

CONVERSATIONS WITH RAJ

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QUESTION: In going about my day to day activities, I lose an awareness of my higher self and easily get stuck in this world. How may I better stay connected?

RAJ: First of all, do not fret yourself about losing your centeredness. It is bound to happen, and so you must have the greatest patience with yourself and understand that at no time is self-criticism appropriate. It is not called for.

Your most valuable aid at this point is to take a specific amount of time, daily, to sit down and become centered through whatever means works for you. Meditation is an excellent way. The point is that the regularity of becoming centered increases your familiarity with what it feels like to be centered. Initially it is the unfamiliarity with it that makes it easy to slip out and find it difficult to move back. So, you literally need to "log hours" in that centered place, even if it is only ten or twenty minutes at a time.

You will find, as a result of the constant daily reminder of what it feels like to be centered, to be at peace at an experiential level, that just generally speaking you will not become as significantly hooked by the day's events. Also, as time goes on, you will rather easily be able to move toward your Center, right in the middle of your daily activities, when you discover that you have become hooked by them. So, it is a simple matter, here—not complex. It is a matter of increasing your familiarity with what it feels like to be centered.

QUESTION: I've been thinking a lot about creativity lately, the source of it—or, more personally, my source of it. I'm wondering just how important it is for me, and how I can better tap into it?

RAJ: It is so important to you that it constitutes the very substance of your Being. Being is the Movement that constitutes Creation. Your Individuality literally is the Presence of the Movement that constitutes Creation.

Now, this means something far different from a puny little ego consciousness which can, by virtue of its acquired skill, become creative in the world's terms. It means that entirely separate and apart from your present concepts of creativity, your very Being—the very spark or essential conscious experience of being, of existing—is, Itself, the fire of Creation. This creativity is not something you need to exercise, because it is what constitutes your very Presence. It is not something you need to develop, because It is eternally perfect in Its Movement.

At this point in time, you can best consider it as your Self, which your present limited sense of self must learn to flow with, learn to be sensitive to, pay attention to, and cooperate with. It only seems as though there is a separate "you" that must flow with your essential Self because the

finite ego or conceptual structures rather definitely imply that you are a "personality" that exists in the middle of creation, and are just some small part of it.

As long as there is this tiny, separated sense of oneself, the movement into the fuller awareness of Who and What You Are as the very Movement of Creation, Itself, must appear as a willingness to cooperate with and flow with That Which You Are. This is all right. There literally is no other way to do it from where you find yourself standing. Your process of becoming still enough to connect with your Self is an essential part of this sensing into and flowing with your Being, so that you might have the chance to experience what your Being is, as opposed to what your concepts define you as.

As you let go of your private sense of control over your environment and your life, and as you let go of it knowing that you are allowing yourself into the more fundamental Orderliness of your Being, you are, in fact, allowing yourself into that Movement of What you Are, which constitutes Creation. Thus, your experience begins to change. Your world begins to reconfigure, so to speak, and manifest back to you greater harmony. It begins to more efficiently identify your fulfillment.

You see, the Universe—every aspect of your conscious experience—is the visibility and tangibility of your Being, which is the very Presence of the Life-Principle, or God. Therefore, when there is no tiny, little sense of self attempting to work its way through its existence and battling with an apparently opposing environment, you are no longer inserting into the universal Harmony of your Being a conflicted, negatively-charged oppositional "energy system"—vibes, if you will. So, the natural, eternal Creativity of your Being, in Its absolute perfection and therefore Harmony, begins to be what you experience.

The Creativeness that constitutes your Being is already functioning Totally, and with absolute perfection. So, again, it is not a skill for you to develop. It is not a personal possession, which you have and someone else doesn't, or which exists somewhere else for You to obtain. So, you need feel no sense of responsibility for creating your Creativity! You need only relax enough to discover It already functioning in Its completeness.

