

## Gurus and the teaching podcast transcript

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Is your advaita teacher claiming to be enlightened and telling you that it is just a matter of time before you too will be enlightened? Are you being taught that you need to behave a particular way in order to become realised? According to some participants and teachers of advaita, that is not what advaita is really about.

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There is sort of a sense in spirituality, you know, which I took on, that even just unknowingly, that everything is kind of floaty and nice, you know, that there is not contrast of, say things that are like, you know, there is the rainbow and there is the volcano and the earth quake and the tsunami and all the rest of it. You know, it is the polarities. I just sense within myself, if I am upholding a sense of having to be, sort of, nice all the time for example, you know, it creates conflict.

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It is such a precious gift that you offer in that Bob because the guru game, you know, with the subtle, and there are always some subtle layers of it, of the one who knows and all of that – the guru needs the disciples as much as the disciples need the guru and that whole loop, that feeds on each other, which is in so many different places and I find that invitation you keep offering helps undermine that. And just keeps cutting it because there's a sort of desire to recreate the game.

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A: You don't see yourself as a guru, why?

GILBERT: Because something was pointed out to me. Something was suggested to me to investigate, what I am, and I had a good look. What I discovered is indescribable.

A: And so how does that then make you not a guru?

GILBERT: Because a guru is only an appearance.

A: And so can you also say 'I am not Gilbert'?

GILBERT: Yeah.

A: I mean, would that be as accurate as 'I am not a guru'?

GILBERT: Yeah, what I am is indescribable.

A: Okay so going back onto the point of the guru idea, you are say you are not a guru because there isn't a person there who is doing the job of a guru.

GILBERT: There is not a person anywhere in the whole manifestation doing anything. It is a singularity that is doing everything. It is the one essence that is doing everything without discrimination.

A: How is this teaching, for want of a better word, different from other teachings?

GILBERT: Well this so called teaching is not really a teaching, it's direct pointing. That's all it is. It's absolutely direct. It's that forming itself and pointing immediately back at itself through so called body mind organisms that have realised that. It's the living essences itself.

Tony Parsons expresses a similar point;

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TONY: Also energetically, really, we are meeting nothing. We are meeting the source of everything which is nothing. And we are talking together, there is a conversation going on, between nothing and nothing.

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A: What do the other teachings do?

GILBERT: Most of these other teaching have lots of stories of attainment, things you can do to improve this, that and the other, practices you can do. Meditate and blah, blah, blah blah. Endless conceptual, complex things, you know, you can engage the mind. And that's why they are popular because that is what the mind wants – the mind wants to do something to perpetuate itself.

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Tony Parsons says;

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TONY: So you have got hundreds of teachers all over the world who are in that situation where they believe that what they did brought them to the attainment of owning liberation; 'I am liberated. I am liberated because I did this.' It is total fallacy. It is just ignorance. It is a dream. It is the way the dream goes. So thousands of people all around the world are going to people who will tell them 'If you take this tablet and go and stand on one leg sing Beethoven's 5<sup>th</sup> with your finger in your left ear you will be come liberated.' They do it. They try and do it.

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GILBERT: They say, 'Look, you're almost there, you're almost there. Stick with me. I'll help you cleanse yourself of all these things and then, it may take five or ten years but, you know, stick with me, you know, keep paying your fees, you know, I know the fees are steep, but you know, this...it costs a lot of money to run a business like this.

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GILBERT: That is why this 'teaching' is absolutely direct. It says you do not have to take one step in time to go anywhere in any direction away from right here, right now. And this series of moments that make up a day, and a week and a month, it is all the same moment. In appearance it is unfolding in constantly changing patterns and that moment of realisation, it must be right now.

When you realise that time is just a story that we tell ourselves, you see through the whole thing and you realise that in that so-called past, as far back as you can remember, you know that you were there the whole time. And it is actually the same moment. This moment is exactly the same moment because the clock does not divide anything.

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Here is what Tony has to say about time and becoming.

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And the function of seeking keeps the seeker locked into the idea there is something else. And that something else is in the future. It is going to happen; 'What I am looking for, I am going to find.' And so for many people the idea of that is to get help, guidance and go to someone else who might be able to help them find what they are looking for. And the natural attraction for the seeker is to go to someone else who also teaches that there is something to find later on, after a while. Most of the teachings that are in the world today are the teachings of becoming. So the teaching of enlightenment or whatever you like to call it, is basically, traditionally and in a contemporary way the teaching of becoming. So if you go to a teacher to

find enlightenment the teacher will invariably say to you, 'Yes you are a separate individual and you have a choice to find what you are looking for. 'And in order to find it you need to.....' and then you get a list.

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Tony Parsons humorously suggests a possible scenario of how the guru adoration begins;

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TONY: The mind will then paint a picture of what enlightenment is like; enlightenment is bliss, omnipresence, Omni power, everybody loves you, you love everyone, and you walk around in this beautiful, sort of pink haze.

