn to love, really has no idea.

Yes, love can happen to you. But you can foster it and build it. You can fill yourself with ecstasy, just by listening to the chanting.

[Chanting and private dialogue removed]

I read forward in *Prior to Consciousness* a couple of pages. There is a lot of stuff in between, but I thought this one was really appropriate for tonight. It is July 26, 1980, and I have a note here: “Stupid like a rock.”

The questioner asks Nisargadatta Maharaj,

**Questioner:** *I have come to Maharaj in the hope that he may help me put an end to this search.*

**Maharaj:** *Can you communicate to me what you have understood?*

**Questioner:** *It is all concepts, all illusion.*

**Maharaj:** *Yes.*

**Questioner:** *I don't believe in processes that take time and disciplines, I've done all that. I want it to end.*

**Maharaj:** *The basic fact—that you are not the body—must be clear to you by now. You are working in the world and you think that you are doing that work, but what is really happening is this: the life force, when it comes out in thoughts*

*and words, is the mind, so it is this prana mind, life force mind, which is the acting principle. The beingness, the consciousness, is the God which witnesses the life force and mind working.*

The beingness, the consciousness, is the God which witnesses the life force and mind working—the ‘I am’ working, the prana, the shakti working.

*It does not interfere; it merely witnesses. The reason for your unhappiness is that you think it is you who are working.*

You identify, in other words, with the work in progress—with the shakti, with the vital force, with the actions, with the activity, with the thinking.

**Questioner:** *I realize that anything I say is a concept arising out of my consciousness.*

**Maharaj:** *That you are, and the world is, are both concepts. You must know that.*

**Questioner:** *How does this knowledge work? I mean: you tell me words and there comes a sense of understanding. Is it a mental process? Is there still a faculty witnessing all this?*

**Maharaj:** *The mind understands because of the consciousness.*

**Questioner:** *Then it is all an automatic happening?*

**Maharaj:** *That is true. The mind interprets whatever the concept is, the base is consciousness on which the concept arises at the moment.*

**Questioner:** *So what is there actually to attain if you cannot change this consciousness and you cannot touch, cannot reach by words? It is there all the time, right now. So for what are we here? Doing belongs to the mind—that is*

*clear—it is going on like an automaton. I see clearly now. I want this mind to surrender to the consciousness. Do you understand?*

**Maharaj:** *All this conceptualizing, all this articulation, has been taking place only after the original concept arose that you are.*

‘I am.’ All this conceptualizing that we are all going through—the spiritual search, the thinking, all this conceptualizing, all this talk, articulation, has been taking place only after the original concept, which you are—‘I am,’ arose; that you are.

*What was the position before this concept arose? At that time did you have any concepts, any needs?*

Before this original concept ‘I am’ arose, did you have any concepts, any needs whatsoever? In other words, before you started thinking, what were you? Was there any bother there whatsoever? Was there any distress? Was there any anxiety? Was there any passion? Was there anything human before this original concept, ‘I am,’ arose?

**Questioner (continued):** *Like deep sleep?*

**Maharaj:** *This concept that it is like deep sleep is not incorrect, but it is still a concept -*

In other words, the guy has got the idea, but it is still an idea for him. He has not fleshed it out with an experience.

*... but it is still a concept, and the original state is beyond concepts.*

In other words, conceptually he grasped it, but you do not have that state yet; you do not own it.

**Questioner:** *What is the fact now?*

**Maharaj:** *That you are awake is itself a concept at this moment. Let this sink in.*

**Questioner:** *It's a movie.*

**Maharaj:** *Go back to the source: before this concept of beingness, "I Am," arose, what was your state?*

**Questioner:** *I don't know.*

**Maharaj:** *That which you don't know, that is the right state.*

That which you do not know, that is the right state.

*Everything that comes after this consciousness is attained, is like a dose of salts—it is useless, consciousness is useless.*

**Questioner:** *So the search, all aspects of it, belongs to the same?*

**Maharaj:** *Throw away every thought, every experience, everything that happens after this consciousness has come. Other than throwing it away as useless, there is nothing to be done beyond this firm understanding in which you become more and more absorbed.*

Beyond this firm understanding in which you become more and more absorbed. In other words, what he was just saying is that you are the witness. The 'I am' arises and suddenly all the concepts arise, and then you become a human being. But what were you before this original concept, 'I am,' arose? This is what you have to become absorbed in. He is pointing you to that state before the mind arose.

Now, one thing about the way of bhakti, of loving, is it focuses all your energy on one point—on loving—whether it is loving somebody else, or loving yourself, or being filled with love. It is one-pointedness.

It is a meditation, just like any other meditation, with or without objects, until the love goes from the object to one's own Self, one's own sense of presence, and becomes formless—which is a higher form of meditation than one-pointedness with an object. Now it is one-pointedness with no object.

Just love itself, which is spread everywhere throughout your sense of presence and *pervades* you, becomes blissful, becomes ecstasy, and you are in ecstatic states. You become absorbed in the ecstatic states.

But then you begin to realize that even these ecstasies are not you. They do not touch down to your basic core. They permeate you, but still, it is you that are permeated. You are still untouched by that ecstasy. You are having the ecstasy, you are having the bliss, but you are separate. The ecstasy is in Consciousness. It is an object. You, as the subject, are beyond all experiences.

July 21, 1980:

**Questioner:** *Why did I take this form?*

**Maharaj:** *Because you were a fool. If you had known anything about it, you would not have come into this world.*

**Questioner:** *First I hadn't any form, isn't that so?*

**Maharaj:** *Yes, even now you don't have any form. It is not your shape, it is the shape of the seed.*

That which has form is Consciousness, not you—the seed, which is the 'I am.'

**Questioner:** *Isn't it the nature of the seed that it grows, like a tree grows out of a seed?*

**Maharaj:** *It is its nature.*

**Questioner:** *So, I am not to blame. The seed must be foolish.*

**Maharaj:** *Because the seed is foolish it has come like this. The seed is the original foolish state, yet what big titles are given to that seed.*

Which is the 'I am.'

*The seed is transient, and the whole world is full of the seeds. All the five elements, all the objective world, is in that seed. You are not the seed—you are the observer of the seed.*

*.... This world is filled up with selfishness due to your association with the body. Once you know what these principles are, then you dissolve the personality, and in the process that selfishness vanishes because you are no more an individual.*

Well, that is the reading for today.

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