

Title: Batgap Interview, 097 Mooji

Interviewee: Mooji (M)

Interviewer: Rick Archer (RA)

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[*Music*]

RA: Welcome to Buddha at the Gas Pump. My name is Rick Archer, and my guest this week is Mooji. Greetings, Mooji, and thank you for granting this interview.

M: Thank you, thank you very much.

RA: I have very much enjoyed listening to other interviews you've done in preparation for this one. [I've listened to] quite a few with Richard Miller, and I also listened to quite a few of your podcasts. I guess they were recorded over there in Portugal. I particularly enjoyed the one with the crickets singing in the background. It made me feel like I was sitting there under the full moon or something [*laughing*] listening to this beautiful wisdom.

M: It is like that. Yes, yes, nature. It's a new one for us. We are all mostly city people, you know [*laughing*].

RA: Yeah.

M: Experimenting a little bit in the country.

RA: It's a healthy life [*laughing*].

I read your biography last night on your website. We're not going to dwell a lot on biographical details because I've kind of gotten the impression that you'd rather not do that, but one thing I was impressed with was that it almost seemed as though, whereas some people kind of dip their toe into the river of spirituality, you dove in head first into this fast rushing stream and just got carried along with it [*laughing*]. I mean maybe we don't, any of us, have a choice, but it seemed like you were just helplessly swept away by the divine current.

M: Yeah, I didn't really feel there was so much to think about in terms of choice. It felt pretty much that if there is anything like a choice, I was already caught up emotionally in that movement, and it was just unfolding like that. So I didn't have to deliberate deeply at all. I recognized it immediately, that it wasn't something of my own imagination. So yes, yes, yes.

RA: There are those verses in the Gita where Krishna talks about how you sort of build up a momentum in your spiritual evolution, and even if this life ends, then that momentum is carried on to the next one. A lot of times when I interview people I get the feeling like those are people

who've built up quite a momentum already, and they just pick up where they left off and move fast.

M: It may be so.

RA: I mean, we can only speculate. At least I can only speculate [*laughter*].

So if I were sitting with you on an airplane or something, and we introduced ourselves, and we didn't have a lot of time, how would you present yourself in terms of the essence of what you like to say to people?

M: [*Laughing*] You really put me on the spot with that one. Somehow I don't have anything saved up. It would just be revealed in the moment. This is what I would be saying truthfully to you because I don't myself have a wish to engage with people about anything. Something else has to be there first. The stage has to be set somehow, and it's not set by me.

RA: Like a stimulus, there needs to be a particular—

M: Yes, yes, and you kind of sense that. That if it is, what I would say, auspicious, something will trigger a kind of contact that will unfold in that way because certainly if it just comes from an intention, it would not have that power, and I would not be able to function in that kind of way. You see?

RA: Yeah, it's said that a spiritual teacher is like a reservoir, and the reservoir only flows if somebody puts a pipe up to it. The volume of the flow depends upon how big the pipe.

M: It's not a bad analogy at all, but it may not even go like that. It may not necessarily be that one has to be triggered by an apparent other like this, that they ask a question or something. Sometimes it can seem totally incidental. It could start in a seemingly very innocent and very casual way, but quickly it heats up and can come as quite a surprise [*laughing*].

RA: Sure. Of course, in your case you kind of look like a spiritual guy. I heard that story you told about how you were sitting on a bench in Moscow or something, and people brought a crippled child up to you and asked you to heal him and so on. So it must invite encounters that would otherwise not happen if you were always wearing a business suit and tie and had short hair [*laughing*].

M: Well, yeah, it depends. Some people might say I look like somebody [*laughing*] who definitely had a few smokes or something [*laughing*].

RA: [*Laughing*] Bob Marley's son or something.

M: Yes, yes, yes, yes, [*laughing*] more like his uncle or brother.

RA: [*Laughing*] Good.

One theme that I heard repeatedly in your satsangs, and maybe I picked up on it more because it's one of my interests, is that I heard you once say, specifically actually, in one of the talks, that as long as one is functioning as a human being, alive as a human being, there's always going to be some kind of remnant at least of personality, of individuality, of sense of individual self, but it's a matter of which is predominant. For most of the people in this world, that is the predominant reality. For someone who is spiritually awakened, then a much more universal reality has become predominant, but there's never a total elimination of sense of personal self. Did I hear that correctly?

M: The personal kind of energy or momentum can be there very much like how it is that somehow, sometimes you see the moon in full daylight when the sun is present. It won't have much impact. It's something very soft. So one's sense of personality or something— Maybe you, yourself, may not be aware of anything about personality, but others may perceive that you have personality or something.

The strength of personality, or whatever that may signify, may not really be anything that is significant for your own self. So I don't know what would be the measure of that. Yes, yes, yes, and you know also that there is some remnant of personality, of conditioning, and so on, I don't find that necessarily intrudes upon or diminishes one's deeper, more profound insight. You see, unless there's invested interest in that because I don't think necessarily it is the show of apparent superficial conditioning necessarily that has any weight, but more the internal belief and identity with that conditioning that gives it power.

RA: The reason I thought of it as a significant point is that there are some teachers who give such emphasis to the impersonal, that I think it might confuse people who feel like, Well, I get that. I sense the impersonal. It's clear to me, but there's also still this sense of personal and maybe I'm not there yet, or maybe I'm missing something because this guy makes it sound like that shouldn't even be there at all.

M: I don't think that that would be a fair kind of encounter, if a teacher is merely demonstrating his knowledge that there's only this and forcefully trying to convey that, if he's speaking to someone who's not yet able to comprehend that in any meaningful way for them self. Then I feel that there's really not a communication there. I would say that one who is true in their realization would intuitively sense the sensitivity, the receptivity, of the one with whom they are communing or communicating because otherwise if there's no real inner contact of what is being said, then it's a wasted opportunity.

RA: I like that point, and I feel like it's somehow missed by a lot of teachers that there's not a facility for speaking to the level of consciousness or level of experience of the person. It's more like they're speaking from their level, and somehow there's a disconnect between them.

M: I think that sometimes we wrongly imagine that people who speak like that are fully enlightened. I don't know if this is the case because somehow the whole point of that kind of communication will be of, let's say, benefit, let's use this word for now, to the one who is in search of some deeper insight, or contact, or direct experience. If you are communicating with someone, and you are simply refuting what they feel is a reality for them, I don't think it's going

to go anywhere. You have to meet them at a level at which somehow their lives or their perception, their field of perception, is still meaningful and then work with that. It's not difficult actually, once you find that resonance, if it is within the person. Sometimes I say always there is the potential, but perhaps at present there isn't the capacity to go to a certain level of comprehending immediately in a meaningful way. Then that would be recognized by the one who claims to be in a position to guide or something, and then you take the person as far as they're able to go for now.

RA: How do you manage when you're speaking with a group of people in which there must be people at a whole range of levels of experience?

M: Yes, yes, this is beautiful, a beautiful question you're asking because, for me, I am not at all concerned about it. Again, the words that will come, the kind of contact, everything is already set somehow internally without the mind having any technique or strategy about it. It's very much in the moment.

RA: So it just flows automatically, whatever—

M: It does flow. It does flow because some people may not be able to comprehend a point at an intellectual level, but still at some other level inexplicable to them, something has been absorbed, and they don't know why and how. It's not necessarily something that necessarily has to appeal to their intellectual abilities.

