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Editor's Note

The wisdom teachings of the legendary sage Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj, have had the greatest impact on my life perspective. I can only read a couple of paragraphs of his teachings at a time and then find myself in stillness unable to read further.

I have never failed to marvel at the way the 'cosmic plan' unfolds, regardless, perfectly as always, despite us, and also at the many synchronicities and catalysts that often precede events. I had heard about Maharaj's interpreter and friend Saumitra Mullarpattan and asked around for his contact details with no success. Life has taught me that when situations are blocked, to stop forcing the jigsaw to fit, as when it is meant to fall into place, life unfolds spontaneously and effortlessly. In this case, however, I gave it one more try and visited my dear friends Chaitan Balsekar and his beautiful wife Neela to ask if they could help. Chaitan, who is always

supportive, telephoned Mullarpattan who was his friend and I was invited to afternoon tea that same day.

A couple of days later I was having a conversation with a publisher, Gautam Sachdeva, before *satsang* with Ramesh Balsekar, who had also been an interpreter of Maharaj. We simultaneously had the idea of putting together a book about Maharaj. I mentioned our plan to Mullarpattan and he generously gave us ten recorded tapes of Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj's talks with seekers during the last two years of his life.

The tapes were full of the 'sounds of India'. It was difficult to hear what was being spoken in between the noise of the traffic, loud music, dogs barking, and carpentry work, not forgetting to mention the various birds competing with each other to be heard, also at *satsang* with Maharaj! I do not understand Marathi, yet it was deeply invigorating to hear the passion and energy with which Maharaj spoke on the tapes and strangely enough, on occasions, even understood what he was saying!

Mullarpattan had done a marvellous job of interpreting Maharaj's words. It must have been a daunting task, as he often spoke for some length of time before the interpreter was able to translate. It would have been impossible for him to translate word for word of what had been spoken. I therefore had to find a person who understood Marathi,

who could give me a literal translation of what Maharaj had said on the tapes. Once again, I discussed my dilemma with Chaitan and Neela Balsekar and discovered to my delight and relief that Neela was fluent in Marathi and was happy, together with Chaitan, to help with the literal translation of the tapes.

Transcribing and editing this book has been the greatest joy. Refining the chapters, daily, over so many months, hammered Maharaj's concepts relentlessly, deeper and deeper, until they have now become part of the fabric of my being. My sincere wish in editing this book was to represent accurately, as much as editorially possible, the precise words of Maharaj during his talks. I retained what some may consider to be 'poor English' in order to preserve the distinctive way that Maharaj expressed himself. I was aware that much could be lost by overzealous editing. It was heartening to hear a comment by my daughter that she did not see any of my style of writing in the editing of this book.

The photo-painting of Maharaj reproduced on the cover of this book was created by my artist friends Trevor and Tim Gainey. When I told them it was to be included, they replied, "*They were happy that others would be able to experience their work as it had been such a powerful experience painting it.*" I offer them my heartfelt appreciation for their awesome picture.

I would like to thank Saumitra Mullarpattan for his kindness in giving us the material for this book and for his generous hospitality during my visits to his home.

I also thank Gautam Sachdeva of *Yogi Impressions* for his support and encouragement during the process of editing this book.

I especially thank Chaitan Balsekar and his wife Neela, for their friendship, support and invaluable translations, without which this book would never have been published.

Many thanks also to my daughter Racquel who proof-read the edited scripts and encouraged me all the way as she has always done.

Lastly, I offer my sincere gratitude to Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj for using this body-mind as a vehicle to incorporate the tapes of his talks and teachings in print. Because of this, everyone who reads this book has been given the life changing opportunity to experience the flavour and essence of this great Master.

– Maria Jory
October 2006

Foreword

When I look back at the series of events that led to the publication of this book, it is a reconfirmation that what the Source has ordained must come to pass.

Last year when I discovered, quite by chance, that the *samadhi* of the guru of Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj was in the vicinity of my residence in South Mumbai, I decided to visit it that weekend. I was quite astonished to find that the *samadhi* was at the Banganga cremation grounds. But then, the thought occurred to me that there really was no better place than this – to which Maharaj’s teaching that “you are not your body” could have brought me. A feeling of peace and calm pervaded the place, as a gentle breeze floated up from the sea.

