

# Edji Satsang Transcript



## **The Subject is Always a Mystery**

*July 23, 2011 – Online Satsang*

[Chanting—*Radhe Govinda Krishna Kanhaiya*]

In mathematical logic there is a term called instantiation, where you pick a particular value in a function to replace a variable, and the function or the equation takes form around the specific value.

[Merriam-Webster Dictionary: *Instantiate: to represent by a concrete example*]

In the spiritual case, the same is true. We, as individuals, take a particular form, a particular instantiation of the universal Consciousness.

Consciousness is the same in all of us. And the base consciousness is that with which we wake up in the morning, before the first thought is there. That is our basic state.

We all share the same Consciousness. That does mean that I have the same one as Momji [Jo-Ann Chinn, “Mother” of Edji’s Satsang,] because Momji is in Nova Scotia, and I am here, in Los Angeles.

It is just that the quality of Consciousness is the same in every individual. Every entity that has a body—whether it is Joan’s, or Janet’s, or Ted’s, or Ed’s, or Alan’s; or Lakshmi’s [Edji’s cat.] The consciousness is the same.

This is the function—the function of awareness, the function of knowing, the function of existence. Consciousness only operates through bodies—sentient beings. Sentient beings everywhere share one consciousness.

And I do not mean “one” in the sense of one entity behind all. But we all share the same chicken soup, so to speak, of Consciousness. We are all separate instantiations in one function of Consciousness; of knowing.

To better let you know the quality of that universal Consciousness, there is nothing better than chanting. Because chanting can remove you from your body, and flow like the wind—a spiritual wind—through you. So when you hear the chanting, become the chanting.

You cannot do it by deliberately trying to identify with it, but by opening up, relaxing; and let the chanting go through you. Let it take you over, so to speak.

So, I would like to try another chant. This is a beautiful chant. It is a short chant. Just let it take you over, and know the function of Consciousness through the chanting. Let us try *Guru Deva*. It is five minutes long. Feel the chant go through you.

Surrender to the music. Flow with the music, and that is your universal Consciousness. It ought to be your individuality.

Get out of your personhood, and become the music. That is the whole function of chanting. In chanting God's name, you are chanting Consciousness's name; for God is Consciousness.

[Chanting—*Guru Deva*]

You know, I had an awakening the hard way. I practiced meditation for 27 years. Going deep all the time, exploring Consciousness. Being with various Gurus, various teachers. Being utterly confused by having five teachers at once.

I learned so much: one teacher, one teaching—it keeps the confusion down. Even if it is the wrong teacher, you will learn more than scattering yourselves among five teachers, and you will not be so confused.

Then, when Robert left, I just chanted and dwelled in my Self. And the awakening experiences came.

Now, fifteen years later I am doing the same thing all over again but through the bhakti [devotional] route. *Exactly* as Nisargadatta described: Find your sense of Self, the 'I Am.' Love the 'I Am.' In loving 'I Am,' you are loving Consciousness.

Through that love, you gain entry into the 'I Am;' the 'I Am' state. And in the 'I Am' state comes the certainty that you are beyond the 'I Am' state; that you are the Absolute—totally beyond the 'I Am.'

I first read Nisargadatta back in 1988, Ramesh Balsekar's book *Pointers from Sri Nisargadatta*. And a short time afterwards *Prior to Consciousness*, edited by Jean Dunn, my other teacher. It took me six months to read *Prior to Consciousness*, because every page was like a hammer blow to my head.

My mind would stop. I would feel in awe of the emptiness, of Consciousness.

But I sort of ignored those states because they were contrary to the instructions that Robert gave me, which were just to do Self-inquiry.

I ignored the bliss.

I ignored the knowledge.

And just practiced Self-inquiry. One teacher, one teaching. Not two, not three, not five like I had at the time; no confusion. Just effort. One-pointedness. Perseverance, as Robert said.

Perseverance was everything.

But this new way that Nisargadatta teaches, especially using Pradeep Apte's *Nisargadatta Gita* as a meditation manual, is all that you need. And it is so much easier and so much faster, than the roundabout way that I took going from teacher to teacher, and even doing Self-inquiry, and even hanging around Robert.