Sometimes people come to satsang, and they don't speak any English and I only speak English. It can be even a whole season of meetings. They don't speak any English, and I'm not translating. I've asked as well, "Why do you come? Because you don't understand in terms of the language; you don't understand." I remember one lady's answer. She says, "Well, I cannot say. I feel like it just communicates to someplace inside myself, and I feel deeply at peace. I feel happy. I feel I'm in the right place."

RA: That's great. In fact I would suggest that perhaps even all the people there who speak English are gaining more from the level at which that woman, who doesn't speak English, is gaining than they are from the conceptual input that's coming through your words.

M: That is not a bad point; that is not a bad point.

RA: A lot of teachers speak of transmission. Do you use that terminology or that concept, that there's something being transmitted from you to students?

M: Not in any kind of deliberate way. It's enough that, if I feel to speak or to be with them, then something must be bearing fruit. It just feels like that, because people have asked questions, have approached on some topic, and there hasn't been the juice. There isn't the incentive, the motivation, the impulse, or the inspiration to speak with them a single word. It is not something decided upon beforehand. It's just like, for whatever reason, I don't feel a way in.

RA: So this way of operating that you're describing of living very intuitively, going with the intuitional impulse to speak or not speak, or do this, or do that, is this what you would refer to as living from the heart? I've heard you use that phrase, living from the heart.

M: Yes, or I can say, life from the heart, life expressing as heart. I want to say that, Rick [Archer], because living from the heart can imply that there's an intention to do something which comes from the heart. Once it is clear for you that really the heart is what you are, and by that I mean the core. The sentient source is what you are, not as a belief, not even as intellectual conviction, but as real direct experience. I would say even beyond conviction, and there is no effort. There is no one thing doing something. It's all one. Actions are one with the being-ness. It's this one thing.

RA: Why would you say the heart is what you are as opposed to consciousness is what you are, which is the way it's often referred to?

M: I use many different kinds of words depending on how it feels in the moment—

RA: Same thing, though, you mean the same thing?

M: Yes, yes, yes, I can say it either way. Sometimes I say as consciousness, as God, as truth, as being-ness also sometimes, as pure consciousness, pure awareness, as the Self.

RA: Good. So they're all synonymous?

M: Yes, I mean we can go into finer looking [*laughing*], but generally speaking it is like that.

RA: Well, in terms of finer looking, I do like the fact that I hear you use the word God quite a bit because in some non-dual circles they seem a little dry. I even heard one non-dual teacher say that God is just a human concept. I would think of it as the other way around actually, but how would you describe God and your relationship to God?

M: I am, perhaps, using the term God because I grew up in that way or in that kind of conditioning or so, and I feel totally comfortable with that. When the first profound, what I sometimes refer to as a, kiss from inside took place, I was not in any doubt that it was nothing of my making. I felt like somehow it announced itself inside me. I didn't have another way of referring to it apart from God because that was the language I knew, and it felt right.

I can say that God is often a human, that I sometimes also say human beings are an expression of consciousness, not the owners or managers of consciousness. We ourselves are the expression of consciousness, or God if you want to say it like that. For me God is my intimate being, closer than intimacy even, closer than intimacy. Sometimes I have a different way of saying it because I feel in some moods, of course. I feel in harmony with that universal presence or current, and there's a oneness in that. It's easy to call it consciousness sometimes or God. I don't have an issue with that.

RA: Personally whenever I look at anything in nature, or look at some science show on T.V. where they're examining what's happening at the microscopic level, or you look at pictures of galaxies through the Hubble telescope, to me it's like I'm looking at God in a way. There's like this incredible intelligence, and it amazes me that a scientist, or a surgeon, or anybody who looks closely at nature could actually be an atheist or could fail to see the incredible intelligence operating in every little particle of creation.

M: Yes, it's amazing. Also the power of just the mindset and conditioning can simply not let that light of introspection go any further than a kind of cold calculation or something, something objective and seemingly outer and apart.

RA: Little billiard balls running into each other and somehow producing a daffodil. It's amazing [*laughing*].

Well speaking of God, there's the whole topic of devotion, and that, too, is often missing in contemporary spiritual circles. I see evidence of it in your satsang, though, both with regard to people's feelings toward you, and also a friend of mine told me that your group is starting to sing bhajans or kirtans or something sometimes. So what is your opinion, or feeling, or knowledge about the role that devotion plays in spiritual life, the development of the heart?

M: People, they go to what it is that is the pull of their own dharma. They don't decide they want to be devotional. You are struck by something, and devotion is the fruit of that touching. It can be like this, and for another one it's not like that. For another one, it really triggers a deep philosophical introspection, and that's right for them. For another, it feels like something is deeply touched, and they have no way of understanding or explaining these things. Intuitively, they have a sense they're in the presence of awe, of great awe, and a natural feeling to say, Please rid me of ego and merge my mind in you. This is something that comes natural. Nobody has to teach them that. There are some people whose orientation is devotional, but they may have children who don't have that temperament. They have a more a sober way of looking at things, in a more philosophical or intellectual way, and that is suitable for them.

For me, whatever approach is an approach, a movement, inside consciousness. I cannot reject anyone, nor do I encourage anyone to worship in any particular way or to approach truth in any particular way. That's already something that's in them. That's their own dharma, and no one can teach you your dharma. It is already something that is an impulse beyond the reach of human intention. It just arises in you like this, if it's authentic, and one just recognizes that, rather than setting up and saying, Well some people seem to say the devotional part is a weaker part because it's relying on something else, and so on. This is a kind of arrogance, I feel. We are all relying upon something.

RA: I'm glad you made that point, and in fact some of the great famous ghanis throughout history have also been great bhaktis.

M: This is so true.

RA: Shankara was a great devotional man, and Ramana Maharshi, of course, with his devotion to the mountain, and so on.

M: Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj.

RA: Yeah, absolutely.

M: My old master, Sri Poonjaji. All the ones I know, in fact, they have this. It's like two wings of one bird. I see no real contradiction.

RA: Yeah, I almost feel like that people who denounce devotion and the qualities of the heart may change their tune somewhere down the line because it almost seems like inevitably eventually that's going to blossom as further refinement takes place.

M: Yes, if their introspections are authentic they will come, they must come, to some point.

There is a saying. I think it's an **[inaudible 21:20]** I've heard in Islam. It says, "He who seeks God finds himself, and he who seeks himself finds God." It quite often happens like this, that people think, *This is who I am; this is how I am; this is how I am not*, but actually they don't know. If they're really open, they must just be open to discover. You cannot know who you are in that kind of way. So I think sometimes it can appear that these people maybe speak with a kind of force because there's almost a kind of inflexibility, and that your eyes cannot really be opened to the true mysteries of the universe, that everything is just not explained simply through concepts but also is felt in ways that concepts cannot reach. You cannot deny that, and if you do, and you are genuinely open, you will, as you have just mentioned, come to some point where you may have to change your step.

RA: I like that, and in saying that, you've brought up the point of certainty, which I think is also an interesting issue. There are so many people in this world who are so sure of their position, their belief, or whatever, and of course so many wars have been fought over that mentality, many of them in the name of religion.

M: It's actually because they are not sure.

RA: Yeah, yeah, good point.

