

Edji Satsang Transcript



The Crux of Nisargadatta

October 15, 2011 – Online Satsang

Go deep.

I want you to go deep. Let the music take you deep. We are going to cover some deep stuff today.

[Chanting—*Do Not Dry the Ocean of My Love*]

[Next chant begins—*He Bhagavan*]

Try to go deep. Dive, dive, dive, down into yourself. Into your heart, and below. Just sink into yourself, or fall back into yourself.

[Chanting continues]

Let the music take you.

[Chanting continues]

Go *deep*. Go very deep.

[Chanting—*He Bhagavan*]

Now, pay attention.

Who hears my voice?

Who is it that hears my voice?

Look deep inside. Where is that witness?

Where is that knowledge?

Who hears me? Who hears Ed?

Plunge deep inside. Look for him, or her.

Who hears my call?

I am calling you. Who hears me?

If you find nothing, what does that mean?

If you find nothing, what does that mean?

Who hears me?

Speak up. Who hears me?

[Pause]

You know, I get asked every day by someone, in a comment, or an email, or on the phone—

How do I practice? What's the best practice? or, Why am I not making any progress? I have been doing this for three days now and I am not enlightened. How come?

What a fucked-up method. Three days I have been working on this!

Other people feel they are moving too fast. Emotions are flooding them; drama and trauma are flooding them. Please, slow down.

You know, most people that come to satsangs anywhere are merely curious.

Let me try you out, they say. If you strike some resonant chord within me, I will stick around, if you are lucky—for a few weeks, or a few months. If you are lucky! But I probably will dump you, like I have dumped every other guru, because they were not entertaining enough, or they were not deep enough, or they were not smart enough, or they did not have enough love, or they had the wrong technique.

But then there are those who are more than merely curious. They have a deep passion to awake. Yet mostly, they have not investigated *why* they want to awaken. They just say, *I want to get of here. I just want to get out.* But why?

What is the motivation? What is the pain? What is the drive? Look into that. You have to know that, before you know anything else. Why do you want to get out? What is so bad about this place—outside of the Republican Party?

And for those who *have* come, and are highly motivated, and are willing to practice, and maybe even looked into that reason *why* they want to awaken—there are still problems. Some come so filled with knowledge from reading books and seeing teachers, they know everything. They are so filled-up there is no humility, no emptiness—just perfect knowing. They check your knowing against their perfect knowing, and you are always found wanting.

Then there are those who are always filled with activities. They are juggling 7 or 8 balls at once, and 2 of them have to be spiritual. They have got kids; they have got a job 84 hours a day, 216 hours a week. They read 6 books a week. They go out 8 times a week. They get drunk twice a week. And they wonder why nothing is coming through, why nothing is sticking. The 20 minutes of meditation they did on Wednesday has not brought enlightenment.

What a shitty world! 20 minutes, and I don't get it.

Then a third set of these people come filled with pain. Sometimes, it is on the surface. Sometimes it is locked deep down—a lot of emotional blockages, a lot of human deadness. This usually has to be unlocked before progress is made.

But, let me tell you—there really is no progress. One day you are not awake, and the next day you are. One day, one moment, the illusion is seen through. The world is seen to be just images, concepts, which your mind has created. Then you are free—or at least, the path to freedom is open. You begin to see your way.

But what about before this awakening takes place? What about all the shit I go through? Is it necessary?

In the late 70's and early 80's there was a big time spiritual writer, he is still around, Ken Wilber, who wrote a seminal book called *The Spectrum of Consciousness*, and another one, *The Atman Project*.

You know, Psychoanalysis postulates a development in children from the time of birth until the time of ten, of certain cognitive structures—certain ways of

knowing, certain ways of perceiving—as well as one’s personality structure. The ‘ego,’ Freud called it, and the Object Relations people called it.

The “internal objects,” which are the internal structures by which we perceive other people—the feelings of love, the feelings of integration, the feelings of morality, the ability to control our emotions, the ability to mate with another, to bond with another, the ability to tolerate the extremes of emotions, the ability to tolerate different viewpoints—all of these are built into the ego structure; and most of the development takes place by the age of seven... most of it, actually, by the age of three.