Rajiv Kapur attained awakening using the old-school method—eleven years of meditation—before we started communicating, and within four months he had broken through, and knew of the Absolute, and knew the Absolute. Because you are the Absolute at all times, and you *know* it. You can know it through meditation, or you can know it through conviction... there are many different ways to know it, but you have to *know* it.

But this new way is more powerful. It can grab you, with its love and the states of ecstasy, to go deep automatically. And then knowledge rises in Consciousness, because Consciousness *is* knowledge.

For this path to really be successful, you need both meditation, and concepts.

I highly recommend reading Nisargadatta.

Very few people understand that he really was a bhakta [embodying the spiritual path of awakening through devotion.] Everybody calls him a great jnani [embodying the spiritual path of awakening through introspection,] but he is really a great bhakta.

He talks about love all the time. Love of the 'I Am,' and that the 'I Am' itself is love—the love to be. That bhakti [devotion] and jnana [wisdom] are not different.

This way is so easy.

Just learn to love your Self.

Which is not easy if you do not know what the Self is. So, first you have to isolate the sense of 'I Am.' Immerse yourself in it—the sense of presence, the sense of existence. Immerse yourself in it, and go deep that way. And the more that sense of presence is felt, the more you can love it.

Recently, I received an email from a long time Zen practitioner—he wrote that for fifteen years he has been practicing shikantaza, which is the Soto school way of meditation; where the mind becomes very still and reflects equally everything in the outside world. But within that world that he perceived, was his own sense of presence. And I told him to change.

Rather than identifying with everything in Consciousness, to just focus on his sense of presence—that sense that 'I Am'—*I have come alive*.

The first day, he started feeling a sudden movement of love.

Within five days, he was feeling love in its many, many colours, and very powerfully. Love for a lover. Love for a child. Love for a parent. Sibling love. All the various colours of love were suffusing his being.

From a dry Zen type, like I was, he has become a wet bhakti type in a week. I am sure that he will make rapid progress from now on, because he has found a new key to his practice—something that will revitalise not only his practice, but his whole being. Filling it with love. That love is a glue, and also a fuel.

I have been receiving a lot of letters lately from long time advaitins who have practiced for twenty or thirty years, various different kinds of spiritual practices or meditations. Then suddenly love has come into their lives. And what a transformation it has made in their practice!

They are now seeing that just being a good human being is the highest good in their practice. To love themselves, and to love others. Like I used to say, not everybody can awaken or have awakening experiences; but at least in the practice of caring for others, of becoming a caretaker for the world, you have achieved something. You can look back at your life and say, "I made a difference."

You know, you can chase spiritual states, like many of us have. You can chase the state where you are aware all the time of the coming and going of Consciousness. You can chase states where you are constantly in bliss, or in love.

You can chase a state where you are one with everything. You can chase a state where you disappear, and there is only Consciousness. You can chase a state where you are one with the universal Consciousness, and just feel the quality of consciousness in you and that that consciousness is separate from your body.

These are all states you can gain after practice. For what end?

What is the end that you want to achieve? Where are you going? What is it that you want? What will make you feel complete? When will you stop chasing states, and wait for them to come to you?

Do you want to know emptiness?

Why?

Because I said so?

Do you want to know bliss?

Why?

Because somebody else said so?

Osho said so?

What do you want? What in your life is so bad? What are you looking for?

The strange thing is that what most people are looking for is just *love*. And that love is the gateway to the Absolute.

Personally, I still love meditation. Going deep inside. Plunging deep inside, into the darkness. Into the emptiness that lights up and becomes one's sense of presence, and even contains the sense of presence.

I love it.

But now, with this new approach, going the bhakti way into the same place that I attained with Robert, it is a whole new adventure.

Yesterday, almost the entire day, I was in an ecstatic state; often hardly aware of my body at all. I felt like I had come face-to-face with God; and he was smiling at me. And I was filled with love, and I was filled with ecstasy, and I could barely move. I did not want to move. I did not want to do anything.

For most of the day, it ebbed and flowed, and ebbed and flowed, and finally I went to bed. It went away when I went to bed.

It was like those experiences that I had with Nisargadatta, in 1988, when my mind stopped, stunned, with the sheer awe of existence and of Consciousness and its magnificence.