M: *[Laughing]* They are not sure. That is why they have an air like they're so sure, but they're not sure.

RA: It's like they're desperately defending their doubt.

M: If you are sure about something, there's a great relaxation in you, a great openness. You really can say that you are really clear and certain about it. You reach a place of stillness, and you cannot somehow be moving in some line of aggression towards any being. There's a stillness in that.

RA: Interestingly, it seems to me, in that stillness you're very comfortable with paradox. You don't take a polar position and adhere to it. You can actually embrace two contradictory concepts or positions.

M: Of course, and why you can do this is only because you have transcended concepts. You see their limitations. You see their usefulness, and you know that what is, is not shaped by any concept. The concept is secondary. The only one who is really moved beyond the dependency upon any concept is free, with all expressions, in every concept.

RA: [*Laughing*] That's good.

Adyashanti, the teacher, he was giving lectures in Berkeley which is, of course, a very liberal place – and this is when George Bush was president – and he was saying, “Okay, now go home and start watching George Bush on television and come back when you feel like you can totally love and be comfortable with George Bush” [*laughing*].

M: Yes, yes [*laughing*].

RA: Which can be a challenge.

In fact I just got an email from somebody this morning who heard a comment that a guest and I were making about a year ago in an interview where we were saying how somebody can be spiritually awakened and yet be a political conservative because it seems so lacking in compassion and so on, rather than the more liberal attitudes. I took her point. It seems like there's all possibilities within.

M: That's great openness, that attitude. I like what Sri Nisargadatta Majaraj said because in this respect he says, "I leave my human life to unfold according to its destiny. I remain as I am." There's a great space in that statement, and it can appear because even people say, But Sri Maharaj you are undisputedly a great ghani for us, then why are you singing bhajans three times a day to images of God? They cannot understand what is this, but at the same time I would have to say that I don't feel that anyone who has really gone deeply into the source of their own identity can really be a hardcore, tight-minded representative of any political, social, or any kind of posture. Something must relax and say, Okay, fine, when something is playing out like that, but there will still be signs that say, I am not locked into the bubble of that expression.

RA: You could still have your preferences, right? I mean you could still say, Okay, well I'm going to vote for this guy, but there's somehow a certain fundamentalism lacking in it.

M: Yes, yeah, I don't like to close the door, necessarily. Sometimes you have to, for a moment, on something, but I would say that these things would have to be playing more of a superficial place. They cannot be deeply felt views. Otherwise, the two do not work together. It must be the greater that will dominate, and if it is that you've realized the Self, realized what is true, then you may use your seemingly single posture to actually promote a much broader way of looking within your own specific group, or something like that. It can happen like that.

RA: And with regard to Nisargadatta, some people might have said to him, Hey you're supposed to be a liberated being, why are you smoking cigarettes all day long? What's this addiction you appear to have?

M: [*Laughing*] Somebody once said to one of the saints, he said, "You seem to be attached to smoking," and the saint responded, "and you seem to be attached to non-smoking" [*laughing*]. He says, you know, I let my body enjoy a little bit of whatever. It doesn't stop me, or rub my being from anything. It doesn't matter. You take yourself to be the body, so you're completely hung up about what this body does and what it doesn't do. These things are really small things.

RA: Yeah, it's a good lesson to hear because I'm not immune from getting judgmental about things, and it's good to remind oneself that personal attitudes and biases don't necessarily define reality as it actually is.

M: Yes, when one goes beyond all of it into simply discovering the truth of what is. We, myself also, I am sort of using the method, if you like, of self-inquiry because it seems to be much more appealing to Western minds generally, whichever way, but in terms of inquiry then somehow you do come to a place of seeing that your correct position is not really just of your upbringing, or something personal, or even some philosophical or idealistic position. You're altogether out of that, and when that is really seen, with such sparkling clarity actually, then all these efforts to drop, or to change, or to fix, or to view things in this way or that way, they fall away actually. Everything becomes spontaneously shaped without human agency in that way.

RA: So when you say that you use self-inquiry because it sort of resonates with Western minds, did you mean with reference to your own path, or your work with your students, or both?

M: I thought you were going to ask this, and I'm very happy [*laughing*]. This is a funny thing, eh? First of all, I think I might have said it in a funny way when I use self-inquiry, and I'm glad you raise it because you give me opportunity to maybe say something a little bit about this. My own way, you can say that how I came into this whole unfolding, this path, if you wanted to say it like that, was clearly I would say more of a devotional quality, more than it would be introspection. I am not someone who was brought up with a love for books, or reading, or ideas. I was the opposite. I more enjoyed books if they had pictures in them, comics and stuff like this—

RA: Well, you're an artist.

M: Yes, you can say it like this.

RA: You're a visual artist.

M: But in fact in the early days for a while, I was not speaking very much. I didn't know what to say actually.

RA: You mean after your realization?

M: Yes, yes, actually the realization was not complete at that stage. It was just very profound, but it was not complete. That very deep mood of peace and stillness seemed to fill my being like mercury or something. I could not move much, and people thought I was just being silent. I said, "I can't move, actually," *[laughing]* and then people, somehow, I don't know how, I have to think about it, how they came to visit me. We were mostly just sitting in silence, and sometimes I found my head turning in a certain direction, and turning another direction, and looking at this person without really much intention. I was even having feelings of embarrassment about it because it was like sometimes my head would turn to someone, and I'd be finding myself, like some powers moving through my eyes and a part of mind which says, *Okay, that's enough you've been looking at this person like for 25 seconds; turn to someone else.* I could feel it's thought, but it was like some other power was there, and I had to wait until it was finished. Then something knew it was finished, and then you could move again. So I was not really speaking so much. I didn't know what to say.

Then, gradually, more and more people were coming, and they began to ask questions. I remember the first time, actually, I was invited to go and meet with a group. It was in Ireland, in those days. I accepted the invitation to go, but I was so intimidated by the prospect of sitting with people who would clearly expect something from you. I don't know how to be when somebody expects something from me. So then I remember what happened is that I felt, *Okay, what can I talk about?* I start to panic a little bit. I said, "Ah, I'll talk about attachment and detachment." I don't know where I came from on that one *[laughing]*, but I sat down in the group. It took me something like two minutes to cover the subject, and then after that I was completely blown away. I didn't know what to say, and that was the first and the only time, actually, that I came into any meeting with people with intention. It has to be completely empty.

In answer to your question, what happened is that somehow people began to ask questions, and I actually prayed. I said, "These people are coming. What can I do? What can I tell them because it is not my way? I don't know what to say to them." Every word that I am telling you know happened like that, that somehow it just came to me, very clear. Even though I had listened to Papaji, Papaji also spoke from the place of the depth of inquiry, but he didn't speak really so much of the method of inquiry that deeply. It's just that you are going through the process of inquiry, through his presence and grace, but he was not presenting it as a technique or some strategy. So then what happened is that it arose inside with such clarity, such profundity. Sometimes I say Sri Bhagwan Sri Ramana Maharshi revealed something inside my heart because I don't know how it could have happened like that, and now I see that, as a tool, it is the most unsparing, the most direct and immediate way of actually exposing what is not true.

RA: Well in the case of Papaji, you're saying he didn't really prescribe anything specific, it just happened spontaneously in his presence. So if you went back to London, let's say, during those days, did the inquiry continue, or did it kind of drop off when you got away from him?

