

Kiran

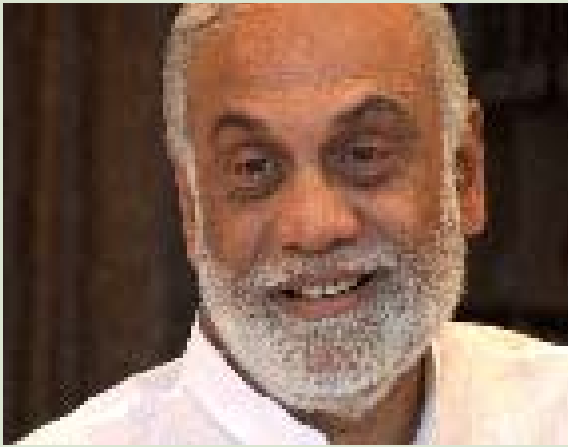


Enlightenment is not something that you can search for. When all searching ends, when you just stop, when you're still, then something opens up from inside. The search is from the mind, and awakening, the clarity that you see, the inner state of awakening, is when the mind ceases.

KIRAN

Sit with yourself. You'll find it inside,
not somewhere outside.

Kiran



Kiran

Kiran was born in 1941, he studied Hindu philosophy at the Sanskrit College in Thane. In 1967 he became a disciple of Osho while pursuing the life of an industrialist and a householder. Following Osho's 1981 departure from India for the United States, Kiran sought out a number of other *gurus*. The one who influenced him most was U.G. Krishnamurti. In 1993 he began to teach. He left his body in March 2006, aged sixty-five.

This interview with Kiran was conducted in 2004. It was our first and only meeting. He sat relaxed on a sofa swinging from the ceiling in a large airy living room. Some of his Indian disciples were present. When asked about his biography, Kiran immediately replied: 'I have no biography.' He felt very much with himself. Kiran was a modern spiritual teacher, a businessman, householder and family man.

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Are there any qualifications for enlightenment? Is sadhana (spiritual practice) necessary? If yes, what form do you advise?

Qualifications, what qualifications? You need to be alive, that's all. Most of the time we are not, we are so dead. We are so connected to the past. The first requirement to be awakened, to be enlightened, is to be alive like a flower, alive like a bird, alive like a child. Look at the child. Can you do it? How can you be alive unless you are just totally free from that whole dead past, unless you are available to Now, this very moment? If you connect here then you are alive. But we do not connect here, we connect to the past. We see the present through the past and dream

about the future. To be alive means to be available now. To be alive means to be bubbling with life inside, with all your problems, with a dance inside, with a song inside, with all your being. Be spontaneous. This is the qualification.

Is there any *sadhana*? Is there any path? There is no path. The path is created by the mind. It's like flying into the sky. It's an open sky, free sky, you just have to open your wings and take a jump. When you fly into the sky there is no path. There is no *sadhana* that you do. Do it, it's your inborn gift. To be enlightened is not something based on some *sadhana*. *Sadhana* is meant to direct the mind, you take the journey through the mind. The mind has to get so tired that at a certain point it drops dead. Real *sadhana* is to make you so tired, physically and mentally, that you realise that you have done so many things to reach nowhere. That is the point where you start questioning the search itself. There is nothing that takes you there because there is nothing there. Then begins the journey which starts from stopping. The outer journey begins when you start walking, but the inner journey, the *sadhana*, begins when you stop. There is no movement. Sit silently and do nothing. You are just doing *sadhana*.

Another path which is attractive to the mind is *yoga*, the path of the seeker. There you are doing something so that slowly, slowly, this mind acquires a lot of power, and at a certain point it explodes. But when it explodes it is an explosion of power, so it becomes more powerful. Some *yogis* (practitioners of *yoga*) have a lot of powers, *siddhis*, a very, very strong ego and very strong mental powers. They can control people, they can mesmerise, they can show so many miracles, *chamatkar*, and this is an attraction for the mind. Most of the people attracted into the path of *sadhana* are thinking that enlightenment will happen there. They reach a certain level of *siddhis* and they misunderstand that this is a part of enlightenment. Enlightenment is to reach the state of a *buddha* (awakened one), of order and total understanding, a total awakening, not the state of the *yogi* with *siddhis*. My question is: are you searching for power or are you searching for peace? Really we all search for peace.

