

Edji Satsang Transcript



I am the Truth

October 8, 2011 – Online Satsang

You know when it comes to spirituality, it is all about identification—what you identify with.

Do you identify with grief? With happiness? With love? With emptiness? With the Absolute? With energies?

What do you identify with?

If you only have one identity, you do not have a lot of choice. So, you have to be open to new experiences. The analogy I use is the hundred-room, or thousand-room mansion. You have to have been able to explore many of those rooms, freely.

You have to be open. The ability to shift identity without openness is useless; and just being open, without being able to choose your identity, is confusion.

Now, why do we like Nisargadatta so much?

Because he is the most Western of all the Eastern teachers. He talks about consciousness as arising from the body, which is what Western science does. They do not understand what it is, or how it arises, or what the chemical is. Nisargadatta just refers to consciousness as “the chemical.” The food body supplies consciousness.

And when the body is born, consciousness is arising; but it has no identity. Gradually a baby, because of its neural growth, and the concepts that are taught to it, develops a sense of ‘I’—a sense of ‘me,’ and ‘mine.’ This becomes the core of the ‘I Am.’ The ‘I Am’ experience and the ‘I Am’ concept.

We love Nisargadatta because he talks just like we do. He talks like Psychoanalysis does. He talks like Science does, about consciousness and the ‘I Am’.

This consciousness takes a specific form, depending upon the kind of body it is born into. If it is born into a worm, it has worm consciousness, which we do not know. It is a lot like us, it is a lot like our fundamental consciousness, but it is different; because a worm does not have eyes, does not breathe, does not have a lot of sensations that we do—has different kinds of sensations. Consciousness in a bird is different than that of us too: different sense apparatus, different kinds of sensations. The same with a monkey; an elephant; a plant. Each one has a different kind of consciousness.

I think maybe humans are the only ones that can choose which consciousness, in themselves, to identify with. They can explore various rooms in the mansion, and choose to identify with the contents of that room.

One of the most important qualities of consciousness to know is that of emptiness, or the void, for spiritual people. To look inside with your eyes closed and see your emptiness nature inside. This sometimes takes years to develop. It starts sometimes in the third eye and spreads throughout your whole body.

The sense of emptiness, the emptiness that contains everything. And the emptiness inside is the same as the emptiness outside. They are one and the same. Then, after a time the emptiness changes from darkness to light. The void becomes lit, lighted, and we talk about the self-illuminated void. The Buddhists say “the self-illuminated void in nature of mind.”

And then sometimes before that, or after that, we begin to get a hold of the sense of ‘I Am;’ as instructed by Nisargadatta, or by Ramana. This ‘I Am’ is formed before we are three years old.

Our psychological apparatus, our brain, our senses—we are equipped in such a way that when instructed, and given concepts, and through interacting with other people, we develop the notion of inner and outer; of an entity inside of us that thinks, wants, desires, hopes, acts. It becomes the actor and we create a persona—a concrete ‘Ed’, a concrete ‘John’, a concrete ‘Tim;’ a concrete personality in Alan, in Jo-Ann, in Joan.

We grow up more or less feeling ourselves to be similar all the time: a stable sense of self. Who we are—housewife, psychologist, angry person, husband—all these roles, and concepts: who we are. What we are.

And then we want freedom. We do not want to be John any more. We do not want to be Tim, or Ed. There is too much suffering in the world. The world is filled with suffering. *My life is filled with suffering—I want out!*

Or sometimes there is no suffering, and we just get struck with a need to know what our basic nature is.

We become seekers... going from teacher to teacher, book to book, workshop to workshop, trying to explore all of these different rooms, and generally getting very confused in the process. Many rooms, but no maps—*what the hell is going on?* There is no control over the identification.

Then, if we are lucky—some of us are lucky—we find a teacher. We bond with the teacher, we love the teacher; and he or she shows us some of the rooms that he or she has explored—takes us, walks us through them.