M: I went to see Papaji twice. I was with Papaji on two occasions. First time was for about five months. Second time, maybe four months I was there. The first time I came back, I had to come back because of the sudden passing away of my son. So I came back very, very quickly, and then I stayed in London for some time. I was not meeting many people in this time. I was spending a lot of time alone, and then more and more people started coming to see me. The second time I

spent time with Papaji was in 1997. I came back, I think, in August to London in 1997. Somehow I just felt very strongly that I needed to come back to London. Still up to this day I don't know why. I don't question it, but it was a very strong feeling to come. In 1997 I came back to London one month before the passing, the physical passing, of my Master.

RA: Was your self-inquiry process dependent upon proximity with your teacher, or did you find that it continued unabated even if you went away?

M: Yes, yes, yes, I didn't feel I was really deliberately engaged with this discipline or this practice. I didn't say, I'm practicing self-inquiry. I just spent time in the presence of Sri Poonjaji, and somehow it got assimilated inside somehow. I didn't know anything much about it until people started asking again about it. Questions were coming, and then answers were coming, responses were coming. I saw it like that.

RA: So is that kind of the way it works around you? I mean, do people just spontaneously go into what you would call a self-inquiry process when they're sitting with you, or do you offer specific instructions: do this; do this; do this?

M: I try to meet them as they come, and I see what opportunity, what opening there is, to really look very quickly into their state and whether they are comfortable to stay in that position or whether there's an urge to go more deeply. It's very easy, very much a natural thing, a very spontaneous thing, and quickly you can get to that place.

At the moment, I'm not really engaged in just having chats with people so much. I feel more accessible to people who really have very important questions for themselves that they want to clear up. Very often it's to do around the nature of the Self and why, for instance – as an example – an experience that felt very profound, at one point, seemed to melt away, and they are again in the normal state of mind as was before and questions like this. These kinds of questions are the questions that I am hearing from people more and more.

RA: In the case of that specific question, would you say that they lost the profound experience or rather that they integrated it, and it became second nature?

M: For the most part what tends to happen is that it is clear that, when one comes to that profound place of seeing, there is no sense of ego or being a person, or feeling like I as a person have got it. There is some blurring of clarity, but in that moment there isn't such attraction to really go deeply into the person. They are too much enjoying the state, a sense of freedom, expansiveness, and so on, and they just want to stay there. Sometimes they say, "How can I stay here always?" and I ask them, "How are you staying here now?" because even here, there are some doubts that come. The mind is still triggering questions which are completely useless; they are just questions from the old regime of thinking, or something like this. These things are pointed out and shown that they are just thoughts, and if you don't bargain with them, they just come and go. You're naturally—

RA: I think that's really valuable. I mean, the mind is a habitual little monkey, and you can just sort of almost see it chattering away in its habitual way and trying to cast doubts on that which is obvious.

M: Well, it will be there for as long as there is a punter, if there is someone who is interested in it. It can only speak to you; it cannot confront the pure self. It can only somehow intimidate, perhaps, the self that is in a state of hypnosis and believes itself to be just conditioning of the body or something like this because that's where the sense of vulnerability comes. I feel that the mind has a use here, that it's going to arise like this, so that one has to dive more deeply beyond the superficial identity. If you stay just as a superficial identity, then somehow the mind will keep coming. The mind will keep coming in that way.

RA: And so how do people dive more deeply? In my own case, I've been practicing meditation for many years, and I very much enjoy it. It's been sort of a real practical, reliable thing. The terminology is clunky here. I mean, I say that I can do, and obviously that's a very crude way of expressing what's actually going on, but for the average person that you encounter, I'm always sort of caught up on this notion of, Okay what's the actual prescription that they're going to be able to take away, that's going to enable them to dive more deeply, rather than just hear those words and perhaps go on with their ordinary life without actually getting anything out of it?

M: Usually when someone comes, I'll have a sense of how much, a sense I would say, a sense of how important it is for them. The way that the conversations or the meetings unfold is a good indication for me energetically to see, really, if there is someone here who is interested beyond some superficial fascination, or who is just wanting to learn more or something. It is for me quite evident in the encounter whether there is someone here who is a real candidate for freedom. Can I say something like that? *[Laughing]*

RA: Sure, sure, and so if they are a sincere candidate for freedom, let's consider those cases.

M: As I perceive it.

RA: Yes, yes, so then how would you proceed with them? What is the interaction? What is the relationship that ensues?

M: Well, if, at that point, we are already in a relationship.

RA: Yeah, true.

M: Somehow I only have to ask one or two questions, and see how the response comes to see if there's space left to travel and **[inaudible 42:17]**. If they have that capacity there inside them, then they will go, and it's amazing sometimes with people I've not met before. In a short space of time, they can come to that place of pure seeing.

I don't want to make it into kind of like, it's a kind of spiritual trick where you get a chance to see who you are, but then quickly it's going to go because very often how things appear to go is that the mind comes back in, which is completely natural. Sometimes you forget that it is only a

movement. It is only a phenomenon. It cannot exist without you, but you can exist without it, and to confirm which is the greater and stay in the position of the greater seeing, or the greater fact, or something like this. If there is incentive, motivation in that, it's clearly felt.

Sometimes people feel something rise up inside them, some fear, because there seems to be, perhaps, a real chance at going beyond the assumptions into a place of real seeing, but then, sometimes, coming with that is some insecurity or some fear of the loss of what it might cost me and all this type of thing. So all of this is assessed quite spontaneously. If you are with someone who you sense they want to go further, and they're hungry for it, it's quite quietly exciting for me to see how much we will go.

RA: Well, you've been talking to me for 45 minutes. What is your assessment of me? Let's make it personal for a minute [*laughing*]. Obviously this is an interview, so it's a little different than it would be if I were just sitting with you privately.

M: I enjoy your questions. This is good, and I know that it must come out of some experience. How these questions are shaped, how you approach, and so on. That is some grounded understanding there. Further than this, I would have to say you have to come, and we'll sit together.

Yes, I say that it is the most easy. It is the most even easier than easy, what I'm pointing to, because it already exists as it is. No one can improve it, and no one can take anything away from it. The only thing that has to be, is there has to be a direct recognition of that internally that is deeper than belief, deeper than trust, deeper than hope. It has to be so immediate that there's no gap, and none of these things can intrude. For that I would say then, you come and you spend a little time. This much time you must find, and of a certainty my feeling is, knowing that you are already that, I have no doubt about it, that all beings are already that.

When I look at you that is what I see. When I listen to you, when I say "you," I mean generally anyone, then sometimes I see that that conviction is not yet established inside, that seeing is not yet fully established. Then I look and see if there is the urge to go more deeper. Then I say, Yes, if you're up for it, then let's go. It's not going to take long. From my part it's not going to take long. If it takes a long time, it's usually because there is some resistance and things, and this is also part of it. It has to be worked through. I don't want to throw magic powder in anybody's face. You have to go into this soberly and see and confirm this in your heart, but it can happen in the space of a few minutes, or an hour, or a day, or maybe a few days, or ten days, or whatever it is depending upon how much there is the readiness for that seeing. What is here is absolutely that there's no doubt that you are that. If there is anything, it is how much doubts linger in you because there is none in me.