If you really understand the path of peace, it's possible to relax. Accept yourself as you are. For the last ten years I have been sharing this

with people. Accept where you are and accept what you have. Acceptance of yourself the way you are finishes all spiritual journeys and all *sadhana*. You are doing this *sadhana* because you are not happy with yourself, you are not accepting yourself as you are. You want to become somebody, you want to reach somewhere, you want to achieve something. You want to become like a *buddha*, like something you have created as a goal, so you take a path of *sadhana*. When you accept yourself as you are, what is the need of any *sadhana*? You are as you are. Stay within yourself, with yourself, and love starts flowing. All *sadhana* begins with hatred, with rejection, with non-acceptance – otherwise you cannot do any *sadhana*. Accept yourself.

You may call this the beginning or the first step where you are just relaxing within. When you relax inside with the total acceptance of the way you are, then something starts coming up because this mind, who is a doer, has no job. Otherwise mind has a spiritual job, a worldly job, so many jobs that mind creates according to the goals it creates. The *sadhana* also is the mind's job. The moment you accept yourself, there is no job left for the mind, so there is no doer. When we start living with the understanding that the way I am is absolutely fine, then automatically the mind is helpless and the ego is helpless. As Ramana used to say, to whom is this happening? There is no answer to this question. You start seeing it, you start seeing that your mind, where this is happening, is a mirage. You come to that witnessing centre which is your natural state, which is what you are. Then you start living with this understanding. This acceptance is automatically the unfolding of understanding; the clarity starts happening without your *sadhana*.

I don't encourage *sadhana* and I don't discourage *sadhana*. You have to make up your mind. I have gone through this whole journey of *sadhana* and at a certain point I got fed up with it. But one has to be very, very honest. Mind is very cunning and tricky, it starts telling you that you are getting somewhere, some imaginary experience starts happening and you start believing that you are close to enlightenment. 'Come on! In one year you are going to get enlightened, maybe tomorrow!' This is all the mind's game. I have gone through this, I know it. It's all the mind's game.

The spiritual life demands honesty with yourself. Only life demands honesty to the other. The spiritual life demands honesty to yourself. Be honest with yourself that even after doing years of meditation, years of *sadhana*, nothing has changed. Who has the courage to say that nothing has changed, that you are the same? We have some vision that something has changed. Some momentary change that you see is not a change. You take a painkiller and wow! all the pain disappeared. So what? The cause of the pain is still there. All *sadhanas* are functioning like a painkiller, they give you some temporary relief and the mind is fooled, and the mind is also fooling you that it is happening. Understand that you have to be absolutely clear about what you are searching for. What are you searching for? Be honest and look there. Am I relaxed when I connect with the life? What is the point of disturbance in my connection with the life outside which creates a reaction in my mind? Am I relaxed? Look inside and see for yourself. You will find that you are not. You get so tired, so fed up. How long? How many years? How many masters have you gone to? How many years of begging for enlightenment?

A Sufi master woke me up suddenly: 'What are you searching for? What do you want in life?' I said, 'I want happiness. I want peace.' He said, 'Then question why you are unhappy. Don't search for the peace. You have to stay with yourself. You have to observe, you have to watch, you have to enquire: Why am I unhappy? Why am I sick? Find out. Don't search for health.' This is the whole *sadhana*. I don't say that it does not help. It has its own limitations. If you are full of pain and frustration and unbearable suffering, then you need some painkiller. You need some kind of technique or method or medication which can relieve you from the immediate pain, but it is not the cure. If you don't understand then you get addicted to the painkiller. Why should you do meditations every morning for twenty years? What for? If it is a cure, at a certain point it has to drop out. It has to make you healthy. But if it does not, then it is becoming an addiction, like a drug addiction.