Now, it is because What you are allowing yourself into is the very Movement of Creation that learning to flow with your Being, and learning to live your life out from the Peace of your Being, is never boring. It is Peace, immovable stability, out of which universal Creation arises. They are inseparable. So, you need never worry that in learning to be centered, and in allowing yourself into the unconflicted experience of your Being, that you will be moving into a vagueness, a nothingness, a dullness, a monotonousness.

You know that you are unique! You know you are indisputably you. And the motivation you feel to have your Individuality fulfilled is the inviolable connectedness you have with the Creativity of your Being. The ego picks up on that feeling and tries to be creative, but its creativeness is always competitive. It is always a matter of outdoing, or being more original than another. The attempts are always fraught with anxiety, the fear of not succeeding, because that which will

prove that the ego sense of individuality truly is individual is to be significantly better than anyone else—else one is not fulfilling his potential. So, creativity becomes reduced to struggle. Indeed, that is all that can be experienced from that standpoint.

Creativity, again, arises out of Peace, and It is arising out of the Peace of your Being perfectly, at this instant. This is why, in your willingness to stop striving, and achieving, and competing, and winning, and allowing yourself to become centered and at peace within yourself, that you are putting yourself in the position of consciously discovering and experiencing this eternal Creativity of Your Being which constitutes your Being.

As with all things, you must allow That Which You Are to be What It Is, without introducing the static of your finite self-concept and its attempts to achieve, which distort your conscious experience of the Process of Creation which you already Are.

Now, that will give you something to think about.

QUESTION: I even feel the need to achieve peace and centeredness, and you say to allow myself and I don't see a distinction between those two.

RAJ: the feeling of needing to be centered is a desire you are experiencing. That desire is being consciously experienced because to some degree you are not totally unconscious of the essential Nature or Peace of your Being. The way for that desire to be fulfilled is to not try to be at Peace, but to allow yourself to relax. There is a fine distinction here. To whatever degree you work at relaxing, you will not succeed. And yet, there must be an intent to not be busy, an intent to relax.

One achieves this apparent goal by letting go of the goal and not introducing any other goal or activity in the process. As I said, it is a fine distinction. One must not will to be quiet. One must be willing to be quiet again, another way of expressing the fine distinction.

QUESTION: I feel as if I am willing. But I'm also trying to will it by trying to alter aspects of my life that will allow me more time for peace or centeredness.

RAJ: That is all right. You have to start where you are. If reorganizing your activities is necessary so that there is time to sit down without interruption, then do that. But, understand where the impetus is coming from for doing it. The motivation is coming from a desire, a desire to be centered. It is a very simple fact that the ego did not set that goal for you. It insists on your being in a state of conflict. Your desire to take time to be quiet and become centered is, indeed, emerging from the deeper levels of your Being. Your actions in organizing or restructuring your time are getting their impetus from the level of your Being, and this is exactly as it should be. Your actions, ultimately, will be the expression of what you are gleaning from the level of your Being.

If a large number of your peers were gathering daily to meditate because it was the latest fad, and you did not want to be left out, and you reorganized your time so that you could be "in" with your friends, then your actions would be arising from the level of your ego. Your Being, your

heart, your deepest levels of sensing would play no part in it, and that is the fundamental difference here.

This is not the way you are doing it. In fact, you do not care whether anyone knows you are doing it or not. You are doing it for you. So, indeed, you are acting "in the world" in terms of structuring your time, but that which is motivating the action is arising from a significant connectedness with your Self. Your apparent expression of will, by restructuring your day, is technically an example of your willingness to flow with your deeper levels of Knowing. Whereas your restructuring of your day so that you would be "in" with your friends would be pure willfulness, and would not constitute a willingness at all in the way I have been using that word.

Do not frustrate yourself or quibble over the carrying out of goals in your world when those goals have been established at a level other than your ego, because when you are behaving and acting out from your deepest levels of Knowing, then you are in harmony with your Being, and that is what it's all about.

QUESTION: I think it's my day to day activity that draws me away from my awareness of my willingness. I keep forgetting.