RA: I find, personally, much greater affinity with the phrase, I am That, than I do with the phrase, everything else is That. I had an interview a couple weeks ago with a guy that went on and on about this point. I was holding up a cup as an example. He was saying, "Well, when I look at the cup I just see myself," and I say, "Well, when I look at the cup I see glass or ceramic" [*laughing*].

To add a second layer to that question, a few minutes ago you were talking about how when you first started doing meetings, your realization was not complete, and that of course implies that later on it became complete. I'd like to explore that a little bit. So my own sense is that obviously there's a certain degree of realization, but I would be dishonest if I were to say that I don't feel there could be greater clarity, completion, wholeness, whatever words we want to use. I'm speaking of my own case.

M: Yes, yes, yes, and you speak for many because if there is sincerity, if one is just not trying to demonstrate one's ability or demonstrate one's so-called enlightenment or seeing, which I don't trust and I don't believe it anyway, then in my case I would say that, although such a profound experience took place for me, it didn't come and go. It was coming and staying, but still it hadn't rid me of ego entirely. It had subdued ego and made ego into a cooperating force, but it hadn't eradicated that.

RA: A cooperating force, you said—

M: Yes, something inside wanted to participate, to welcome. I was very much welcoming, surrendering, going *Replace me with you*. It was like this. Still, you never keep puking out your arrogance [*laughing*]. It is still there. No matter how humble you think you are, something has come up, a little burp here and there.

So what happened is that the opportunity came to go to India because I had discovered the teachings of one Sri Ramakrishna. First, I actually came across the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi, but it wasn't appealing to me at that time. I felt it was too intellectual for my head, but when I found Ramakrishna, maybe his language, his way, or something, it was much more meaty for me, and—

RA: He was very devotional.

M: Yeah, not only devotional, he has tremendous wisdom. It was totally accessible. I didn't feel like it was just clever. It felt authentic for me. Whereas, I think the book I saw on Sri Bhagwan Sri Ramana Maharishi, was a book on self-inquiry, and it wasn't appealing for me. It sounded very technical, very noisy actually, and in fact when I first saw the book, I saw a picture. First, I saw the picture on the cover of him, and I felt, *Whoa, I like very much*. I opened it up and went, *No, I don't like* [*laughing*]. I thought, *What is this? The printers have made a mistake, and they put the wrong cover on this book* [*laughing*]. I couldn't get it.

Then I discovered Ramakrishna, and somehow that was the first book I bought, the *Gospel of Ramakrishna*, and I didn't want to finish it. It was a very big book, but I totally fell in love with it. It was speaking to me at the time in a way that I could comprehend and enjoy.

Now, I went to India with the intention to go to Ramakrishna's place in Calcutta, but I never made it there. Instead, I met some people who drew me to Papaji, and when I met Papaji, then suddenly I began to understand Sri Ramana Maharishi's teachings. Like a kind of grace opened up or something like that, and it was through meeting Papaji that I would say that his presence kind of yanked out, pulled out some residual hiding out, and it was very, very powerful in fact.

Yet I was a bit surprised. I imagined I was further on than I found I was [*laughing*]. He called me out.

RA: So you're saying that your initial realization happened before you even went to India and went and did all these things. So would you feel comfortable using the word, "final," with regard to the realization that happened with Papaji, or was that, too, a stage in the journey?

M: Sometimes words that I would use in the East, I'm a bit reluctant to use in the West because we have a very suspicious mind, a very cynical mind. You know, you say, Yes, that was my final realization, and people start to pull you up, but I would have to say that there was now a place beyond doubt in me. It has been like that. It is not a posture that I have. I cannot help it. I make no effort now—

RA: Right, like breathing; it's just automatic.

M: Yes, yes, there's no effort, and it's the same for anyone who has come to that point. There is no one being realized. If there was, then you have to keep it up. It's going to be a full-time job [*laughing*], and I am not good at things. I have a very short attention span normally, and I have very little discipline. This is why, perhaps, I'm a good one to speak to people because they say, "Well, I don't have any discipline." I say, "Well, well, just like me" [*laughing*]. So this is beyond discipline. It's beyond skill. It simply is.

RA: Yeah, it has become as automatic as heart pumping and breath flowing, a natural state, right?

M: It's greater than that. It's greater than all of those because those function inside it, in front of it. It itself is not a function. All functions are pursued in it, but it is completely unalterable, immutable. It's just—

RA: Including when the heart stops pumping and the breath stops breathing, it will be immutable.

M: Oh, yes, it is.

RA: Right.

M: Oh, yes, it is. It's difficult for people to comprehend. They say, "Well, how can you say that. Your heart does not stop for you to know."

RA: Yeah, true.

M: Yeah, but then I say, Okay, I cannot turn it into some kind of philosophical debate. I can only tell you that there is a certainty about these things and prove to myself. I don't need to prove to anybody but prove to my own self that this is so.

RA: As a friend of mine once put it, "You're the only one there at your graduation" [*laughing*].

So despite the fact that there are no doubts, and everything that you've just been saying for the last five minutes, is there still a way in which somehow further refinement continues, or further enrichment, or whatever word you want to use?

M: Oh, yes, there is. This is what is a seeming paradox, or the mystery, that there continues to be a kind of refinement or maturing. I don't know where the end of that is, but it is taking place against a background of unchanging awareness. To comprehend this, I don't know how to say. There is something, as long as a life force is here, the body and consciousness is here, there will be continuous refinement, refining and refining. Something is going on by itself. I don't know who is refining. I don't know what is happening there, but maybe the intellect of the being or something, I don't know. Something is just kind of chewing the cud, maybe you can say, and it's going on, going on by itself. Behind this is the immutable one, and I don't mean behind, sequentially like someplace else, but in the most subtle place. So that's what I would say is the ultimate truth.

RA: Foundation of it, yeah. Can you expound a bit on the nature of this refinement? Elaborate on exactly how it is experienced from your perspective, this refinement?

M: Yes, perhaps I cannot [know] how specific I can be about it. It's more intuitive, but I would like to have a go, and see what comes out.

RA: Yeah.

M: I would say that the way in which your intuitive perception functions in a much more acute way, much more quickly, all of that, something, some change happens there. Different aspects and facets of being are making their way into that conscious field, and they're not being sort of like cultivated. It's almost like they are flowering by themselves. It comes, and they are totally appropriate to whatever they need to express by that, and you can say that there may be subtle, subtle tendencies that, in some way, obscure greater, speedier clarity on some phenomenal perception that will become much lighter, much more effortless. They are happening also by themselves, but, at the same time, there is no expansion happening to the pure self. There is a kind of expansion happening in consciousness, but I would want to say also that consciousness itself is phenomenal, but it is all we have in our knowing aspect.

RA: When you say consciousness is phenomenal, are you distinguishing between the pure self and consciousness in a more expressed form?

M: Yes, yes, yes, if I can continue, what I would want to say is that we can speak of pure consciousness or pure awareness, but sometimes I will feel somehow to say awareness *of* arises in pure awareness, which is not *of* anything. You have to allow a little space for this type of terminology because we're not speaking about quantifiable hectares. You're not talking about something that can be weighed and measured or something.

