

# Edji Satsang Transcript



## **That Place before the ‘I Am’ Announces Itself**

[November 5, 2011 – Online Meditation Intensive, Part 2](#)

You have to realise that ultimately, all concepts are bullshit. They are intellectual constructs, and they are not a direct apprehension of reality, or of your own true nature. They are a set of concepts that are supposed to oppose your habitual way of looking at yourself and the world.

Eventually they become a quasi-belief system; and then eventually you will have a realisation of what you really are, and the nature of consciousness; which is different than the *belief system* that Nisargadatta is giving you.

The concepts he gives, they are called *pointers*. At least that is the term [used in this talk,] as opposed to a belief system. Yet, most of the time we accept it as an alternative belief system to explain what we see and understand, and the nature of the world.

But it is to get rid of our nature, or our ideas of ourselves as being individual humans, as opposed to the one subjectivity—the Atman. The Parabrahman. God, so to speak—who sees through a hundred billion eyes, in a hundred billion organisms, and a hundred billion sets of skin ... worms, maggots, butterflies, birds, foxes, monkeys, humans, fish. All living, and some breathing.

All seeing, or feeling somehow, through the sentient meatball, that they *are*. Somehow, consciousness has come into them, and with it a sense of individuality, and self-preservation.

Self-preservation is in all of us—from the worm that tries to escape you, to the fish that tries to escape you, to the cat that wants to cling to you, the lover that wants to cling to you, the Guru who wants to cling to you; and you to him.

So, these are pointers. They are not the truth.

The truth can only be directly perceived by you, and has nothing to do with concepts.

What happens is, your identity changes. You no longer identify as Harold, or Michael, or Joan, or Tim, or Ed, or Jo-Ann. You see yourself as knowledge itself, you see yourself as love itself.

You change your identity.

I am love. I am that I am. I am God. I am sentience itself. I am the centre of the universe.

As Buddha said, *From the sky above to the earth below, I am the only one.*

Only one.

Only one consciousness. Only one sentience, through a hundred billion creatures; a trillion creatures—from amoeba, bacteria and viruses, up to the highest life form, which is a street cat.

One of the best users of concepts is Nisargadatta.

Nisargadatta met his teacher [Siddharameshwar Maharaj] in 1936, had an awakening in 1939. Or he met him in 1933 and awakened in 1936, and then he wandered as a monk for two years in India before he returned home, knowing that his beingness and his absolute nature was the same everywhere.

A great, brilliant mind.

A very Western thinker. He translated advaita into something Americans like, and Westerners like. Even the neo-advaitins look up to him as one of their luminaries, and this is going to be covered in much more detail, in the last talk.

But right now, I am going to read from *Prior to Consciousness*, and at salient points I am going to explain it a little deeper.

[Whispering to Lakshmi, the cat] I've gotta go now. Bye, sweetie.

[*Prior to Consciousness*, September 11, 1980, page 49]

**Maharaj:** *Whether one be a jnani or an ignorant person his bodily nourishment, sustenance, maintenance, etc., goes on through the meaning of the words of his mind.*

Get that? The sage, the enlightened man, and the ignorant person—they are all the same. They all have the same physical sustenance, and they all live by the words of the mind.

*His thoughts will also flow according to the impressions he has received since childhood. The activities came out from the vital breath, the words, and the knowingness "I Am."*

*If you want to invoke your Deity you will have to worship the vital breath;*

It is also known as shakti.

*... through the vital breath you approach your Deity. The image of any God is given through the vital breath. The language of the vital breath means words. When all aspects of the vital breath are purified there is no scope for desires, there are no physical or mental sufferings. As per the command of the Guru hold on to the "I Amness"—the Atman prem—"I love."*

That is defined. "I Amness"—he defines it—Atman prem as "I love."

"I Amness" is the same as "I love".

*All our activities, physical or spiritual, are based on emotion. All these details I accept, but I know that the sum total is zero.*

Nothingness. All the details he accepts—physical, spiritual—are based on emotion.