By the age of two, some people can begin to observe themselves as different from the others, and they refer to themselves as ‘I.’ All of these are thought structures inside that become integrated. The child is able to observe an apparent world out there that is created by its mind, and things people teach it.

Mama teaches it. Papa teaches it. They teach you how to *be* in the world, too—*stiff upper lip*; or a quivering upper lip; or a loose upper lip—whichever kind of parents you had. All of these structures are inbred, and they contain our feelings.

But into this, in almost every life, huge trauma comes that disrupts this developmental complex. The death of a father. A divorce. Child abuse. Sexual abuse. Something always happens to screw up this developmental sequence, and psychotherapists or psychoanalysts talk about, *Well, you don’t need to have the perfect parents, you just need to have good enough parents.*

Good enough to get by, to get you through.

But a lot of people do not have good enough parents. Or they do not have any parents. Or, they are the kind of person that is, let us say, by constitution very sensitive, and highly reactive; and even a good parent, and a holding parent, cannot completely contain all of their feelings, and allow their structures to develop in the proper way.

All of these people develop what we call *neuroses*, or *psychoses*, or *personality disorders*. There are millions of them outlined in the Diagnostic, Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association—my bible. I use it all the time, for reaching diagnoses of people, then do evaluations. It has got hundreds of categories, depending on symptoms and behaviors... for example, *borderline personality disorder*. What are some of the other hot topics? *Narcissistic personality disorder*.

And all of these describe the kind of symptoms people have. For instance, a *borderline* is emotionally eruptive, a lot of anger. *Depressive disorder*—these people have a depressive core that they regress to every now and then, and they feel very depressed for long periods of time, either because of the death of somebody or some other thing.

But Ken Wilber hypothesized that you cannot go to the place of “abandoning the ego” until you have a well-formed ego. A schizophrenic, for example, cannot become enlightened because he really does not have a well enough formed ego to *transcend* the ego. It sounds paradoxical, but a schizophrenic can be very close to being awakened, because they do not have all of the structures that a lot of people have in order to deal with the world; and those well-formed structures are what prevent you from seeing through the world, and that spirituality works on.

So, Ken Wilber hypothesized that you had to be emotionally healthy in order to get into spirituality—to become “transpersonal;” to go beyond the personal. The personal has to be fixed; either first in psychotherapy, or originally, with good enough parents.

Or, if something went wrong, then you go back and repair it—you repair that emotionality. *Then* you can get into spirituality. It is a transpersonal model. I fought that model a lot, in publications and so forth. Because, to me, the whole personality was just a concept—just a network of thoughts tied together, by which we structure the universe.

So, how do I deal with people that come, that are highly motivated, have looked into why they want to get out of the world, have dealt with some of that pain, who

are too busy, or have a lot of emotional blockages, or have too much knowledge already?

You know, there is very little I can do. I have to wait until people are relatively empty, and are motivated.

You know, *my* problem was always pride.

I had too much understanding. I had read too many books. I had seen too many teachers. By the time I met Robert, I was through with spirituality. I thought it was a bunch of shit, I had gotten nowhere.

I was so full of myself, my self-assurance that *all of this is bullshit*. But I did not see all the way through the bullshit. I saw three-fourths of the way; but I was *full* of myself with arrogance, of knowing. I was puffed up with knowing. That was my weakness—was knowing. I knew everything.

And what did it take to break through that? 7 or 8 years of being with Robert, and knowing less and less each year.

Trying to become good-for-nothing. And Robert was *very* good at making us good for nothing. You would become more and more dysfunctional. You would care less and less about things. Your memory would go, because you were not paying any attention. And if you paid attention, you would still forget.

The world does not make sense much anymore. Not like it used to, when it was solid. Now it is developing holes.

So, gradually, I was becoming useless, and it felt *so* good. There was not so much to do anymore. Everybody's expectations, including my own, were lowered.

I could relax.

But then, Robert left.

He went to Sedona; I failed to follow him. I was one of the ones that was instrumental in having him move to Sedona. I tried to move, I really did. I tried a couple of times. But it did not work out.

I finally realized... one time when I was talking with Robert on the phone, he was up at Sedona, and I said, "Robert, I can't take the cooking anymore. You've cooked me too much. I need some rest. You are always complaining about me, always talking behind my back, always putting me in situations where it hurts so much. I can't take it anymore. I want a rest."