When we speak about mind and consciousness, sometimes it's the same thing because mind is also an aspect of consciousness, and consciousness is also an aspect of pure awareness. You can

use words like this, but when I come into that way of speaking, I know that it's very open. To try and be a bit more specific about it, what I would want to say is that the consciousness is more the medium of knowingness wherein we feel our existence. We're aware of our existence in the body, in the form of sort of presence or conscious presence that arises in that natural sense: I Am. I Exist, or Am-ness, or I-ness, whichever way, but I'm pointing more to that conscious presence after which other things come. All things are reporting to that, and you can say that that aspect of consciousness is what is functioning as the wake-ness of the material manifestation, as life, as relationship, as time, as the full play of the interrelated opposites. You see the wake-ness of that, the sense of I Am-ness, or what I call, maybe, localized consciousness. Sometimes I refer to that state, I Am, as the Immaculate Conception because it is through that concept that all other concepts are reporting. Whereas when, what I would call spirituality or the fruit of spiritual endeavor mostly is to come to that state where that I Am consciousness is not mixed with any concepts.

Now, ordinarily, it itself is neither man nor woman. It has no religion or belief system. It is actually pure, the earliest expression of the Absolute as material expression, but as soon as it announces itself in the body, it seems that identification arises with the body. The feeling, *I am the body*, arises, and that feeling, *I am the body*, then can [inaudible 59:17 divvy?] up other conditioning. That flow of conditioning and the belief, *I am the body*, creates the sense of a person, which is consciousness also, but consciousness in a very limited form. That limitation of the form creates some insecurity, some vulnerability in that limited consciousness expression, and that is what arises as the seeker, who then goes through so many different stages of growth or maturity as they approach more and more the pure state of the unassociated I Am.

So all of this is within, what I call the dynamic field of consciousness, where consciousness is experiencing the quality of knowledge, knowingness, comparison, growth, progress, life, death, all of these things are virile concepts for awhile. The state of pure realization is really beyond that because we know that that feeling, that state of consciousness, the state, I Am, is not timeless, is not absolutely pure because in deep sleep it is not there. Also, someone can hit you on the head, and your I Am is gone. So it cannot be the Absolute, you see, but while it is here it feels absolutely the highest principle, but there comes a time when this I Am-ness itself is also observed and recognized to be the subtlest phenomenon, the earliest phenomenon.

RA: Hmm, but still a phenomenon because subtler than that, or beyond that, is the non-phenomenal—

M: Yeah, yeah.

RA: So it's like the first sprouting of—

M: Yes, yes, we can say it like this, and I am very careful to whom I speak about these things. I don't want to just throw it out like it is just— I don't want to speak like this because it can sound like, Yes of course it is, and, you know, of course that's the way it is, but to even come to the place of the unassociated I Am is something extraordinarily rare. The I Am-ness, which is not molested by the I am the body idea and the fear and insecurities that, what I would say, accompany that egoic state.

RA: I wonder if that is what the Hindus refer to as Atman and Brahman, what you were just saying.

M: Yeah, actually the Hindu term, Atman, does not really refer to a spiritual ego or personality. It actually refers to the Para Brahman or the Brahman as is expressed inside the human form. We can equate it in our language as the sense, I Am, and what the indication of I Am is, we can say like that. This Para Brahman Paramatman, for most people, is only concept. Only when you know your I Am as a concept, then you intuitively know what Para Brahman is.

RA: That's interesting. So it's very beautiful what you were just saying, and I very much got the impression you were speaking from experience and not just philosophizing for us as you were saying it.

If I could summarize in order to make sure that I have understood what you were just saying, it struck me that you sort of traced the whole thing as it manifested into greater and greater identification and individuation, and then you reversed it and traced it back to greater and greater universality. I believe the conclusion was that as long as one is an embodied being, then the interface of the embodied-ness with Brahman or universality is going to necessitate some sort of sense of I Am, some sense of individuation as the sun is reflected in this particular mirror. Am I getting that at all?

M: Yeah, yeah, it is very good.

RA: Okay.

M: What I would say is that somehow we can only speculate about that pure Brahman state, that pure principle, the absolute awareness, because you can only know this when you are this. Otherwise we are only assuming. How one comes to know that: first you have to be ready to know it somehow. It has to be like that. Then you come to the place where even the elevated state, what they call the Godly state, the state I Am, the unassociated presence: I Am. Out of that I Am incubating in itself, the perfume coming out of that is, they say in India, satchitananda. I'm sure you're aware of this term, that you are intuitively sure that you exist, that you're conscious, and you're in a state of unmixed joy. Unfading joy comes from this.

Then most of the beings are happy to say, If this state can perpetuate, then we are content. We are happy for this, but that principle, which we call or refer to as a ghani or sage, is one who has transcended even this lofty state. They are aware that the I Am itself is kind of false. It's a strong word to use, false, but I mean it, the false, in terms of the highest integrity of meaning, meaning that it's not ultimate because it itself is perceivable.

Then they wanted to find out what perceived this. The fact already is that it is perceivable, that's already a fact, not a fact aimed at but concluded. Now to find out, by what is it perceived? They find out, not mentally, not philosophically. They say, But the fact is, this is already after the fact. The fact is that even the I Am itself is perceived. So I must be in a position to witness the I Am. I cannot be in the bubble of I Am, but this is already something so rare because for many people

there's already so much juice, so much joy in the state of the unassociated presence that the aspiration to go further is not immediately appealing, you see, because further than this, you see, they've reached the wish-fulfilling tree. Further than this, is what? It's almost like nothing, and the mind cannot conceive of nothing. Even the mind essence, which is still so much reflecting the manifest world but in its highest mode of perception, it still has some, I don't know, some affection for the being-ness. I don't know. I hope I'm making sense to you.

RA: No, I'm following you. Do you think that the evolutionary impulse prevents a person from resting on their laurels, though, and getting stuck in that, Okay, this satchitananda is sufficient, and I have no motivation to go further? Do you think they might rest on that plateau for a while, but eventually they're going to get moved along by the evolutionary force?

M: Yes, yes, even that one, and I don't want to trivialize it, would come to that unmixed presence. That's already a very, very rare and very auspicious recognition or realization, you see? You talk about the impulse to go beyond evolutionary outcomes. What I'm speaking about is super simple. I was going to say supernatural and thought, *No I'd better not use this term—*

RA: [*Laughter*] Too many connotations with that.

M: Ok, I say, super simple, because it's the one place where efforts cannot reach.

RA: Right. Yeah, so when I say, "Go beyond," I didn't necessarily imply by making some kind of effort, but it's like we started this interview—

M: It's going to continue already—

RA: And I used the metaphor of a river and you getting swept along on a river. It seems like that river never stops flowing, and then whatever stage of development you're at, there's going to be— You might get off in an eddy for awhile, but eventually the current is going to keep carrying you.

M: Yes, sounds good.

RA: [*Laughing*].

M: [*Laughing*] Of course, you know, I started to say to you that All are That, and I'm not backing down from that statement, All are That. That in our manifest expression, I sometimes use the term, I hope you don't perceive it disrespectfully, that we have developed an affection for the infection, and the infection is the belief, I am the enjoyer here. I am the one. I am taking this, and as long as the universe keeps feeding me with higher and higher, subtler and subtler food, I am happy to consume.

There comes a stage when one also comes to the place, but that is always going to be consuming, and that is also phenomenal. It is not ultimate. When that realization comes, then one finds that oneself is already that, and what effort is to be made? Until then efforts will be made. It's part of

that, what you may call, the outcome of that universal drive. Not the outcome, but perhaps the fuel for that universal drive.