The whole day you stuff so many things inside. Why are our minds so full of frustration, so full of tension? Understand this: *sadhana* can work up to a certain point and give you a temporary relief, but it is not a cure. I am saying this because I have gone through it, I know

it and I have seen many of my friends go through it. Understanding is the only awakening. Understand why you are sick, why you have frustration, why you are unhappy; understand it. Find out the cause of your unhappiness. The moment you understand it, you understand also the remedy. Then you are free. That freedom is your natural state. It is not that you have to find the freedom.

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Radha Ma



The moment you make a blueprint then you are freezing the moment. The whole awakening is a mystery and the moment you make a blueprint, the beauty is gone. You can't make a blueprint, as it is different for everybody, a different path and different way, so you can't make a common blueprint.

RADHA MA

We are already That, we are
not ignorant to be enlightened.

Radha Ma



Radha Ma

A young woman of unknown age (perhaps early 40s), she originates from Bangalore and she was successfully working for many years in Hyderabad as a chartered accountant. It was here she met her husband and they chose to marry to escape the family marriage pressures. He lives with her now as a devotee. She refuses to see herself as a *guru* or master but many come to her anyway.

Arranging this interview with Radha Ma in 2003 was a delight. She was immediately completely available, saying, 'Why not now?' So we sat together and had lots of fun making the interview. Meeting her again in recent years, there is tremendous love in her presence. The large sign on her gate reads: 'I'm not a guru. Instead of wasting your time trying to meet me, you can go to Ramanashramam.' I am touched that despite this, she accepts my invitations to speak at the Arunachala Pilgrimage Retreat. Her uncompromising delivery of Truth is lovingly and humorously expressed. A wise woman.

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It has been suggested that the mind must be destroyed for liberation to occur. Do you have a mind?

No, no. The mind is illusion. The mind does not exist anymore. I don't know what mind is.

You say that you don't have mind; if you got in a car then you could drive the car, right? When you worked as a tax officer you could work

with computers and with figures and calculations, right? So for doing those kinds of things you need a mind.

Sure, also I have a point of view to answer all these questions and I should have a dictionary in my mind to speak all these words, right? But it comes spontaneously from consciousness, from my inner being. It's not through the mind. Mind always manipulates, judges; nothing of this happens here. Before I answer a question I don't have to think whether I am right or wrong, nothing like that. That is the problem with the mind. The mind always calculates and manipulates, but when something comes from spontaneity – the mind never existed here. I don't know whether I am right or wrong from your point of view, I don't care about it either. There is no judgement, nothing. It just happens.

When you say you don't have a mind, do you mean that you don't have the memories, experiences, worries, conditionings and knowledge that society and teachers gave you? Are you saying that you have a mind in the sense you can do things when you need to, to operate your body?

Yes, that has been taken care of, but there have also been so many days that I have lived without food. I am beyond the physical and beyond the mental, the mind cannot be here now. All these emotions and attachments are transcended. I don't want to say that I am different; the moment I say that I don't have mind I feel I am different from you. It feels ugly to say it, but it is true.

Could you say, 'I am not attached to my mind'?

No, there is no mind at all to be attached to! Attachment is a different thing. I don't have a mind at all, it does not exist, it's an illusion. And once you cut off that illusion, where does it come from? There is no mind at all. It is just an illusion.

Are you telling me that since you were very young you never really had a mind? You never really lived in your thoughts?

No. No thoughts. I don't know how to explain it more than that. I didn't have words to explain those stages. I was what I was. Maybe what I was when I was a child and what I am today are the same. There is no difference in me, I am the same. So what you say about the mind is relative. I don't find that the world or mind exist for me, but as the body is in the world, you think I am in the world. And because I talk, you think that I have mind too. Apparently it looks like that, but it is not.

When you worked in the tax office it looked like you had a mind to do these complicated calculations.

Nothing of the sort. It is being taken care of. In fact I didn't study much about these things. I didn't even study computers. The moment I wanted to learn about computers I went to a hardware training institute. My lecturers objected. They told me, 'You are a tax consultant and don't have any electronics background so we can't teach you. You need some electronics background.'

But after a few days it was as if I knew the subject best in the class. I was even correcting the master; I told him that he was wrong in so many things. He was really shocked and he thought that I had learned it somewhere else and that I was there teasing him. (both laugh) This really happened, I am not joking! Actually they thought that I had learned it somewhere else and was coming to class to annoy these people, but I was not. The moment I had made the decision to learn it, the knowledge came to me.