RAJ: You will always have day to day activities. It is not the activities, which pull you out, but the well-established habit of perceiving and responding to your day from the level of intellectual concepts, rather than from the level of your Being. Again, it is not life, which pulls you off center. It is the vantage point you are choosing to experience life from, which pulls you off center.

If you are going to choose to experience your day to day activities from the level of your ego reactions—from the level of your mental conditioning, and from the level of your memory—then you will be off center, because that vantage point is off center. It does not pay any attention whatsoever, to what is emerging from the deeper levels of your Being.

You either have the option to experience life—meaning day to day activities—from the reactive level of the ego, or the centered Place of your Being. What pulls you off center is simply your habit which, up until now, you have never thought to challenge. You did not know you had an option. Now you are challenging it, and succeeding, and then losing your success temporarily when you slip back into the habit. But, each time the slippage occurs, you have gained a little more validation of the actual reality of the centered Place. As you move along, the manner in which you slip out of It will become more and more apparent. It will become easier to recognize when you are beginning to slip, and you will not slip as far. The process of slipping back and forth will be educational and will contribute to your more skillfully remaining centered, no matter what is happening in your daily experience.

Do not blame life. Do not blame your daily experience. It is the lack of skill within yourself, and the deeply ingrained habit of living your life from the reactive ego level that is the culprit. Once you grasp this and remember it, you will stop blaming circumstances, people, activities, your world, for your being off center. Because you will know where the slip actually occurs—that it is

within you—you will be able to immediately take responsibility for it and do what you know needs to be done in order to move back to your Center.

As I mentioned earlier, when you move into your Center and you are experiencing your Peace, you are in the presence of the Creativity of your Being. You are not introducing what we will call "negative vibes," conflicted energy patterns. Your world, which seemed to have uncentering dynamics to it, will reconfigure, and the harmonious dynamic of the Creativity of your Being is what will replace what appeared in your world to be uncentering.

QUESTION: I have a question about love, and how I understand unconditional love to be the only real love. Yet, I still find myself looking or longing for a mate. To me that is contradictory, yet the desire is there. I'm wondering if I'm missing something in there.

RAJ: The simple fact is, you must have a proving ground for unconditional love. You must have a place to practice it, a laboratory, as it were, for you to uncover the subtle ways in which your ego attempts to defeat the practice of unconditional love. This uncovering process, this refining process is weak when you are simply relating in a social sense with society.

A relationship with one individual, a committed relationship, provides the fire—the heat, as it were that is sufficient to separate the fact from the illusion, the dross from the gold, the belief structures from the Reality within you.

It is too easy not to have the level of commitment necessary for the fullness of the meaning of unconditional love to come to view when you are just functioning in society. It is too easy to just not be around the circumstances, which will clearly uncover the subtle means you have for defeating your ability to express it. It is the level of commitment that is brought to a relationship that provides the element necessary for the disrobing of your capacity for unconditional love and the discarding of the belief structures that block it. So, there is no inconsistency in your desire for a mate, for a companion in life.

The simple fact is that at this moment it would be impossible for you to connect with everyone with unconditional love, because it constitutes such a connectedness that there is no other word to describe it than Oneness. There is nothing uninvolved about unconditional love, and at this point its consistent expression is difficult enough with just one person, although you may do your best to express it everywhere.

Stay with your desire. Do not invalidate it or squelch it because it seems inconsistent. It is appropriate for there to be someone with whom you can love unconditionally in a committed, ongoing way.

QUESTION: I have been guided to become a counselor. I have taken a lot of psychology and sociology classes, but I don't have a specific counseling degree. I feel uncomfortable when people ask if I have a counseling degree. How can I feel more at ease with that?

RAJ: What any counselor who is worth his salt is doing, is loving, and literally being willing to acknowledge the divinity or Worth, the inherent Value, of the individual coming to him, who is

having difficulty seeing it for himself. A license cannot actually cause one to be able to love. So, at the bottom line, the license is irrelevant, and the expression of love is what matters.