RA: Yeah, and maybe what we could say is that that same universal drive might, at one stage, show up as effort and, later on, as sort of an automatic, spontaneous process or something.

M: Yes, yes, thank you. Thank you for bringing in that word because sometimes I speak about effortless, but I don't speak against the effortful. The effort is also necessary, and it's also an expression of consciousness. It's also one way in which consciousness expresses effort. Efforts are needed until efforts are not needed.

RA: *[Laughing]* Exactly. It's very popular in spiritual circles to say, Oh, give up the search, but that could very well be a premature—

M: And I would be asking, Who is going to do it?

RA: Yeah, yeah.

M: Who is going to do it? It's also mind thinking, *Oh, yeah, give up the search*. It is not coming from the pure self.

RA: A few minutes ago, when we started on this particular phase of the discussion, and I was asking you about your own sense of refinement continuing, you mentioned something about intuitive perception continuing to refine. I have a sense of what you meant by that, but do you also feel that actual perception is continuing to refine, not necessarily in terms of getting 20/20 vision or something, but just in terms of the subtlety with which the world is perceived?

M: Yes.

RA: Subtle faculties of perception are somehow refining?

M: Yes, they are both one. I say, sometimes, there is one Earth, but there are billions of worlds because in each, you may say, position of consciousness, a world is being constructed and sustained in that construction, but it's never still. It's always moving along like an ever-changing self-portrait. It's not fixed, and so there's always some subtle changes there, modification, always something. I don't think everybody is looking at the same physical world and getting the same reading. It passes through so many filters of our own conditioning, and so many factors are contributing to that experience. It cannot be—

RA: Yeah, we're all seven billion blind men all feeling one big elephant *[laughing]*.

M: *[Laughing]* I wonder which part of it I'm feeling now.

RA: *[Laughing]* I have a feeling you have a pretty good grasp on the whole elephant.

M: *[Laughing]*

RA: No, actually that topic fascinates me a little bit because I have encountered people who say that their perceptual faculties have refined to the point where they routinely perceive subtle realms of creation, celestial beings and things like that. Not that we should place some kind of great priority on that and make a big deal out of it but that it becomes sort of a routine way of operating at a certain stage of spiritual development.

M: I don't know. If it is your karma. I'm going to use this word now. I may get into trouble for it, but [*laughing*] to experience these things, then they will come to you. It's not something that, yeah, you know, you get into this, and you go more deep, and then you start. It's not like this. People make things up. It's not quite like that. If it comes, it usually comes completely unannounced, unexpected. It usually comes when the consciousness is really fixed upon itself. It's not studying phenomena. It sees actually the superficiality of it. It doesn't dismiss it cynically, but it's not feeding from that anymore. It self-feeds. Then it sees that all the manifest world are just images, forms of the one consciousness. You feel this thing. To want to go more deeply into phenomena is not an urge that one who is fixed in the truth feels, but the manifest world may be revealed in more subtler forms and ways. It will not be of any great attraction for the one who has really comprehended truth in the heart. It will not. It will just be some other [inaudible 1:13:42].

RA: That's a good answer. So you would say that it's not an essential criterion or prerequisite to full realization. It's some sideline that may or may not be part of it.

M: Yes, yes, I am happy that we touched this point because I think people are often misled or misguided, or they may miss the mark about this, that the deeper you go, the more mystical your vision becomes. You start to see metaphysical manifestations, and you start to operate in all the three worlds or the different worlds. That may be so, but one who has realized the Self doesn't take that as any big deal either.

RA: But what if someone would argue, Well, realizing the Self is actually the foundation for those further unfoldments? It's like the prerequisite for that, and in a sense it's like a starting point for further exploration.

M: No, that's not true.

RA: Okay.

M: The realization of the Self is already complete. When you realize that you yourself, your own self, the question comes ultimately, Are you material or immaterial, tangible or intangible? Through your own introspections, through your own spiritual discipline, your own encounters, your own experiences, what conclusion have you come to? Ultimately the final stroke, Are you something? Are you an object or not objective? You must find it out.

If you are an object, you then discover that you are the subtlest object, and this subtlest object is going to perceive other subtle objects, or going to perceive other objects subtly in correspondence to their own subtlety. If you are not material, then your perception will be very

different. You will see the material universe will still appear, but you will be perceiving its essential reality. When it appears as an objective reality, but inwardly, ... empty of the mind's overlay, it still will be insignificant for you. Whether those manifestations take on metaphysical forms or not, you will not be attracted to that because so complete is the Self, actually, that there is no fascination for other things, although those worlds are still regions within the Great Mind, and may be perceived also. I don't want to rule this out because this is also another fact of perception. It does happen, but what I'm talking about is if it is a fascination for the one who sees, I would say, no it's not a fascination. There is joy in it because the joy is manifesting out of that single source, and it imbues all manifestation with that joy.

RA: I'm glad we dwelled on that point a bit because I live in a town where several thousand people practice transcendental meditation, and I'm no longer part of that organization. I used to be, but part of the teaching in that organization was that there's a sort of a progression in which first, self-realization is established. Then eventually perception becomes refined, and you begin to perceive the celestial levels. Then eventually you begin to perceive everything as consciousness, everything as the self. There are a lot of people around here who have been meditating for decades, and they're very adamant about that sequence.

M: They have not experienced it, that's why.

RA: Well, that's what I'm kind of discovering, talking to so many people.

M: Yes, yeah, I've experienced it, as many people who have recognized the Self have seen the functioning of the entire universe in such a way that— It happens in a short time, that all the different species, all the different expressions, all the different times, all the different manifestations, and all the different worlds, they all appear in front of you and are swallowed up inside you. I will tell you, extraordinary as it sounds, it is a very simple experience.

Do I want to have this experience again? I don't care about it. It doesn't matter. I mean if one feels like this, it may be because they feel that somehow that is something. That it is really something that I can speak to other beings on other planets and all this, but this is my own private view I have to say. I am not speaking as a representative for any person to say this. My own view, I am not concerned at all about it. If it happens, and when it does happen, I see it in that moment, and I see that it also passes like any other phenomenon. It cannot exist independent of my perceiving of it, but I do exist independent of the perceiving of that.

RA: And I'm sure you would say the same thing of siddhis, that they are sort of superfluous, not essential prerequisites or criterion of—

M: They have their part to play because also they do help in lifting up the faith of humanity who believes only in tangible things. We are all Doubting Thomases, you know. We don't mind to see extraordinary things as special effects on television, but we don't expect to see them in ordinary life. So when one sees that some things like this happen, that there are people who can live without food, that there are people who can speak to all beings in other parts of the world very, very clearly and like this, they say, My God. Then they can't explain. Their minds cannot explain, and to such extent sometimes it blows the cover on the mind and completely can bring

in a space of humility. That humility is necessary in order to make some space for the Lord to visit you.

RA: That's good, but as you were saying in other instances during this conversation, it might be just that individual's particular dharma to manifest a thing like that. Just like you might be a good golf player or something, it doesn't mean that it's an essential characteristic of realization.

M: Well, there are different degrees of siddhic powers. One great yogi, whom I loved very much and I was very privileged to also meet him, Sri Yogi Ramsuratkumar from Thiruvannamalai—

RA: Oh, I've heard of him, yeah, yeah, yeah.