Then I found that there is no need for me to learn anything. Whether in this world or another world there is no need to learn. Everything is already available. When you use a computer you use a server. I am a client, so I receive whatever record is being sent by the server – that's what happens. The ultimate takes care of that. I don't have anything of my own, just a monitor is enough. So whatever the server sends, the client receives it, that's it! I need not have a CPU (central processing unit) of my own.

When Western people come with their minds, their sufferings, their worries, tensions and fears, can you understand immediately that this is an illusion, that this is not true? What do you say to them?

Whether a person is Western or Indian, all suffering and pain are illusions. You are dreaming and you believe that you are having a nightmare; you dream that a tiger is chasing you, but it is an illusionary tiger and illusionary fear too. Any suffering, whether it is Western or Indian or whatever, is like that; all suffering is illusion. You imagine you suffer, that's it. There is no suffering really. Everything is perfect in you.

Everything is exactly as it should be!

Yes, it is perfect. I can say that you are dreaming. I can say it one hundred and one times but still you dream and still you are frightened of the tiger; you can't help it, because it is perfect and it should be like that.

You yourself will wake up from the dream one day and see that all those times you were chased and frightened by an imaginary tiger! But everything is perfect. It is perfect for you to be afraid now. It is perfect for you to have the nightmare now. We can't say that it is wrong, it is perfect.

Are you saying that you accept whatever comes, whether it be happy or unhappy, sad, angry or blissful?

Mind is illusion, so why are you bothered if mind is angry or not, or whether it is jealous or suspicious? The mind itself is illusory, so why should you be bothered by this negative quality of the mind? Everything is perfect. Mind is like this. Mind can be angry or peaceful, mind can be happy or unhappy. But it is illusion. How to say something is good or something is bad in the illusion? This illusion is illusion, it is still illusion, and it is perfect whatever comes.

What do you say to somebody that comes to you? You tell them that it is an illusion, but still they are suffering and they come every day to

see you with this pain. The pain is there from something which they believe so strongly that they can't just throw it away. What do you say to them?

I say the same thing to them: it is all perfect! You suffered, it's perfect. You trusted, it's perfect. So many people seek in the world and then come back. They say, 'We have meditated for ten years and we didn't get it,' and they are frustrated. And this frustration is perfect. I can say that your seeking is a waste, but this is not real for you. My knowledge and my Truth is not real for you, it is not your Truth; you have to find out your own Truth.

So I say this, 'What you are seeking is stupidity, there is no enlightenment,' but still your mind can't accept that. You meditate for one week and there is no enlightenment, so the mind says 'Why should I meditate?' So you stop meditating and then next week the mind comes back and says, 'What you are doing is rubbish. You have to sit and meditate.'

That's what the mind says, so you follow the mind. It is that which is going to give you the happiness, not me! My Truth is mine and your Truth is yours and until you find out the Truth for yourself you have to walk on the path.

Suppose you start off from home and I say that this is your home and that you need not travel anywhere; you can't accept this, you have to travel, you have to get fed up and be frustrated and come back to the same place and realise that this is the home from where you actually started. It's perfect. You have to find out for yourself. It is the mind, that is what the mind is.

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Ramesh Balsekar



The basic understanding is: everything is a happening, nobody does anything. What the sages mean when they say the ego has to be destroyed – but for some reason don't bother to make clear – is that doership in the ego has to be destroyed. The ego cannot be destroyed. Similarly, the mind cannot be destroyed.

RAMESH BALSEKAR

Living means, from moment to moment, never knowing whether the next moment is going to bring peace, pleasure or pain.

Ramesh Balsekar



Ramesh Balsekar

Ramesh Balsekar lived his life as a householder, raising a family and having a career in the Bank of India where he rose to become president. After retirement he became Nisargadatta Maharaj's translator and later began to teach. Ramesh has written many books on both his master's and his own teachings. Several of his disciples now teach in their own right. *Satsang* is held every morning at Ramesh's residence in Mumbai from nine to ten-thirty.