And the living space of our lives begins to expand. We add room after room: emptiness; a sense of presence; a feeling of electricity; of love moving through one, from the bottom of one's feet all the way through the body—a river of love which can turn into ecstasy; turn into bliss.

Or else, if we are really lucky, the brain begins to feel like a brick and no thoughts penetrate it. We become dumb as a rock.

We feel like we are starting to go to sleep, when actually we are going into samadhi. We go beyond consciousness, we go below consciousness, beneath consciousness, we go prior to consciousness; and we are no longer aware of our existence.

We disappear. And a minute later, or an hour later, we come back—and somehow we knew we existed that entire time, even though we were not aware of our consciousness.

At night, too, our consciousness goes away. We slip into sleep—peaceful sleep, dreamless sleep. We wake up the next day, and we know that we had some dreams—some were good, some were bad; but then there was also this peacefulness of deep sleep without dream, without consciousness. This is what Ramana refers to as our real nature.

We have gone beyond consciousness, and the troubles of consciousness.

So, the concept is this: the body is born; so is awareness, consciousness. A baby makes no sense out of it, but because of the comfort given to it by its parents, it fears not too much. Gradually it develops a sense of self, of 'I-ness' and 'mine,' 'me,' 'my;' and of action, control, decision making, manipulation.

And we develop a concept of 'I Am,' a sense of presence associated with being a human being.

This 'I Am' sense can really be screwed up—depending upon the parenting, and one's psychological equipment going into it. Some of it can be cleared up through psychotherapy. But often, we see the inherent limitations of being a human being and we know something is wrong. The world we live in is not the truth.

There is too much brutality, too much death, too much killing. Too much cruelty. We watch television, it makes no sense. Who wants to “keep up with the Kardashians?” Who wants to see CSI [Crime Scene Investigation] for the fifteenth time? Who wants to see that red-headed guy's bare ass all the time, on one of those crime shows?

We look at our own lives.

Robert used to say, *You know, after you have brushed your teeth ten thousand times, how many more times do you want to do it?*

After you have had sex five thousand times, isn't that enough? After you have had arthritis for five years, don't you think of putting it away? After you have read your one millionth book, isn't it time to stop?

What has it gotten you?

And you just want to put it all away.

Then you are confronted by the task of dismantling the 'I Am,' to get back to your original nature. You come to me, or Nisargadatta, or Robert; and we say, “Look at yourself. Turn your attention around, instead of looking out—look within.”

Explore that spiritual mansion. All of those outer experiences are Rooms 1, 2 and 3. Let us go to Room 4 with Emptiness; Room 5 with the Sense of Presence;

Room 6 with Love; Room 7 with Energies; Room 8 with the Absolute... actually, that is the basement.

We begin to explore all of this stuff, including the 'I Am,' and see that the 'I Am' is just intertwined concepts; the central one of which is the sense of 'I'. Then one day we recognise that there is no internal referent for that word, 'I'.

It is just a concept—there is no Eddie. There is no Joan. There is no Janet. There is no Jo-Ann. There is no Alan—it is a concept.

If you look inside for that 'Alan,' all that Alan finds is emptiness—that inner emptiness, the void, filled with light; and that light shows no 'Alan' in there whatsoever.

And Alan says, "Oh, fuck! I don't exist!"

It is a shock. *I don't exist!* The 'I' was just a concept. All that there is, is consciousness.

All that there is, is consciousness everywhere—not divided into an 'I Am;' not divided into an 'Alan,' and an 'Ed,' and a 'Jo-Ann.' There is just one consciousness, with no inner, and no outer. We become that vast emptiness that contains the inner and outer. We expand, and become that vast emptiness which is the inner and outer, and identify with our self as *space*.

We are the space that is aware of everything. All objects in the universe are in us.

[Pause]

Then one day, we make a further discovery: Even this unity consciousness is a joke.