Seated near the *samadhi* was an old man. I struck up a conversation with him and learned that he had, on several

occasions, sat in the *satsangs* of Maharaj. I asked whether he was aware if there were any talks of Maharaj that had not been published so far, as there must have been a number of recordings made during those years. He answered that he had no clue, but there was one person, called Mullarpattan, who might know something about it. Unfortunately, he did not have any address or contact number of this person. So I left it at that, but with the thought that if there were more tapes, it would be a great idea to bring them out in the form of a book.

The following Sunday, I was waiting below Ramesh Balsekar's (a disciple of Maharaj) apartment before the start of the morning *satsangs* at his residence. It was there that I met Maria Jory. We spoke casually and she asked me what I had been up to of late. I mentioned that I had recently visited the *samadhi* of Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj's guru, and now I was looking for a person by the name of Mullarpattan. I can still recall the surprised look on Maria's face as I uttered that name. She exclaimed that she was, quite coincidentally, meeting him that very evening! She told me that Mullarpattan had been Maharaj's translator for the longest period of time.

She invited me to come along with her to meet Mullarpattan that evening. We were greeted by a gracious, hospitable, and a very vibrant, ninety-one year-old man. Without much ado, Maria and I asked him if there were any tapes that had not yet been transcribed into a book, as they could be of enormous value

for those interested in Maharaj's teachings. He kept reiterating that Maharaj used to say to "forget all books and go within."

On a subsequent visit, we were pleasantly surprised when he handed us a box of ten tapes. These tapes, later transcribed by Maria, form the book you now hold in your hands.

My heartfelt thanks go to Mullarpattan for presenting and entrusting us with this treasure of Maharaj's talks that had been lying forgotten for so long. This now gives seekers a rare opportunity to get a further taste of Maharaj's teachings. To Maria, for all the hard work she has put in and for her patience with this project. To Chaitan and Neela Balsekar, for their help in translating the Marathi spoken by Nisargadatta Maharaj. And especially to Gary Roba, for his invaluable contribution in patiently going through the teaching, over and over again, with a fine toothcomb and ironing out the rough edges.

I always thought of Maharaj's teachings as golden arrows going straight into the heart. When I mentioned this to a friend, he said, "Really? It was more like Maharaj was pumping bullets into me!"

It is our hope that this book impacts you in some way or another.

– Gautam Sachdeva

May 2007

What is That which you are searching for?

Maharaj: There is no sense of personality at all when you become the *Ishwara* principle. Have no concern about losing your personality by listening to this knowledge, as personality has always been illusory. In order to even understand me the sense of personality must be absent. You *are* the knowledge and you don't have any shape or form whatsoever. You are impersonal. You are comprehensive. You are the unmanifest, the Universal Consciousness. What would happen if you went in search of that Consciousness? The seeker would disappear in the search, because the "I Amness" is all there is.

Visitor: I have a question here.

M: Do not focus on your question. Focus on what I am saying. Don't say anything, just listen.

V: I am able to appreciate listening to you, therefore I am speaking.

M: Just leave the question, be strong.

V: You speak very harshly... it hurts me.

M: Just leave that. Do not even look in that direction, just focus on what I am telling you.

V: There was a split between what was there before the question and what came after.

M: Look at what was there before the question came up. Do not speak about what came after the question.

V: But I do not know who I am, that is my reality.

M: As long as you are coming here, your search is not over. You are here because the search has not ended. Try to find out why. What is That which you are searching for? There is nothing there, only the process of seeking.

You might be anybody in this world, even *Brahma* or *Vishnu*, but you do not have the power to do anything. Your life is your existence. It is made up of the five elements and it is dependent only on these five elements.

Consciousness is an orphan without parents or source. It has no need of anyone. What you understand of the objective world is all duality. Your objective world is

composed of relationships. You have to depend all the time on someone else – friend, husband, wife, etc. In the objective world there is only dependence, whereas in your true state there is always independence. Existence without identity, which is your true nature, is independent. The time is half-past eleven at present, it cannot be twelve now. It will be twelve half an hour later. We don't have any control over it; the time has to pass. That means you are always dependent on something. You cannot live independently of time, space, or the elements. Everyone is helpless. Only Consciousness is independent.

The state of bliss or joy is *Poornabrahman* or *Nirvana*. One who does not need anybody for entertainment is *niranjan*. The ever-present is *nitya*. That state never changes at all. As long as you are conscious of your body and its needs, you cannot be totally independent. Consciousness does not need light and it does not need darkness. It does not need rest. It is the Truth and there is no change in it.