My first meeting with Ramesh was in 1992. In the following years I enjoyed sitting in his apartment, which he rarely leaves, while he spoke to us as non-doers, explaining that everything happens in our life according to destiny. He has maintained his morning meetings for more than twenty years and even now, at the age of ninety, these continue. His master was Nisargadatta Maharaj but he has always displayed a deep connection to Sri Ramana Maharshi.

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It appears essential to meet a guru and stay with that guru. Who is the guru?

First and foremost there is no pure *guru*. There are many *gurus*. To which *guru* you will go depends on your destiny. Whether you go to a genuine *guru* or whether you go to a false *guru* is your destiny, and if your destiny is to go to a false *guru* for five, ten, fifteen, twenty years, you will do it. There may not be a clear distinction between false *guru* and a genuine *guru*. There may be a *guru* where the enlightenment is not total, but still teaching can happen through him.

So someone goes to a *guru* for twenty-five, thirty years. Deep down there is a frustration. There is a specific case I know. For thirty years this man was a remarkably honest and sincere *sadhaka*, spiritual seeker, but at the end of it there was a certain amount of frustration. Something made him come to me, and after two or three years he had the final understanding. Three months after he had the final understanding he was dead. He had blood cancer, leukaemia. In his own words he said, 'Ramesh, the report was practically a death sentence: galloping leukaemia. When I read it, I had never felt better in my life.' That was his destiny.

And what is the guru's role?

If you ask me, the *guru's* role is first to tell his disciples that whatever he says is a concept. It is not the Truth. And all that a concept can do for you is to bring you peace and harmony in life. So if the concept from the *guru* leads you to this peace and harmony, that is your destiny. The *guru* can only give his concepts. Whether the disciple will be able to accept the concepts and whether the concepts will do the disciple any good is his destiny. According to me, the duty of the *guru* is to tell the disciple it's just a concept, and also to make his own concept as clear as he possibly can so that no confusion remains in the mind of the disciple.

Is there any way a seeker can tell who is a true guru?

If the seeker knows that in the presence of a *guru* he has come home, that's his *guru*.

Sri Ramana's devotees had tremendous devotion to him and he to Arunachala. Please say something about bhakti, devotion, in the pursuit of awakening.

Whether devotion happens in a particular body-mind organism is part of his destiny, but even *bhakti* must ultimately lead to the one conclusion,

according to my concept, and that is that no one is a doer. Everything happens according to the will of God or according to the cosmic law, whichever way you go.

I will tell you the story of Tukaram. He's a very famous saint from Maharashtra, a total *bhakta* (devotee). He was an uneducated man who wrote more than five thousand verses. In the original story he addresses his *guru*, Vitala, the temple *Vitobha*, a representative of *Krishna* and *Vishnu*. He tells him, 'Lord, the *jnani* (one who knows) can see you as formless, but for me, please show yourself in a form which I can enjoy and pursue, which I can pray to, for life after life.' Life after life he lived in rebirth, in devotion. See what I mean? *Bhakti*. Then when the final understanding had happened the same *bhakta*, Tukaram, goes to the temple and tells *Vitobha*, '*Vitobha!* You are a cheat! I myself didn't know that you and I are ultimately the source, but you knew and yet you extracted so many years of worship from me. You are a cheat!' The *Bhakta* suddenly becomes a *jnani*.

The *bhakta* says, *Tvameva bhakta, tvameva karta*. 'You are the doer, you are the enjoyer.' Then he says, 'You are the speaker and you are the listener. You are all there is, therefore how can the speaker be anything other than you?' Which means it may seem as if I'm speaking and Premananda is listening, or Premananda is speaking and Ramesh is listening, but the *bhakta* says it only appears like that. What is really happening is it is God functioning through both body-mind instruments, speaking through one, listening through the other. That is the difference; the *jnani* says, 'I am not the doer,' and the *bhakta* says, 'You do the speaking and you do the listening and you do the enjoying.' Basically, it's the same thing. I'm not saying that there are two different paths to reach the same goal. The words are different, but they mean the same thing. You are the only doer. You do the speaking. You begin as a *bhakta*, end as a *jnani*, or you begin as a seeking *jnani* and end as a *bhakta*.