Do not labor under the misconception that somehow you are lacking something essential by not having that license. Do not hesitate to declare, in a straightforward manner, the fact that you are not licensed, but that you have been able to help others, and it is your intent to continue to do so, whether you have a license or not.

It is an artificial problem—not really a problem unless you are allowing a mind-set to govern your thinking that says you need that piece of paper to qualify you. It really is not as big a problem for you as you are thinking it might be. Just remember that there is never a valid enough reason for withholding the recognition of the value and worth of any of your fellow men or women. And that to whatever degree you do withhold it, for whatever reason, you are blocking your Self in your ability to be the presence of that recognition, which is truly your function, whether you are doing counseling or not.

QUESTION: My husband and I are having trouble in our marriage. It seems to be going downhill, like we are growing apart. It's really depressing for me. I don't know how to turn it around, or whether it's appropriate for me to try.

RAJ: I want to assure you, first of all, that the relationship is salvageable. In fact, the very things, which drew you together in the first place, are still present and active in both of you. It is just that over the years, a pattern of behavior, and a structure of concepts have developed, which are getting more of your attention than the energy of the relationship. You are paying more attention to what you think than what you feel.

Along with these things you are thinking, there are emotional reactions, which you are miscalling feelings. They are actually reactions. Emotional reactions are ego structures, whereas feelings, in the sense that I am using them, are constituted of Soul sensing—sensing with your Soul. Again, emotional reactions are what you could call the sensing that is done by the ego, and feelings are the sensing that is done by your Soul.

Now, you can see, on this basis, that you have been binding yourself by the ego and its reactions. This means that what is needed in order to bring about a turnaround in the relationship, is for you to take the time to, again begin to sense into your Soul, and through your Soul sensing, which has never gone anywhere, begin to be aware of your husband. Indeed, the same applies in the other direction. However, I do want you to be aware that you are the key factor here, and that your insistence upon setting aside your ego, even for short periods of time during the day, and literally paying attention to what your Soul is saying, will contribute significantly to a change in the environment of your home and your relationship.

It is also important for you to recognize that it is a level of doubt in you, rather than a level of doubt in your husband, which has allowed this situation to develop. This is not a criticism or a judgment. If you will stop and think about it, you will realize that there came a point when you stopped relating to him from your Soul and began to do a lot of thinking, coming to conclusions

that were based upon that thinking rather than letting your conclusions arise from what you Knew in your Soul.

The ego always introduces conflict. It thrives on conflict. You cannot expect to be able to look at anything, not even a relationship, through the lens of the ego without seeing a source of conflict. The ego is incapable of seeing Peace. It is incapable of seeing Harmony, unless that peace and harmony is contributing to some greater source of conflict. In other words, the ego is always self-seeking, and it will use even the positive factors in your life if it will serve its conflicted, distorted goals.

Now, you have a choice! You have two vantage points from which to engage in this relationship—or, indeed, engage with any aspect of your world and life—and these two vantage points are your ego and your Soul (your Being, your heart).

From the level of your heart, the level of your Soul, all you will be able to see is what is Real. It is incapable of acknowledging conflict. It is only capable of seeing that which is like It. So, when you are looking through your Love, when you are looking with your Soul, that is what you will see in others. You will see that which is truly lovable, and that which is truly worthwhile. Even if that other one is coming from an ego level, your choice to view him through the lens of Love, and through your Soul, will constitute a refusal on your part to join with him in his ego vantage point, and thus you will not be strengthening it.

On the other hand, that which you are seeing in him that is lovable, and which is of value, will constitute a joining with him at the level of his Soul, and strengthening it, thus making it easier for him to release his ego perceptions and dare to join you at the deeper levels of your Being.