When I was young, I had the power to squeeze a piece of metal and pull it back into shape. Now I am old and require help from somebody to move around. Where has the power gone? It has not remained with me at all.

All of these things in the objective world are inseparable from their attributes. An attribute by its very nature depends upon something. That knowledge, “I Am,” is also an attribute.

Therefore, the “I Amness,” one way or another, also has to depend on something.

V: What is the concept of maya (illusion)?

M: The concept of *maya* comes from the “I Amness.” The existence of *maya* and the world around you only arises when you are conscious of yourself. This is a state of darkness and ignorance, which is far from that of knowledge. *Maya* does not exist within the state of knowledge.

V: What is Atma Prem (Self-love)?

M: *Atma Prem* is also due to the “I Amness.” If you start with *Atma Prem*, it can distract you and all you will see is *maya*, which is a state of ignorance. If you reach a state of knowledge, then even this *Atma Prem* will be non-existent. The word *maya* has a different meaning here. What you are calling love is itself *maya*. Love is playing many roles. All these houses, etc. have been created out of *maya*. Love or *maya* has set up the whole of Bombay. Love is taking many shapes; *mula-maya* has created *Vishnu* and *Shankara*, but what was there before that? *Maya* is the culprit. Man has entangled himself in this concept and illusion of love, and because of it gets trapped in the cycle of life and death. The feeling of love is a great mistake if one gets entangled in it. There is love for so many things. The minute the illusion is created, the entanglement begins. By imagining male and female,

you got entangled in that illusion.

“You are the Paramatma.” This is what my Guru told me when he was going into *Mahasamadhi*. His words had so much force that they were implanted and embedded in me, and I became That. There was so much power and force behind his utterances that whatever he said came true.

V: Were you constantly doing the sacred mantra, which your Guru had given you?

M: I was not doing it. I was constantly listening to it. The power of the *mantra* depends upon the intensity of the faith you have.

V: Is there any cause for this faith?

M: Yes, there is a primary cause, the big cause, which is the knowledge “I Am.” This is the cause behind the faith. The ‘Awareness of my Being’ happened automatically. It just happens. The sprouting of this knowledge “I Am” is prior to the formation of the five elements. The Ultimate Consciousness, the Absolute, is not even aware of Itself or of any happening. Consciousness was One, but two people of different sexes were created and the love between them created this world. This sound and this awareness are not one, but two. Consciousness is just a speck, and this illusion has come out of it.

Love is divided into two sexes and the world has grown out of this, but as soon as realization happens this separation disappears. When you have the realization that ‘You are’, that all is the play of *Shiva Shakti*, then you will know that this is all an illusion, and you will be free of grief as well as joy. Self-realization is *Shivadatta*. The moment you reach that stage you will not have these feelings of happiness, sorrow and suffering. When you reach the state of Self-knowledge, there will be peace and quiet. Such knowledge of the Self is known as *Shivadatta*. If you realize that this is all an illusion, then there is no need for Self-realization.

V: Is there no love with Self-realization?

M: It is beyond that. Love is a worldly state. The very feeling of Self-realization will not arrive until you understand what you are. If you understand the answer then this question about Self-realization will not arise. *Ananda*, the pleasure and bliss of Consciousness, will arise in you like an atomic explosion, and you will see how the whole wide world is a manifestation of That. *Chinmayananda* means ‘speck of bliss’. *Swami* means ‘the spontaneous Awareness of my Being’. Through the “I Amness,” Swami Chinmayananda has created a big ashram that many people visit. All the gods are coming and going in this Consciousness. Merely the fact that ‘You are’ is *Swami*, which is pure honey, the proof of the Absolute. It is always with you and has come all by itself spontaneously, without asking. That is *Swami*.

V: And all the other things, what is all that about?

M: Why worry about that? Let it be there. Worry about the “I Amness” and forget about the rest. What the *Swamis* are doing or what they say is immaterial. If you have come to the Source, why do you want to go back again to the banks of the river?

Knowledge of your real identity

Maharaj: When the “I Amness” appears spontaneously, like a bolt of lightning, the illusion of Self-love is broken into five basic elements: space, air, earth, fire and water. But this Self-love, the “I Am,” manifests as *Sattva Guna* to the one who accepts this as a natural process. When it is used for achieving something in the world, it is referred to as *Rajas Guna*. When it is used to take credit for achievements, it is referred to as *Tamas Guna*. All the elements merge into one, and through the earth they create the grass and the grain. Grass is the fodder for the animals that give us milk. Grain is the food of human beings, in which the subtlest principle is already embedded. When it is assimilated in the body, it becomes the ‘food-body’. This food-body is formed out of the milk and the grains that we eat. When the vital force is there, the “I Amness” appears. “I Amness” is the *sattva* quality, which is from the word *sat* – to be. The “I Amness,” which

appears in a fraction of a second, is due to the food-body.

