

# Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj: The discipline of disappearance

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*The most cardinal question in the self-inquiry as prescribed by Sri Nisargadatta maharaj is:*

What were you before you were born?

*Quite obviously you did not exist! You were not there! Or simply you can say 'I was not' or 'nothing'.*

*Presently you know that you are 'something' or 'somebody'*

*And, quite obviously you also know that a moment would come when you wouldn't be 'something' or 'somebody' or you would be 'nothing' again.*

*Maharaj stresses on this point, and goes on to say:*

This is a subtle point, so try to understand it clearly

When I say 'I was not' prior to conception, then what I mean is, that I was not like the present 'I am'

But that 'I' which could discern this must be there to judge the absence of the present 'I am'

*Further:*

At first 'no one' is. Instantly, one is, and then two.

The subject of the talk is: How did these two reduce to one, and finally to nothing?

Out of nothingness spontaneously the sense of beingness is felt - this is one.

Later, when the sense of beingness knows 'I am' duality begins.

Then after the duality has arisen, the sense of being identifies with the form, and so on.

Actually to refer to the sense of being as 'one', is not quite correct.

Since in this state only the sense of being prevails, where is the need to say even 'one'?

With the appearance of otherness (duality), both no.1 and no.2 appear simultaneously.

To say 'something is', 'I' must be there first.

If 'I' am not, I cannot say 'something is'.

So the fundamental principle of spirituality is that 'I must be there, before anything else can be.

This 'I' is the beingness which is first.

*This primordial beingness or the nascent 'I am' when it just dawned or appeared has to be caught hold of. It is a state without words or completely non-verbal, you knew that 'you are' that's all! And believe me there is no at single human being who must not have gone through this stage, It is only a question of applying oneself and coming to this purest of the pure 'I am' or 'presence'. An extremely important point made in the above statements is:*

‘Actually to refer to the sense of being as ‘one’, is not quite correct.

Since in this state only the sense of being prevails, where is the need to say even ‘one’?’

*When you are in this state of pure ‘presence’ or the wordless ‘I am’, then it is only the ‘presence’ or the ‘I am’ all over! There is nothing else! In its actuality it is a non-dual state and everything including the ‘I am’ is bound to disappear! And you wouldn’t know that ‘you are’.*

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