Just awe. My whole body was tingling—what I could feel of my body—but mostly it was emptiness, filled with love. Filled with ecstasy. I did not want to move.

So, is this an end state? No. But it is *really* interesting when it happens.

We each have our own path, like Jo-Ann, Momji. She is a karma yogini. Three or four years from now, she will burn out. She will be happy. She will feel complete. She may go into ecstasy. But eventually, it will all drop away, and she will become a has-been. A good-for-nothing. Like me.

She will have burned out. That bright bulb will become nothing. All that energy will drop away, and into contentment inside of herself. The same with Alan.

I hope that's beer you're drinking, Alan. [Laughs]

Each one of us will change over the next four years, if we persist.

Tina is getting closer.

Ted is getting closer.

Someday, we will all be good for nothing. The bright sense of presence, the power, will diminish. And we will all walk into a room and everybody will NOT notice us—and how free we will feel!

Let us have another short chant. Chanting is good, people. Chanting is *good*.

How about *I Will Sing Thy Name*? And the reason I am picking this, is because it is talking about love. Try to feel the love in the chant, and feel it in your heart. Isolate your sense of presence and sing to that sense of presence, and let the sense of presence respond.

*I Will Sing Thy Name.*

Put your own name in there.

[Chanting—*I Will Sing Thy Name*]



This is from *Prior to Consciousness* [September 21, 1980, page 53]:

**Questioner:** *If Atman is sat-chit-ananda, (being-consciousness-bliss), what is Param-atman?*

**Maharaj:** *Sat-chit-ananda will, in due course, become the Paramatman. Sat-chit-ananda is 'I Amness' and is itself a state of bliss, a state of love, but it is an experiential state, so long as consciousness is there, and consciousness is there so long as the body is available—it is a time-bound state. You must transcend the sat-chit-ananda state.*

All this bliss that I am going through, and others are going through now, has to be transcended. Just in the process of going through it you recognise that it is experiential, and it is not you. It is an experience coming to you; just like waking consciousness comes to you and sleep comes to you.

[Skipping ahead to September 24, 1980, page 53]

**Maharaj:** *How many years back did you take the mantra from me?*

He used to teach mantra – an introductory mantra for people, like his teacher taught him. They progress by using mantras.

**Questioner:** *Three years ago.*

**Maharaj:** *The knowledge you are is God. You worship that and one day you will realise that you are not an individual. You will realise that you are the universal consciousness which cannot suffer; there is no pain or pleasure for that consciousness. Not through intellect, but through intense meditation you will know it.*

*That meditation will be done by consciousness itself. To meditate on something is to become that.*

*I am fully established in that unborn state but I still am experiencing this state of multiplicity, but it has no effect on me.*

*... I didn't know I was, presently I know I am, this is the same 'I' with the knowingness mantle over it. This is the way the very Absolute transformed Itself into this grosser consciousness state, the state of appearance. This is the way the Absolute transformed itself into this grosser consciousness state, the state of appearance.*

[Repeating for emphasis:] This is the way the Absolute transformed itself into this grosser consciousness state, the state of appearance.

*I am the God, I am the devotee, I am the worshipping; all the same, one common principle.*

... I am the devotee, I am the worshipping; all the same, one common principle.

He is talking about the 'I Am' state, the state of love. And it is also the same as the Absolute, but it is the *manifest* part of the Absolute. The Absolute *manifests* itself through the 'I Am.'

It knows it exists through 'I Am;' through knowingness, through Consciousness.

Boy, you Canadians are really suffering, aren't you? None of you have air conditioners, you are all sweating! [Laughs]

You think it is me, radiating energy. But no, it is the atmosphere.

*.... 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.*

In beingness, duality 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.*

The Absolute does not know itself.

When you are asleep, you are closer to the Absolute than you are in the waking state. Because in the waking state, 'I Am' is there—filling you with illusions, and appearances, which have to be seen through.

The concepts have to be seen through. The appearances have to be seen through, as empty holograms, so to speak.

Even the void is an appearance.

Knowing is an experiential state. The 'I Am' is an experiential state. Sat-chit-ananda is an experiential state. But you are beyond those states; and you know it in those moments of ecstasy.