It is quite possible, and you have the freedom, to stand at either vantage point. There is no judgment on you for standing at either one. But, understand that there will always be an experience of conflict when you are standing and observing from the vantage point of the ego. It is inherent in the ego sense. There is no other way for things to be observed. That is not a punishment. It is simply the way the ego functions.

On the other hand, when you view things from the standpoint of your Soul, you do not get praise from some external judge. Because, from the vantage point of your Soul, you are able to see and feel that which is Real, and because that which is Real is unconflicted—because It is the expression of God—then there is Joy. There is the absence of pain and conflict. There is peace when Reality is viewed from where It can be seen without distortion.

Therefore, there is no need for you to feel guilty. There is no need for you to judge yourself for having gotten caught up in the ego's vantage point, where it has looked like everything is unfulfilling. There can be no penalty for it, other than the discomfort one can't help but feel when he or she is not seeing Reality clearly. Again, that is not a punishment, but an inherent part of viewing things through distorted lenses—and the ego is a distorted sense of Life.

If the ego is only capable of presenting lies, distortions of Reality, then it behooves you to be willing to set it aside and not validate the way things look from its standpoint. And, it behooves you to take the time to rekindle your conscious awareness of that which is of value in your relationship, that which is of value in you, and that which is of value in your husband.

This may seem like a tall order, but it only seems that way from the ego's standpoint. It is important for you to understand that the ego's sense of self has no actual power. Its power is the power of suggestion only, just like a hypnotist. It cannot enforce itself. It cannot control. It can only suggest that you might control yourself in such and such a way. Therefore, it does not have any means of keeping you from dishonoring it and setting it aside, other than some threats, which it cannot back up or enforce.

There is nothing actually standing in the way of literally changing your vantage point. And, I will tell you this. In being willing to invalidate all that the ego sees and interprets incorrectly, and shifting to an awareness of what your Soul is saying, and what your Soul is able to see of the Soul that constitutes your husband, you are moving into the Place of your Power.

When you are willing to validate what your Soul sees, love is spontaneously present, and love is transformational. It is healing. It does wipe away the tears. It does soften the heart. It does allow you to be the Presence, which feels good to those around you—including your husband.

Although he may lag behind you and not respond to you immediately, because he is not sure what is happening, at some level of his Being he will be fully aware of your genuineness and will feel the love. From that level he will begin to respond to you, and his trust will increase, and things will mellow out.

Understand that it has become a habit with you to react, instead of act out from your Soul, and it will be easy for you to again get caught up in the habit of reacting while you are doing your best to insist upon coming from your Soul. When this happens, do not further react and kick yourself around. Notice that it has happened, but do not invest it with a lot of energy, and quietly get back to the business of being in touch with your Soul.

If you and your husband were truly at opposite ends of the stick, if your paths were not paralleling each other, if there was no active energy or relationship between you, I would be telling you entirely different things. But, the fact is that the love is there. The faith in each other is still there. What it takes to have a meaningful, committed relationship is still there. It is present and it is alive. But, it is not discernible from the level of the ego reactions. It is only observable from your Soul.

So, you see, the literal resolution of this problem lies in your deciding to once again pay attention to your Soul, and to honor what It sees more than you honor what the ego sees.

Again, the ego is a liar! It is not trustworthy. Its information is always distorted, and therefore invalid. So, there is never a justifiable reason for honoring it, except that it seems to be able to explain its biased viewpoint in a way that makes sense.

You can always tell if you are hooked by the ego if you are experiencing conflict within yourself. When you realize that the very presence of that conflict is what feeds the continued existence of the ego, it will become apparent to you that you must do everything possible to not supply that kind of energy—that it is not constructive, in terms of your spiritual growth, to validate and maintain a state of inner conflict.

As this begins to become really clear to you, you will see that the battle, the war that goes on when you are trying to reduce the conflict on the basis that the conflict is real, is all a lie, is all an artificial structure based upon a suggestion, and that the simple necessity is to not validate it and not pursue its "righteous conclusion." Rather, connect again with your very Soul. Then view everything from there, honoring without reservation the truth that you see.