*All these details I accept, but I know that the sum total is zero.*

*My earlier talks anybody could understand -*

And he would be talking about the ones in *I Am That*, from the early 1970s.

*- to some extent, but my present talks are very difficult to understand. To become qualified to understand, stay put at that source of your birth.*

He talks about the 'I Amness.' That it is, let us say... it is a seed that exists within you when you are born—the body is born. And 'I Amness' only begins to manifest itself when the sense of "I" is born, around the age of two or three. Then, it announces itself.

So, it is innate or it is inherent in your beingness; but begins manifesting at age two or three. And he wants you to get to that place before the 'I Am' announces itself, before the 'I Am' expresses itself in words, and self-consciousness.

*The talks are spontaneously flowing out. I am not framing them. I myself am often amazed as to why these types of profound expressions are emerging, and people who listen to my talks are also nonplussed because they are not able to frame any questions based on my talks. Everything is spontaneous, the stage of witness also has come spontaneously. All my activities come out spontaneously, there is no scope for thinking.*

*Since I know my state prior to birth -*

He means the Absolute; the subjectivity before it is lit by consciousness, or self-consciousness.

*Since I know my state prior to birth, I also know that birth point, and since the birth, whatever I am—my beingness—I also know. That's why I talk like this. The experiencer and the experiences, both are to be dissolved. The moment the translators come and I take my seat for talking, I am energized, my battery is charged—otherwise I am down and out and have to use this cane. I am least inclined to collect any spiritual seekers of any grade.*

And this is so true. Rajiv [Kapur] was talking to me the other day, and he said his satsang is growing in India. He says when he sits, a different voice—an energy—speaks through him. A power comes through him, and he is no longer Rajiv. He is the voice of Consciousness. This is how I feel, too.

It is as if the Absolute is talking to the Absolute—trying to get the Absolute in you to recognise who you really are, as opposed to who you think you are.

[Skipping forward to September 15, 1980, page 51]

**Questioner:** *In meditation when I try to stabilize at the point behind the mind, there is darkness, nothing, blankness. I don't like the state.*

**Maharaj:** *Don't you see—You are still there. Prior to stabilizing in the Self, traces of the mind are still there.*

*This machine is a self-generating machine; when you go into that the momentum helps clear all doubts in your mind. This is exclusively your knowledge which you will enjoy most, and then all traces of the mind are completely uprooted. This is the stage where you are—you are not, that is the borderline. The moment you know you are duality is there -*

In other words; you know, at the age of two or three, the self is born. The kid begins saying “I,” versus “you”.

“I want this.”

“I,” “I,” “I.”

Self-consciousness has arisen. Before that, there is only awareness. There is not a duality. There is no longer “I,” a “thou,” “them.” But the consciousness begins to split up, and ‘I Amness’ is formed. A sense of “I”-ness is formed—a sense of “me,” as opposed to the other.

A boundary is created, and Nisargadatta says he wants you to get to that place before the boundary is created. That is what we are doing today, in this retreat—to get lower than the mind, lower than that sense of “I,” deeper than the sense of ‘I Amness.’

*This is the stage where you are—you are not, that is the borderline. The moment you know you are duality is there, when you do not know you are, you are perfect, but you must go through this process. In deep sleep you do not know you are, but that is a grosser state. In this alive state you must recede into the state of no-knowingness.*

*What is this knowingness? It is the stamp or registration of the booking "I Am." You are booking a flat which is under construction but where is that flat? It is only the booking. Similarly this "I Am" is only a booking, it represents your Absolute state.*

I am not quite clear what he is saying there, but he appears to be saying that the 'I Am' is sort of like the personal instantiation of the Absolute subjectivity.

When you look inside of yourself and you try to find an object that is "I," the ego, there is nothing there. You are the subject. You cannot find anything.

But that does not mean that somebody cannot talk about your personality and personality dynamics, cannot talk about ego and the developmental processes that the ego goes through, that a child goes through. It is very complex, the structure of the personality and how it functions. It has many, many different phases.