The knowledge is there that this bliss is experienced by *you*, who is removed from it. Even if you feel identified with it, the knowledge is there that you are *prior* to it; you are beyond this blissful state, beyond the trance state, beyond the 'I Am.'

It becomes more and more certain. And as it becomes more and more certain, you become less and less moved by things.

You know that the appearances take care of themselves. The play of Consciousness takes care of itself.

You know, a few weeks ago I was worried about money coming in, to take care of the cats that I feed, and all the feral cats that I give people money to feed—but it was not a big worry, let me tell you, I have plenty of savings—yet I explored, "Why is this taking place?"

And Alan said, taking a look at the data, “I don’t see anything.”

I did not want to do a deep analysis because I did not have the energy, and I did not care enough. So we hit upon a novel solution: *Ask for money*.

And it worked!

No big deal.

This is something I have learned, and... it was not some sudden epiphany, I just noted that in my life, I have really become a *lazy* fuck. I do not care!

I *really* do not care what happens.

[Chuckles]

You know, once you get on the spiritual path—deeply into the spiritual path—once you get past the tourist stage where you are reading five books a day, and settle down into a serious practice with one teacher, or without a teacher, but with a serious, one-pointed effort to understand who and what you are, your life takes care of itself.

It does not feel that way, it really does not feel that way—because you get lazier and lazier and lazier, and you want to do less and less. The *Ashkatavara Gita* puts it very well when it says the jnani is the laziest of all people. He has a hard time even making the effort to breathe, because he is complete, satisfied. He is okay with the way things are.

But a lot of people have to go through some devastating learning processes before they trust that God is taking care of them, that Consciousness is taking care of them. They lose their job, because they cannot work anymore. They lose their spouse, because their spouse does not understand them anymore.

Or, like me... I was always feeling so peaceful and quiet, that any time anybody disturbed me, I got enraged. Muktananda also used to do that, I understand. You feel such *peace*. You do not want anybody to disturb you with any activity, whatsoever.

Or, like Deeya [one of Edji's students who became awakened]—you almost die from lack of taking care of yourself. Or Ramana, where he sat in the basement of a temple for months and did not move, and the insects bit him and he got glued to the floor with his own blood and pus. You do not care.

A lot of people at this point are scratching their heads... “Is this what I want?”

And you have to know that. This is what happens. All kinds of things happen: You lose your job. You lose your spouse. You lose your home.

People would run to Robert all the time... “Robert! Robert! I have this problem! I don't have any money, my savings have run out, I can't find a job—I'm over-qualified. It's just terrible! It's terrible, I'm suffering so much!”

And he would ask, “What's the worst that can happen?” And they would say, “Well, I could lose my house!”

He would say, “Well... so what? What then?”

He would always point this out—that no matter what the worry is, you are just worried about your body. And you are not the body.

You are not your possessions, you are not your kids, you are not your house. You are not your cat, your dog or anything like that. They have nothing to do with the deepest part of you—and that is what is being nourished in the spiritual game, so to speak.

God is coming inside and guiding you, taking you away from that which will destroy you or keep you in prison, and showing you a new life: a new liberty, a

new meaning, a new love, a new ecstasy—something totally new and free; taking you away from the old boundaries, the old bonds.

For two years before Robert left Los Angeles, I could not work to save my life—even the simplest jobs. And for four years after he left Los Angeles, I could not find a job. I was over-qualified, nobody wanted me.

All the monks know about this. Nobody wants you, after a while, when you are in spirituality. You are a good-for-nothing. The world does not want you anymore. It rejects you.

But you are not in this world; it only appears to be that way. You are entirely beyond the world. And God is trying to show you, *You are not part of this world. Don't worry about it. It will take care of itself. You will be taken care of. Your children will be taken care of. Whatever is really important will be taken care of, better than you could ever do it.*

I got such ridiculous jobs, during that six-year period of time.

I worked in the census bureau, taking a census and going from house to house, being screamed at by people.

I got all kinds of crummy little jobs. I went to Korea, where they made me the “first American world teacher of Buddhism”—of their kind of Buddhism, of Zen. I came back to Los Angeles and it turned out that they wanted me to be sort of a functionary of their church, here in Los Angeles. It was all a con-job.