When an individual soul (*jiva*) is born, it becomes aware of its parents and then becomes aware of its pasture, grazing ground, and food. Shapes are formed according to their parent forms. A human being gives birth to a human being, animals give birth to animals, and snakes and worms are created from the lowest forms of life. Four-legged creatures and human beings are created from a higher life force. Self-love is unique to human beings. Everything is created from the 'seed'. When the parent form is mature, the seed is formed and the photo or form of the parent is stamped in the seed. Each seed creates an individual that is different from the others. The seed of one member of a family is quite different from that of his brother. The photograph in the seed is taken in a fraction of a second and the new creation is born according to the traditional form. Some species, like goats, are born after three months. Human beings are born after nine months.

All living beings, as well as every shape and form, are created from the merging of the five elements with the essence of the earth. There are four ways in which creation takes place. That which is created from the air, like bacteria and various insects, is referred to as *Udhvaja*. That which is born from water and the sweat of the body, like worms, etc. is referred to as *Svedaja*. That which is born from eggs, like

snakes, fish, and birds, is referred to as *Undeja*. Animals and human beings, which have their own ways of procreating, are born from the earth element; this is referred to as *Jaraja*. Along with the five elements, a quality of the universe that is called destiny or *prarabdha* also comes into the formation. The process of birth does not arise through any deliberate action; it happens spontaneously. All actions are predetermined.

With so much ‘mixing’ going on now, I predict that all races will eventually blend together. Caste and creed will become meaningless and it will be impossible to identify a pure Indian or a pure European. The entire pattern of the human race will change. The divisions into Hindu, Muslim, or Christian will cease to exist. Male and female will be the only remaining categories.

As long as the identification with the body and the ego remains, you cannot be free. You will still just be following the same conventional pattern of behaviour as the rest of the world. But what is the genuine behaviour of your true *dharma*? With what identity are you asking me these questions? Your knowledge is the product of your perceived identity, but what knowledge do you have of your real identity? First understand that, before asking further questions.

What is it that you want most? What is it that you are running after? You love your body, and crave the things that give it pleasure. You feel egotistical pride for your

achievements. But once you have found your real identity, that which ‘You are’, you will be stabilized in that Awareness. You will be free of greed, attachment, and pride. The thing which attracts you most of all is your “I Amness.” You want to retain that “I Amness.” You want to ‘Be’. This “I Am” is what you truly love the most. You want to be alive.

Visitor: So, does the real freedom lie in being able to find out who you are?

M: When you discover that Self which has no colour, image, or design, you will no longer require freedom or be conditioned by freedom. You will be beyond freedom.

What is *yoga*? *Yoga* is uniting, two things joining together – that is *yoga*. The whole population is a result of *yoga*. One party mixing or joining together with the other produces offspring with the identity of both. Why do you seek *yoga*? *Yoga* means the bridge, the link, or the connection. Why are you seeking this connection? You have to find out why it has occurred. *Yoga* was not required prior to the appearance of the bridge. You must find out what your state was prior to the bridge. Whatever the principle or the state was before this linking, before the existence of the bridge, was the perfect state. Because the bridge has appeared you feel separated from your true Self, and you are trying to become reunited; that is *yoga*. Because of this, you have become the servant of your desires.

The method that the *yogis* practice is breath control. By controlling their breath, they are able to enter a state of *samadhi*. Because their desires have been suppressed for a time, they presume that they have attained Self-realization. Before meeting my Guru I had a liking for these things. Once, a great *yogi* came to visit. After controlling his breath, he'd allow a car or even a truck to run over him. This was the miraculous power that he could exhibit. But that was the scope of his *yogic* studies – control the breath, perform miracles and exhibit them. Those people who go into *samadhi* by holding their breath have only learned a skill. They do not have the knowledge, and they have not transcended the knowledge. With the acrobatics of breath they may temporarily achieve certain powers, but that is not real union with the Source. Knowledge of the Self (*jnana*) is required. They have not achieved Ultimate Unity with the Absolute.