Even this unity consciousness is just temporary. Not only do objects come and go, consciousness itself comes and goes. All this unity consciousness requires us to

be awake, but we are not awake all the time—we are also asleep, and even unity consciousness disappears in the sleep.

Then we have dream consciousness. It is a different world. We create a new world every night. Maybe not quite as sick as the real world is, but nonetheless we create a new world.

So, it is all about identity. We just covered the whole concept of identity.

And openness is also necessary—openness to the experiences, and all the various rooms of the mansion—from emptiness, to presence, to love, to hate.

That is why we love Nisargadatta.

Now, I had an experience beginning several months ago. I was talking to Janet; and she said something to me. She said, “Ed, when you speak, I feel truth. I feel a movement of truth in me.” She has said that many, many times over the last few months.

Last night I had dinner with two friends. We had a very deep meeting, after we ate. There was a lot of ... mini-darshan with these two very advanced students. A lot of flowing of energies, a lot of flowing of love, and a lot of talking of truth—like I am talking to you now. But it was for them, so it was different.

And I said, “You know, when I used to start doing satsangs, the words came to me. They came from beyond. They really had nothing to do with me.” But I recognised last night, when I was talking to them, I said, “Now it is different. Now these words are mine. I *own* these words.”

One woman asked me, “Well, what does that mean to you?” I just thought about it for a second, and said, “It means I am the truth.”

I am the truth.

I know what Christ meant when he said, “I am the way, the truth and the life.”
[*John 14:6*]

I am the way.

“The way” is providing truth—to the life evermore, the Absolute.

So, my identity yesterday, briefly, was with that one room in the mansion... 83A is the room number. *I am the truth.*

I am the way is Room 90. And “the life” means life immortal; which is recognising that all of consciousness is only a play, and it is not your play, either.

You are far, far beyond that play. You are far beyond God.

You are the witness of the entirety of the creation, and God is messing with your mind, through consciousness.

Consciousness is temporary.

It is like the wind, blowing leaves around, rearranging things.

But I want you to become the truth, too. I want the truth to abide in you. I want you to find life immortal by identifying not with what is witnessed, but with the witness; which is not of this world. It is you as you are now—when the ‘I Am’ is seen through, and dismantled. The conceptual you that was built up over the years becomes empty. It dissipates.

What is enlightenment? There is nothing that becomes enlightened. You always are enlightened. What happens is the illusion passes, and you see through the illusion. The Absolute sees through the illusion, and sees itself again for the first time, as the host of the universe.

It is not that we become enlightened. It is because bad concepts, the nutty concepts, go away. They are seen through; and you become the truth. You become life immortal.

But there is one more step. This is the step that Robert really did not explore that deeply, and even Nisargadatta just hints at it—which is going back into the world.

You have seen through it as an illusion, and a lot of people just stay away. Some of them become cold fish, like an ex-girlfriend I emailed recently. I had mentioned that I had been depressed, when my teacher left after I had awakened, and she said, “Jnana does not have any emotions. Jnana does not get depressed.” And then she referred to her own life and she said, “I am satisfied with my life.”

There was no talk in her of excitement, or of mercy, or of compassion. She was “satisfied” with her life. I could feel that there was very little life in her.

So many that follow advaita, and Buddhism, have very little life. They do not take the passage back—back into life, into the drama, into the fray. And I don not think it is incompatible to do both—to head towards enlightenment, and to also act with compassion in the world as your inner processes purify you, so to speak. Even that is just a concept.

To act more compassionately in the world, more lovingly in the world; transforming the world.

I saw on Facebook today a statement by Mother Teresa. It is so moving. I would like some of you who want to follow me back into the world, even though you have not left the world yet, to sort of adopt this as a theme, or a part of the theme of your life:

She writes,

[from *Whatever you did unto one of the least, you did unto me* by Mother Teresa of Calcutta, given at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington DC, February 3, 1994, <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/augustine/arch/teresa94.html>]:

When I pick up a person from the street, hungry, I give him a plate of rice, a piece of bread. But a person who is shut out, who feels unwanted, unloved, terrified, the person who has been thrown out of society—that spiritual poverty is much harder to overcome.