Then, one day I went for a job interview at Workers' Compensation, because I had done that from about 1987 to 1991, when Workers' Comp had fallen apart. And I applied for the job.

I was hoping to get anything over \$30,000 [yearly subsistence wages in USA at the time.] This woman came up to me after the interview, and she said, “Do you recognise me?”

I said, “No.”

It turns out that she was married to the psychiatrist I was applying for the job with—Dr Curtis. Her name was Cathy Curtis. I had worked with Cathy when she was a secretary at another psychiatrist’s office, from 1987 to 1991.

I got the job for \$50,000. I didn’t even ask for it. She just offered me \$50,000. It came out of nowhere!

And I have been doing that ever since, one way or another or one person to another. It has just constantly unfolded with no problem since then. God has been guiding me, every moment.

I use the word “God,” because that is common. You could say “Consciousness,” but the concept is the same.

The big thing Robert wanted to teach everybody, and I am trying to teach you, is that once you are deeply involved in your Self, everything will be taken care of. Even though that is the last thing you think is the case. You think you have to struggle and strive to make things work, in the way you have always struggled and strived to make things work—but you do not have to. You can give it all up. Just surrender every moment.

Let the house be taken from you. Let your savings be taken from you. Let your job be taken from you. Let everything be taken from you, and you will be so happy.

Somebody will take over your job, and do it fantastically. Somebody will take your spouse, and have a fantastic life with them. And you will be happy; free. Was it Ramakrishna [actually it was Nisargadatta] was asked why he never remarried after his wife died, and he said “After she died, I married freedom!”

So, that out of the way... a couple of more quotes from Nisargadatta:

[Continuing from previously quoted passage from *Prior to Consciousness*:]

**Questioner:** *Suppose I am just watching that all actions are happening through me and I am doing nothing, is meditation necessary?*

**Maharaj:** *That is a sort of meditation, but the right meditation is when you meditate on your Self. You come to that state when you woke up in the morning and you watch the consciousness; that is the state when you meditate on your Self.*

*Presently you think that consciousness is watching consciousness, but consciousness is being watched from the Absolute platform only.*

You are not Consciousness. That is the first step, identifying with Consciousness; the universal Consciousness—the function, so to speak, of which the body is a particular instantiation. But all this is happening, and being witnessed, by the *witness*; who is the ultimate cognisor. Who cannot cognise himself or herself.

The subject is always a mystery.

You look perplexed, Tim.

I didn't say, "Say anything!" I said, "You look perplexed!" [Joking]

Okay.

These lectures were written in the last year of Nisargadatta Maharaj's life.

[From September 30, 1980, page 57]

*When will I be pronounced dead? When the Atman has left the body, but I am not the Atman, where is my death there? I am not affected by cancer because whatever happens, whatever the experience, I surrender all of them to the*



Atman. *All the actions and fruits of the actions are surrendered to the Atman by the Parabrahman, the Absolute.*

*You can never have knowledge about your Self because Parabrahman cannot be witnessed. You know that you are not—what you are you cannot know.*

Here, he is saying whatever happens in Consciousness, he surrenders it to the 'I Am.' He says, "Not me, this is not me, this is you. You, Consciousness, this is yours. I refuse it." This is the conviction you get, after a while, of watching the coming and going of states. You know that you are unchanged through all of these.

How many times have you wakened up in the morning; or napped and wakened up? If you are fifty years old, that is—what is it—fifteen thousand days? Fifteen thousand, right? [Calculating]

Fifteen or twenty thousand times. And then, you nap at least once a day or, if you are like me, twice a day. So you wake up thirty thousand times, forty-five thousand times; you make that transition. You have got to learn *something* from it! Other than going from one state to another state.

If you pay attention, you learn that you are not touched by the transitions between these states.

You always remain the same.

Okay. *Om Guru Jai Guru*. It is the long chant with Nityananda. It is twelve minutes, and we will just continue sitting after it is over.

Remember, the point of the chanting is to identify with the music, which is more ethereal than your body, more ethereal than even the 'I Am.' It is like the wind. It has no resting place.

[Chanting—*Om Guru Jai Guru*]

[Long pause]

I love you all, and good night.

Stay in meditation if you want.

I do love you all. More and more.

Bye-bye.

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