I got him to move. But I failed to move with him, and thereby lost him. And I became lost. I felt desolate, a failure. The arrogance was gone. I was no longer full of myself. Full of shit, maybe, but not full of myself, anymore. So I gave up.

Then I got what was equivalent to one of these mp3 players a long time ago, a cassette player, and just listened all day long to sacred music, and to Robert's satsangs; lay down on my couch and listened to them. Listened to Robert's talks, listened to these chants; and I gradually felt happier and happier. Happier and happier. I was desolated, but I felt happy. I was laid low, but I felt happy.

The chanting increased my happiness. Listening to Robert's words increased my happiness. And then one day I took a shower and I woke up. Just suddenly. No warning. No warning. Then, a few days later I had a second awakening, more profound than the first; but gentler.

Now, what was it that caused me to wake up?

Was it the 30 years of meditation before I met Robert? Was it being with Robert for 8 years, and becoming useless? Was it learning to learn less and less? Was it Robert's going away, and my feeling of desolation? Being laid low? Was it the chanting music? Was it listening to the satsangs? Was it having given up the whole thing? I do not know.

I do not know. I know listening to chanting is very important, and if you could do that, and listen to his talks all day long; my talks—it would help a lot. You *would*

feel happier and happier. I am even going to make a special tape for telling you to be useless, and you can play it over and over again:

Do not do anything today. Do not think today. Do not do anything with the kids today. Do not phone your parents. Do not feed the cat, even. Do not do anything today. Become useless.

So, what was it? Why did the illusion dissipate at that moment?

People come to me and say, *What did you do? What practice should I do?*

I do not know.

You can practice Self-inquiry, like Robert says, and Ramana. You can abide in the 'I Am,' like Nisargadatta says. Or you can go through all kinds of emotional movements; or you can lie on your back and listen to chanting.

Or, perhaps you could become of service. Go to a hospice. Rescue animals. There are a million things you can do. But it is really important to do something—to have some sort of movement.

I think more than anybody else right now, Joan is moving so quickly; and part of it is because she is listening to chanting music all day long, and all night long. She listens to Robert's talks, to my talks. She is 150% committed to her Self. Not so much to awakening, but to awakening her heart right now.

Janet, also.

Katherine, I believe, although I have not talked to her that much.

And, of course, Jo-Ann, who is working her toosh off all the time for our satsang. But now I am starting to cook her especially.

And through cooking her, I cook Alan.

I have got you all on my mind. I am working on all of you in my own way. But, because I am lazy, I am slow. [Chuckles] So, you have to do some of the work yourself, too. I *highly* recommend you listening to chanting music.

Okay, maybe we should have some questions at this point—if anybody has any questions, comments.

You know, at Sasaki Roshi's Zen monastery on Mt. Baldy, there came the time when you went to see the Roshi [teacher] for your one-on-one meeting with him. I think it is called *dokasan*... or that is Soto Zen, I forget what it was called in Rinzai Zen.

Everybody would be very slow to go, because they were just coming out of a deep meditation. So we had this Japanese monk, they called him *Jikijitsu*, was his title. This guy was Ryosho, and was about 5'3" or 5'4", but muscular. One day he got so upset that nobody was moving; he got off of the *tan* and went one by one down the rank of the people sitting there, and pulled them off and threw them onto the floor. He told them to *Rush up to Roshi!*

Now, I do not know who our *Jikijitsu* is; but maybe Joan—she is getting pretty mean.

Joan, you want to go after these people and make them come and say something to me? [Chuckles]

Joan: Okay—everybody go say something! [Giggles]

Edji: [Laughs] Oh, that was forceful!

Joan: I know! [Laughing]

Tina: Hello, Edji. I have a question. You say that we should be going out and doing things?

Edji: Yes, I do.

Tina: I find when I go out now, I get so stupid, I can hardly get my groceries!

Edji: Well, it is not for everybody. It is for those who can. Be of service. But if you have become totally useless, that is sort of out of the door, isn't it?

Tina: It is, in my perspective... [laughing.] For me.

Edji: That's fine, don't worry about it. As long as you are becoming totally useless, I cannot ask for more of you than that.

Tina: I'm *totally, totally* useless!

Edji: Thank God.