M: I spent some time with him. He had some authority, some power. People would come sometimes, and they would say, Sri Yogi, we are trying for a child for so many years. We cannot have a child. The doctor say that the chance is very little because my wife has got some something, some blocked fallopian tube, or whatever it is, and please we are appealing to you. He will say, Okay, in January of this year, you will have a child. It's going to be a girl. Bring her to me. I'll give her a name. These things happen, and people go, Oh, my God. It's like this, but to the Indian mind, they are quite accustomed to this. It's not just, Do you believe in it? They see it, you see.

So there are some powers which, say some sage or some saint may [have, and] somehow are in some harmony with the Supreme, and the Supreme manifests in a particular aspect of its will or expression in that, through that, yogi's life. I'm not talking about Tarot cards here. I'm talking about beings who are able to be functioning in two or three different places simultaneously.

Some people who this is happening to, consciously doing it, and others, they are doing that somehow. They're *not* doing it, in fact. Sometimes they don't know anything about it. Other people come and say, Thank you for helping me and for showing up, and they say, For what? What was that? They don't know. They didn't do it as a deliberate act, but the Cosmos manifests that out of grace. Out of the power of their own realization, these automatic manifestations are created. They don't necessarily know it. This is well known about Sri Ramana Maharshi. He was known to go and help people and to show up in places, and when people came to thank him for this, he showed at least, maybe he pretended, I don't know, but he says, I don't know anything about it.

RA: Actually with regard to him, I've interviewed three or four people out of the 96 or so that I've interviewed, who, before they had even heard of Ramana Maharshi, had him come to them. One woman, she had this intense desire for truth, and she said, "I'm just going to sit here until truth walks through that door," and then she went to bed. She woke up in the middle of the night, and Ramana Maharshi was sitting on her bed. She didn't know who in the heck it was, and she threw a pillow at him [*laughing*]. Later on, years later, she found his face in a bookstore. So it's interesting. I wonder if he's actually still functioning in some way on some level.

M: Of course.

RA: Yeah.

So that addresses the notion that a realized being just is like a drop that merges into the ocean and is no longer distinguishable from it after death.

M: These things are very, very subtle and sacred things. There's no way we can explain them. They can manifest on several levels in the manifest life, in our ordinary life. Then also when they drop their bodies, their manifestation is even greater. It happens. That's a big room to go into right now *[laughing]*.

RA: It is. By this time you probably have to go to the bathroom. I'm getting to that point myself, but it's *[laughing]*—

M: I'm okay at the moment. I'm still holding up somehow *[laughing]*.

RA: It's fascinating because again, in contemporary spirituality there is this attitude, at least in some circles, that there really is no entity whatsoever which exists even now and which therefore could exist after the body drops. So talk of Ramana Maharshi showing up in somebody's life is absurd, and many people are kind of buying into that line of thinking.

M: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, they are small timers. This is small change. They are dealing with small change. I don't know, these people, they have a certain respect somehow because there's a side of the human intellect that's really afraid, that's really been trained to regard the things we are talking about as mumbo jumbo, voodoo, foolishness, you understand?

RA: Yeah, yeah.

M: These people they are speaking a language that seems very, very clear and can appeal to a certain part of the intellect because it seems really clear and explicable, but it's dry. It has nothing in it at all. You meet them, and they are also dry because they've cut themselves off from the all-encompassing greatness and magnificence of consciousness. They think they have a hold on this understanding, but it's only a very tiny thing they're claiming, a very tiny thing. I wonder if these people are really alive at all, or what. They must be covering their eyes, or something. They're in strong denial. Very often I meet some of them, and they are very afraid, very afraid to be opened up. I think the people who are speaking these things, you should see them when they are having dinner, or whatever it is. They go to the restaurant and get short changed sometimes, and they are making such a big fuss about it when nothing in the world exists.

RA: As Ram Das put it, "If you think you're enlightened, go spend a week with your parents" *[laughing]*.

M: Your mom especially *[laughing]*.

RA: Well that's kind of the way I've dealt with it. I kind of regard it as, Okay they've got their niche, and in that niche they appeal to a certain people with whom that niche resonates.

Eventually all those people, both they and their listeners, are probably, God willing, going to move into a more nuanced view of the world.

M: I really wish them very well. I wish them well in it and to stay open, stay open. I want to say stay open is a good thing to say; it's a generous thing to say because I hope they are already open. They don't sound open. I wish they would become more open, and stop, in some way, speaking for the universe.

RA: You sound like you've encountered a few of them [*laughing*].

M: Yes, a good amount [*laughing*].

RA: I have, too. It's a little bit of a challenge interviewing them, but it stretches me, and that's good.

Well, it hasn't been a challenge interviewing you. It's been a total delight, and I've really enjoyed this conversation. I could easily keep it going for another hour-and-a-half, but out of respect for your time, and —

M: No, no, no, if you want to speak about something, we can talk about it. If it's time for the end of the interview, that's also fine. Everything is fine.

RA: Yeah, well it's open-ended. I mean, you know, the way my mind works I could probably keep thinking up things to ask you.

M: Oh, no, don't think up things to ask me. Maybe we—

RA: I mean they come spontaneously. They just bubble up, you know.

M: Yes, yes, yes, we can always, if it's agreeable to you and to the people who listen to your show and watch your show, then perhaps another time may come, and I may have another opportunity to speak with you—

RA: Oh, I would love to do that.

M: If that opportunity comes, we will see how it goes.

RA: Oh, absolutely. Let's make it happen. We won't try to do it when you're in India because I don't think the Internet connection will allow, but this is a good one here, though. So sometime when you're back in Portugal—

M: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.

RA: That would be great.

M: Very great, very great.

RA: Thank you, Mooji.

Let me make a few concluding remarks here. Then we'll close.

I've been speaking with Mooji. He's in Portugal. I'm in Iowa. This is Rick Archer, and this is a show that we call Buddha at the Gaspump. The implication being that in ordinary circumstances these days, you're going to meet awakened beings because they are becoming more and more numerous. It's a weekly show, although the schedule is a little bit irregular, but on the average it's one week.

So if you have been enjoying this interview and would like to hear others, go to Batgap dot com, B-A-T-G-A-P, and you'll see all the ones we've done so far. You can sign up for an email newsletter to be notified each time a new one gets posted. There's a podcast that you can sign up for.

I was out riding my bicycle the other day, and some guy stopped his car, rolled down the window, and said, "I'm listening to Buddha at the Gaspump!" "Great!" [*Laughing*]. So you can listen while you're commuting or whatever. There's also a little chat group there that you can participate in that gets set up with each interview so that people might want to discuss points that were brought up in that interview.

So that's about it. Thank you for watching or listening, and thank you so much, Mooji, for your time and generosity. It's really enriched my own experience in my heart to interact with you like this.

M: It's a good pleasure for me. I am very happy also and enjoy— I don't always enjoy every interview, but I enjoy talking with you because actually the questions and points you raise they are stimulating for me. So thank you for that also.

RA: Thank you, and we'll definitely do another one. I'll be in touch with your people that helped me organize this, and we'll schedule another one. So thank you. Thank you to those who have been listening or watching, and we will see you next time. Namaste.

M: Ok, thank you. Namaste.

[*Music*]