... Those who are materially poor can be very wonderful people. One evening we went out and we picked up four people from the street. And one of them was in a most terrible condition. I told the Sisters: "You take care of the other three; I will take care of the one who looks worse." So I did for her all that my love can do. I put her in bed, and there was such a beautiful smile on her face. She took hold of my hand, as she said one word only: "Thank you"—and she died.

I could not help but examine my conscience before her. And I asked: "What would I say if I were in her place?" And my answer was very simple. I would have tried to draw a little attention to myself. I would have said: "I am hungry, I am dying, I am cold, I am in pain," or something. But she gave me much more—she gave me her grateful love. And she died with a smile on her face.

Then there was the man we picked up from the drain, half eaten by worms and, after we had brought him to the home, he only said, "I have lived like an animal in the street, but I am going to die as an angel, loved and cared for." Then, after we had removed all the worms from his body, all he said, with a big smile, was: "Sister, I am going home to God"—and he died.

It was so wonderful to see the greatness of that man who could speak like that without blaming anybody, without comparing anything. Like an angel—this is the greatness of people who are spiritually rich even when they are materially poor.

Can we play *O God Beautiful* and *In the Temple of Silence*?

[Chanting—*O God Beautiful* and *In the Temple of Silence*]

The reason I read that Mother Teresa quote was to show that we can expand our compassion. We can go beyond our small little world of family, neighbours—expand that love and compassion. Rescue animals. Rescue people. Vote Democrat. Get rid of the Republicans. Actually, get rid of most of the Democrats, too.

We can really help other people.

[Pause]

Now, for the academic portion of our program. It will be short, because we are running a little late tonight.

This is Nisargadatta Maharaj from July 22 1980, and Jean Dunn [devotee of Nisargadatta and one of Edji's teachers] quotes Maharaj:

[*Prior to Consciousness*, page 35]

All these discussions are an exchange of ideas and mental entertainment, meant to while away the time.

This was exactly Robert's attitude towards satsang: it was entertainment, spiritual entertainment.

What was not entertainment, what was real, was to look inside and find the 'I Am;' and to love the 'I Am.' Or, with Robert, to explore the sense of 'I-ness,' and what was that 'I?'

For Nisargadatta, it was to go inside, feel that sense of presence, and expand it; until it becomes all of consciousness, and you understand the totality of 'I Amness.' And by knowing the totality of 'I Amness,' knowing that it is just an object—it is unreal. It is part of the illusion.

And the questioner says:

If you don't make some kind of effort, you get nowhere.

Maharaj: *Don't think that some progress has to be made. You will continue to do something, even if it is conceptual, but the one who understands that he is already there, what will he do?*

The one who understands already that he is beyond space and time—that is, somebody who is awakened—what is there for him to do, in terms of search or spirituality? Nothing for him to do.

Questioner: *Okay, but isn't there tremendous scope for self deception here?*

Maharaj: *Who is this who is going to be self-deceived?*

Questioner: *The empirical ego.*

And Maharaj says—and this is *so very important*:

There is no entity. It is not possible for a phenomenal object to achieve something, and this is only a phenomenal object.

The ego is only a phenomenal object. It cannot achieve anything. It cannot achieve awakening. It cannot deceive you.

The whole thing is deception. The entirety of the mentality of conceptuality is a deception—and the ego is only one part of that deception.

Do you get that?

Jo-Ann, you look perplexed. Do you want me to explain it again?

[Jo-Ann shakes her head “no”]

Okay.