Tina: [Laughing]

Edji: We have got a potential winner, here. You know, what we are going to do is like with the salesmen, in an insurance office—as soon as somebody awakes, we will ring a bell!

You know, this shit is not easy. There are people that are constitutionally forced to do it the difficult way—through Bhakti [devotion,] and through suffering. They need to suffer—and Deeya! Poor, poor Deeya.

Nine years of endless pain; of empathizing with people that were dying, or demented, and going through pain and not being treated well by civilization. The pain became so much for her, and still is sometimes, she has to withdraw; totally. It is a very severe task for these people—these sensitive people that are breaking open, and feeling all the emotions coming out. Killing them, it seems like it is killing them. But that passes.

But it is not necessarily the case that you have to go through all of this, before you awaken. So far as I know, there is no set course. There is no sequence that is foolproof.

I did not go through all of this stuff, before I awoke. I went through psychotherapy for 8 years, prior to it. But I did not have the extreme amount of suffering that some of you have. Maybe that is yet to come for me. I am looking forward to it.

[Pause]

Tina: Thank you.

Edji: Yet other people can do it just by being quietistic—being empty. Going deep inside in meditation; seeing that inner sense of emptiness, the Void; finding the sense of presence that fills the Void; asking themselves, *Who am I?*—and finding nothing there, and then saying, *Hey, there is nobody home! Wow, I do not have to do anything anymore. The whole world is a bunch of crap! It is not real!*

How about chanting *Sri Ram Jai Ram*? [Sings a bit to demonstrate. Jo-Ann goes about trying to locate it. While she is doing so-]

Edji: Notice that Lakshmi [the cat] is camouflaged today [because both the cat and Edji's t-shirt are black.] The writing that she is hiding says... [trying to read the writing on his own t-shirt, while Lakshmi jumps down]... *For a minute there, you bored me to death.*

[T-shirt graphic depicts a heartbeat that has flat-lined and then picked up again]

Okay.

[Chanting—*Sri Ram Jai Ram*]

Who are you?

Look into your heart. Look into your mind.

Who is there?

Who is *knowing* this?

Who is listening to this, and cognizing this?

Who is it that knows what I am saying?

Who is the knower?

Where is the 'I'?

Where is your 'I'?

Find your 'I.'

[Pause]

Is there anybody in there? Anybody with form and substance?

Or, is the knower without form? Without substance? Without existence in this world? Without properties?

Is the knower unknown?

This kind of questioning is as deep as you can get in Advaita. Does the knower have form? Is the knower *a thing*?

[Pause]

And now, for the academic part of satsang: from Nisargadatta Maharaj .

There is going to be a test at the end of the month. It will be an open-book test, so you do not have to study. I do not want to make it too hard on you!

[*Prior to Consciousness*, October 1, 1980, page 58]

Maharaj: *You live in the house but the house is not yourself. Similarly, the knowledge “I Am” is in the body but it is not the body.*

Questioner: *I do not fully understand it.*

Maharaj: *With the mind you will never understand. You are not the mind, nor the words, nor the meaning of the words. I expound the knowledge of the Self to the Self but you accept it as the knowledge of your body.*

You are not the mind, nor the words, nor the meaning of the words. You are not the mind, you are not the words, nor the meaning of the words.

I expound the knowledge of the Self to the Self. He is not talking about the ‘I am’, the sense of presence. He is saying, “I am expounding the knowledge of the Self to the Self, but you accept it as your body.” He is talking to the Absolute, and we will get to that in a second.

I am completely detached from the body and the consciousness which is within the body. Nevertheless, because of the disease, the unbearable suffering of the body is being experienced through the consciousness. It is unbearable but since I am detached both from the body and the consciousness, I am able to speak to you. It is something like the fan—the breeze is there and the sound is also there. In the same way the vital breath is there and the sound is also there. In the same way the vital breath is there and the sound is also emanating, but all of this happening is unbearable... the suffering has to be endured.

In other words, he is comparing himself to a thing—a fan, with the breeze and the sound. And he says, “Yes, I am experiencing and it is pretty unbearable, but it is not me.”

When the knowledge “I Am” is not there do you perceive or observe anything? Knowingness is knowledge and no-knowingness is also knowledge, but it has no form. If you equate it with the body, only then you say that you are a male or a female.