I have spent more time talking about the ego and the way it works than I have about your Soul. But, you are familiar with what your Soul sees, and you are familiar with feeling It. You are not as familiar with the way the ego hooks you and causes you to believe its whole dramatic explanation. That is why I have spent more time talking about it.

Again, the solution is simple. It has to do with which of two vantage points you are going to choose to look at your world and your relationship from. Those are the only two choices you have, ever, no matter what it is you are looking at, and the resolution of any dissonance, any inharmony, will always come as a result of shifting from the ego's viewpoint to the eternal vantage point of your Soul.

QUESTION: I'm a registered nurse, and I work in intensive care units. From time to time I really resist going into the hospital and doing the things I do as a nurse. Lately it's been very difficult to go in to work and deal with the chaos, the stress, the frustration level, doing the many little things that nurses do, and that I've done millions of times. What may I do to increase my income, and/or what area of career am I forgetting to look at as a lucrative possibility?

RAJ: The one thing that you are overlooking is that love is not ethereal or nebulous. It is not just a warm cloaking presence. It is real, and its reality is expressed in actions, words, deeds. You are also overlooking the fact that it is in the midst of crisis that love is needed. It is not needed in the presence of harmony and peace. It is there, but it is not needed.

For the sake of perspective, your questions could easily be looked at as the repetitive cry of ignorant human beings. It is very seldom that people speak with me when they are not in the middle of a crisis. And their questions always express their ignorance. If I were coming from an ego place, I could become bored with being the Presence of the Answer that is needed, so that the crisis can be released and moved out of. Yet, this is exactly where the love is needed. This is exactly where the light is needed. It is at the point of crisis, it is at the point of ignorance, it is at the point of lack that the fulfillment is needed. So, this is where I work. This is where you work, because you have that love to give, no matter how repetitive, no matter how mundane, no matter how nitty-gritty it seems to be at times.

Go to a place where harmony is, and you will not find fulfillment there for you, because you have the ability to give that which isn't needed there. You have the ability to give where love is needed. Every bed pan you have ever rinsed out was an act of love. Every sponge bath you have given was literally the presence of divine love meeting the human need right where that need was being felt.

Nurses are not called angels of mercy for no reason! They are the ones who are able to be present in the state of great lack on someone's part to feel competent, to feel confident, and to feel their wholeness—a very diminishing and humiliating place for anyone to be. Yet, their need is being met. Care is there. And, again, as I mentioned earlier, in the sharing of your love, you are joining with another at the level of their capacity to love, and they experience that as that which gives hope, that, which lifts their spirits.

Do be careful not to look at what you are doing with your eyes only, and with your intellect only. What you do is meaningful far beyond words, far beyond what it even looks like you are doing. If you will get back in touch with your love for your fellow man, and you let that flow again, I can assure you that if there is any appropriate change in your job, in the particular form of your work, it will unfold with great harmony, because you are flowing with your love. But, if you change jobs on the basis of the tiredness with the routine and do not get in touch with your love, you will move into another job that you will see only as routine, and the value that is You will not be available for that job either.

You must be the presence of Love. Why? Because Love is the substance of your Individuality. You do not have to assume that you will always be expressing this Love in the particular form that you are presently, but the form will not matter. It will fluctuate and change as it fulfills purpose if you are willing to not divorce yourself from remembering What You Are and why you are doing what you are doing.

It is very easy, I know, to get caught up in the way everyone around you sees their work, but your work is a divine activity. It is a holy activity. To the degree that you remember that—and I mean remember it in the sense of connecting with your feeling of it again—you will be one of those nurses who inspires the nurses who are down in the dumps, or who are feeling resistant to going into work in the morning as though the expression of love was a burden, rather than that which frees their Soul to soar into expression of healing.

Again, do not assume that getting in touch with your Love again will trap you forever in what you are doing. It will actually allow any changes that need to be made to occur with more ease. Please think about these things.