[Skipping to page 37]

Questioner: *Even beingness is an imperfect temporary phase?*

Maharaj: *That consciousness is a product of the food essence body; the body is the fuel on which "I Amness" is sustained. Do you not observe what the body is? Is it not a morsel of food and water? Presently you are embroiled in this "I Amness," but you—the Absolute—are not this "I Amness."*

Questioner: *What you are saying is, even the "I Amness," the way you recognize it in the mind, that is not the way it is actually?*

Maharaj: *Take it like this: this is as good or as bad an experience as having a tummy ache or a pain in the neck. In my perfect state I never had a pain, but when the "I Amness" was there, suddenly I felt the pain. That "I Amness" will merge, will disappear, I am the perfect state when "I Amness" was not. I definitely know that "I Amness" was not. Just as I have to suffer a chronic ailment I suffer this beingness. Just understand at what level I am talking, to what level I am leading you.*

Just imagine the flight to which this spiritual talk has gone. The normal spiritual approach everywhere is to worship this consciousness with so many titles, but to me it is a pain and I want to get rid of that.

This is what separates the neo-advaitins from traditional advaita. The neo-advaitins are filled with consciousness and beingness. They extol it; they worship beingness and being in the present.

Yet Maharaj says, *to me it is a pain and I want to get rid of that*—because he knows his true state: being beyond consciousness, being beyond the drama and the ‘I Am.’

Do you want one more?

[July 23, 1980, page 37]

Questioner: *Maharaj says all that is necessary is to be aware. The mind keeps on casting doubts, and particularly keeps on saying that there must be more practices or something more to be done.*

Maharaj: *All the activities are in the field of consciousness, the mind, and vital force. The knower of the mind is just a witness. It does not interfere in anything.*

Guru's grace means the knowledge you are. When you stabilize in this conviction, that will open up and give you all the knowledge and that is the grace.

If you are there, -

And he is talking about the Absolute, before consciousness arises.

... then everything is immeasurably there. You give no significance to the fact that you are—you are carried away by all the manifestation which is the expression of your beingness.

[Edji repeats]

If you are there, then everything is immeasurably there. You give no significance to the fact that you are—you are carried away by all the manifestation which is the expression of your beingness.

Questioner: *My tendency is to look outward, rather than inward.*

Maharaj: *That is the quality of your "I Amness," not of you, the Absolute. You have embraced the body as your Self. That also is superficial, you don't know what is happening inside the body either.*

Questioner: *Correct. I don't know what's happening in my organs or how they act.*

Maharaj: *All the actions happening in this wide world, the samples of all those, are also happening in the body.*

Questioner: *That which is, does not know Itself?*

Maharaj: *In that state you do not know you are.*

In the Absolute state, you do not know that you are.

With the tool, or aid, of beingness you know you are.

Questioner: *With the tool we try to go beyond?*

Maharaj: *Don't try to go beyond consciousness, only recognize, understand, what the beingness is, that does the trick. The proof that consciousness was not lies with you only. You, the Absolute, are the proof of that. Spontaneously, uncalled for, this beingness has come and this beingness is being witnessed by you, the Absolute. Ask questions—you will not have such an opportunity again.*

Questioner: *The urge is not so much to ask questions, as to just be with Maharaj.*

Maharaj: *That is quite proper. Just by sitting here quietly and listening to the talks your mind will be annihilated. In case the mind sprouts again you forestall it by asking questions.*

The mind is sprouting, expressing itself with various concepts. Don't identify with that, let it go. Don't be a customer to your mind concepts.

Hear that? Don't indulge in them.

Question: *Things like getting food, eating at regular times, earning money, all these are concepts of the mind and are responded to by the mind. If one does not respond to these things, then how does one live?*

Maharaj: *By all means employ the mind, but don't get lost in the mind. Observe the mind, be a witness to the mind flow.*

That is enough of the academic portion of our satsang tonight.

Any questions?

[Private dialogue removed]

I love you all. Be safe.

See you next week.

Bye-bye.

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