In the absence of knowledge, the question of I know or I do not know does not arise. When you fully understand what I have said about knowledge you will fully identify with that.

That is very difficult to understand. This is a central passage in Advaita, in Nisargadatta’s Advaita.

[Repeating from the above passage to stress its meaning]

When the knowledge “I Am” is not there do you perceive or observe anything?

Without the ‘I am,’ is there anything whatsoever?

Knowingness is knowledge and no-knowingness is also knowledge, but it has no form.

That is, neither knowingness has form, and that is knowledge; nor not-knowingness. Knowledge has no form. If you equate it with the body, only then does it have properties of being male or female.

Now, we are going to go a step further in this next quote.

[October 2, 1980, page 59]

This is going to become a little complicated, because Nisargadatta in this passage is apparently identifying the ego with the 'I am,' which is not typically what he does. The translation might be poor, or something else, but listen to this:

Questioner: *I want to give up this ego but I don't know how.*

This is important now.

Maharaj: *What is the measurement and the color of this ego that you want to give up? What have you understood about this ego?*

In other words, what form does this ego have, that you are trying to give up? What does it look like? Does this concept have any existence, whatsoever?

Questioner: *It is a false conviction of the mind.*

Maharaj asked, "What have you understood about the ego?" The questioner says, "It's a false conviction of the mind." Now Maharaj goes from the ego and he says, "What is the form of this ego that you are talking about, that you want to get rid of?"

Maharaj: *It is a pinch in my fingers, this "I Amness," but all the scriptures, the sixteen sastras, eighteen puranas and four Vedas have been screaming and shouting, trying to describe this Brahman.*

He is now equating the 'I Am'ness with God, or Brahman, and before he was talking about the ego. So we have got to be careful, here.

All those praises are only for that tiny little pinch "I Am." The moment you start making a design of that "I Amness" you are getting into deep waters.

This incense holder is silver, you have the knowledge that it is silver.

Listen to this carefully.

What is the shape, color, or design of that knowledge?

This incense holder is silver, and you have knowledge that it is silver. But what is the shape, color, or design of the *knowledge* of the color of the incense holder? Does it have form? Or is it formless? Where does it reside, this knowledge?

If all knowledge is formless, could there be a form, design or color to the knowledge "I Am?"

Maybe now he is talking about the ego.

[Repeating previous sentence and continuing]

If all knowledge is formless, could there be a form, design or color to the knowledge "I Am?" Could it be subject to sin or merit?

In other words, I know that I am. That is my knowledge—I exist. But what is the nature of this knowledge, that I am?

Does it have form? Can it be perceived? Can you witness the knowledge, at all?

And what is the relationship between the *knowledge* that I am, and my existence? I exist, I know that, in this manifest world. I *know* I exist. But what about this *knowledge* that I exist? What is its nature? Does it have any form? Does it have any substance? What is its reality? And then he says,

In this timeless ether the touch of "I Amness" is not there.

He is saying in the great void, when that touch of "I Amness" comes, the void does not perceive it.

It does not touch the void. It is manifest in the great Void—not the one we perceive, but the one we *are*. It is beyond any form. It is purely knowledge.

Questioner: *Is it not true that out of compassion for the ignorant the jnani expounds knowledge?*

Maharaj: *You can say whatever you like. There is no such thing as compassion in that state. I have elevated you to that state where you should know that you are the very illuminant of everything, and the love to be is also therein. When I lead you there why do you ask me such questions? How do you know anything?*

Here we are getting to the crux again—how do you know anything?

Questioner: *Through the mind.*

Maharaj: *No. The knowingness recognizes the mind, the mind cannot recognize consciousness.*

You are overpowered by sleep, you wake up—who recognizes this? Prior to mind, the knowingness principle is there.

Prior to mind, the knowingness principle is there.

Prior to knowingness, there is the priormost principle which knows the consciousness.

So we have knowingness—*I know I exist*—it is an essential part of the ‘I amness.’

But where is the knowingness residing? The knowingness itself has no form. But this is jnana—jnana is *knowing*. That is what jnana [Sanskrit] means: knowing. And prior to this knowledge is that principle that *knows*—which is not part of the ‘I am,’ or part of the manifest universe.