As Maharaj put it sometimes, *How can you talk about yourself as an object when you are more like the city of Bombay?*

How do you describe it? How do you name it? It is very complex. He says, *Show me Bombay.* Of course, you cannot show him or anybody all of Bombay. Nor can you show anyone your objective "you."

**[Maharaj:** *Whatever appears has really no existence. And whatever has not appeared also drops away; what remains is That, the Absolute. "That" is like Bombay.*

**Visitor:** *Bombay certainly seems to be appearing at the moment. We should sell him another city.*

**Maharaj:** *But I normally ask you this kind of question, whether Bombay sleeps, whether it wakes up in the morning, whether it is worried, whether it has pain and pleasure. I do not refer to the people of Bombay, nor to the land, but to that which remains.*

*Now you know that you are. Prior to this moment, did you have this knowledge that you exist? This consciousness, beingness, which you are experiencing now, was it there earlier?*

....

**Maharaj:** *A patient suffering from terminal cancer always remembers his state and ultimately undergoes that very end; so much is certain. Similarly, one who remembers that he is the knowledge, that he is the consciousness, has that end, he becomes the Parabrahman.*

*So if you are about to photograph this land, I would say, no don't photograph... take a photograph of it but without land. Whatever is Bombay, take a photograph of that and show me. Can you?*

**Visitor:** *I could not do it.*

**Maharaj:** *So that is like photographing yourself without the body. You are that, like Bombay. Remembering that you are the consciousness should be without any effort. When you say "I," don't refer to this body's "I," but to that "I" which represents this consciousness. The consciousness is "I," and make use of this knowledge when you act.*

Excerpted from *The Ultimate Medicine: As Prescribed by Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj*, Edited by Robert Powell, Blue Dove Press, 1994]

There is an extraordinary structural complexity—there is unconscious process; there is conscious process; Freud's *id*; the archetypes mentioned by Jung; existential crises; developmental milestones that are missed; the inner child—so many different complex processes. All this is concepts, dreams that psychologists talk about.

So, you can never take out something and show it to the world and say, "This is me." All it is, is ideas and processes that have become solidified inside of you. When you see that these are just empty concepts, and empty processes—not empty processes, but crystallised processes—when you see through them, they no longer possess you.



Later on, we are going to talk about what happens after seeing through the illusion—the steps we have to take back into humanity, and into being a human. All the different levels we have to work on ourselves after we have an awakening.

There is a difference between awakening and full liberation.

**Questioner (continued):** *What gives you the courage to transcend in the nothingness which you know is there?*

**Maharaj:** *Your deep urge to understand the Self. Receding only means to go within, your normal inclination is to come out through the five senses and see the world. Now reverse; I am not the body, I am not the mind, I am not the senses; now you are stabilized in consciousness. After stabilizing in consciousness all further things will happen automatically. You expand into the manifest.*

This is what happened to Robert.

In a sense, it is what happened to me, which is... Now we feel we are isolated to some entity within this body, consciousness or sentience within this body. But what happens when we see that the distinction between inner and outer is not real? The *boundary*, the skin between the inner and outer disappears, and there is only oneness—the unicity experiences.

At Mount Baldy I became the world, in meditation. Nirvikalpa samadhi. When I had my shower experience, I looked within and I found no-one there. There was no “I.” There was no entity that the “I” pointed to. I was freed.

I was emptiness—emptiness manifesting, with no central character. And the emptiness within is the same as the emptiness without. There is only oneness. This was the experience, combined with the knowledge of oneness.

This is awakening, or an awakening process, but it is certainly not the end.

[Pause]

[Skipping ahead to September 24, 1980, page 54]

**Questioner:** *Suppose the witnessing stops, is it samadhi?*

**Maharaj:** *Suppose you all go away, there is no more witnessing, I am still here, but I have nothing to witness. In that beingness the otherliness is there and witnessing takes place. If consciousness is not there the Absolute cannot know Itself—there is nothing but the Absolute—therefore no witnessing.*

My mind is getting tired. It is hard for me to think now. Hopefully, it is hard for all of you to think.

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