He calls it the Absolute, the *Parabrahman*. The basic ability to know.

So, we have the basic ability, the witness—whatever we want to call it—the “knower,” you might say. And then *knowingness*, which is the knowledge that we exist; and then we have the manifestation, which is the ‘I amness’ and all of consciousness. This is the most subtle point that you will ever run across in Nisargadatta, and essentially you have to get it.

Maharaj: *In the final analysis out of the absence of knowledge, knowledge was born, and knowledge delivered the world, all beings and all things.*

In the final analysis, out of the absence of knowledge, out of that ether he talked about, out of the void—knowledge was born, and knowledge delivered the world; gave us this world, all beings and all things. Consciousness is suffused with knowledge. Sat-chit-ananda [Sanskrit]—existence, knowledge, bliss.

Existence without knowledge is not existence.

Maharaj: *The one who enters spirituality is like cold water which is put on the fire. When you put it on the fire the bubbles start rising and in due course it starts boiling. That boiling stage is something like the sadhaka entering the highest class of spirituality; at the boiling point he likes to talk a lot, put a lot of questions. When the fire is applied continuously the boiling stops and simmering takes place. That is the stage where one acquires knowledge in spirituality. After listening to these talks will you be able to go into quietude? I have my doubts about that, because you still like to please your pampered mind. If you have really understood what I say does it matter if you please your mind or not?*

I have told you that presently that you are like that warmth in the body.

He was saying, “Presently I have been telling you that you are the ‘I am’—like the warmth in the body.” But then he says,

What is the Parabrahman like?

That is, the Absolute. But what is the Parabrahman like? I told you that you are the 'I am,' but what is the Parabrahman like?

The Parabrahman does not experience this warmth of "I Amness" at all. If you understand, this puzzle would be solved for you.

In other words in the emptiness, in the void, there is just the principle residing there of the ability to know; and then the knowledge comes, 'I am.' It is born—you wake up, and the world appears. Spontaneously. Out of nothingness. Just like the "big bang" theory, which talks about the universe coming out of nothing.

Each day, you are born anew. This knowingness comes. You were not knowing, you were dead asleep; then the knowingness comes, from nowhere, and suddenly the world is born. But that *principle* that is able to perceive knowingness—it must always be there, because it witnesses the coming and going of knowing, and of the world, and of *us*.

After understanding this, if one becomes as jnani, that consciousness principle and body is available, and they will be involved in the emotional field also. It will give full vent to crying and it will also enjoy whatever situation is there. Such a jnani is not going to suppress any expressions of emotions which spontaneously come out of this consciousness and body apparatus.

Such a jnani is not going to suppress any expressions of emotions which spontaneously come out of this consciousness and body apparatus. You, the Parabrahman, associate yourself with Joan the body-mind; with Matthew the body-mind; with John the body-mind, and with Tina the body-mind. But that is not you.

It is a spontaneous arising in emptiness that has nothing to do with you, as the Absolute. But the Absolute is not going to repress any of the emotionality and spontaneity that arises out of the 'I amness,' and out of your body-mind apparatus.

Normally people suppose that a jnani should suppress all the emotional outbursts. That is not correct. With your standpoint in the Absolute, you are not concerned with the feelings and instinctive outbursts of the apparatus.

A jnani does not volitionally participate, it is spontaneously happening; while an ignorant person is deeply involved in that, he assumes everything is real. For the jnani, the warmth, -

the 'I am' -

is also unreal, so whatever happens in the realm of warmth is unreal.

All devotion, liking, and love, is dissolved for a jnani, but whatever he does is for others.

Now this has been really tough, this is the crux of Nisargadatta.

Read those two chapters over and over again. Maybe read them onto an mp3 player, so you can hear it read over, and over, and over, and over again. I hope to come to some to other places where it is as clearly stated, and we will just go into it again, and again, and again, and again—until you get it. I know it is hard to get.

How many fully understand?

[Pause]

Two. Okay.

I will send you a “certificate of enlightenment.”

That will be 25 dollars, please. [Chuckles]

Any questions?

Now, let us have a final chant, and Jo-Ann, you choose it.

[Chanting—*Jaya Bhagavan*]

Wow! I loved it.

Take care. I love you all.

<http://www.wearesentience.com>