People come to you and they say, 'I hear you are enlightened.'

And you say, 'Yes.'

'Well, would you come and speak to some of my friends?'

'Yes, okay.'

You go and you know and there's a few friends and you tell them how you have become enlightened and they love that and it sounds good. They look at you and you are sort of very quiet, obviously completely together and in bliss. And they want to be like you and their friends want to be like you so they get more friends and they come. And you get more people in the room. And in the end it has to be a bigger room and the crowds get bigger. And then you say to your friend, 'Well look, you know I am down here at this level, maybe I will have a platform or bigger seat so that people can see me. This is...we've got this idea...the difficulty with this is that the mind has an idea of what enlightenment is like.

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A: So then why is the notion that somebody like you, for example, is a guru, problematic? How does that create problems?

GILBERT: Well it doesn't create problems but in people's minds it creates a separation, immediately. 'That, so-called, person is a guru' they've attained what it is your trying to attain and that's bullshit. It's immediately obvious.

When I see these, so-called, popular gurus what I see is absolute conceitedness. But, you know, it is obvious that seekers do not recognise that conceitedness. It is not a problem. I don't really give a shit one way or the other.

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Q: That's not wrong, is it?

TONY: Oh no, there isn't anything wrong or right it is just what it is. It is oneness playing the game of pretending that there is something called enlightenment that people can get towards and attain. It's been going on ever since, yonks.

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A: And Bob never, ever claims to have got anything.

GILBERT: No. You never hear him say, you know, 'I am enlightened. I am an enlightened being.' I have never heard him say it.

A: In fact, he makes a joke of it.

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Eliot: I mean is Bob a sage? That's a question to answer; 'Is Bob a sage?' (Bob laughs)

B: No he is parsley, rosemary and thyme, he's not sage.

Eliot: Is he an enlightened being?

Q: Eliot, how can you be an enlightened being?

Eliot: That's the point.

Q: There's no enlightenment. You've got to grasp that point from the outset.

Eliot: Well, I mean, that's a huge concept that goes around in these circles – enlightened beings.

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On that point too, of when you were talking about questions and asking questions, I mean Bob loves people asking questions. He doesn't care how crazy they are if they are direct about this stuff and, you know, they're not telling stories. Not many gurus I would imagine take too kindly to some of the direct questions that are put to Bob. Because he asks people to say, I mean, in most followings, I'm not sure because I have never done the guru thing myself, well I have a little bit with BEEP, but with him, nobody questions him, you're not allowed to question him, you know,

GILBERT: Of course.

A: You are not allowed to doubt what he says.

GILBERT: Anyone who starts to see through the guru game is dealt with very quickly and they are asked to leave, pay up their fees, and asked to leave.

If I put a notice up on my web site for people to get in touch with me who have been thrown out of various guru groups I would get heaps and heaps of emails. I could start a vigilante group, an anti-guru vigilante group, you know, it would be so simple. Because there would be so many people who have started seeing through the game and started saying, 'No, no, no' da, da, da' and they are dealt with and they are asked to leave in the middle of the meeting. And they have got security people take them out.

A: And they are not being violent or anything, you know,

GILBERT: They are questioning the authority.

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Q: Unfortunately, I took your book with me so I kept asking very awkward questions. It was very uncomfortable.

T: The most awkward question is who is it that is liberated

Q: How can a process take you where you already are? I asked her actually expecting to hear a response. I thought your books were a stage and then she would give me a reply and it would validate thirty years of meditation.

Tony: Oh well. I'm afraid not.

Q: Unfortunately she couldn't answer the questions so I was just shunned. I felt I was shunned because I was asking questions. Eventually we just left.

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A: What were your first impressions when you went into the group?

E: I had some kind of expectations. I mean I had been to other teachers obviously, and on the one hand there are a lot of similarities, I mean, it's advaita, and what Bob's talking about and

what's been talked about in the group, I mean, in that sense it's what I expected. It's sometimes the format is a little different and I find it, actually very interesting, it's a very interesting new challenge also. It's a challenge that I am really ready for, it is really something that comes at the right time, so to say. Because the format is not necessarily questioning, answering, where I put up my hand and ask a question to the teacher Bob, that does happen as well, but usually evolves, it's a group conversation or a group discussion, even, where everyone responds to everyone. And that's a very new dynamic which is really nice in the sense that you get new perspectives, everyone has their own words that they use to actually explain things. But it is also challenging in the sense that you're actually...you are not only invited to ask a question, but your also invited to actually just share your insights, to share how you see things. How...the words that you give it – that is a whole new aspect to it which is really nice about being at Bob's and different from what I have seen before.

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BOB: Everybody has got a chance to say, to talk about it, if they want to. You can go to any other guru in the country, or so called guru or teacher, there's not one of that that will let you sit out the front and have a say but it has been done here and it can be done again. It's open to everyone to have a go. It's not just what belongs here. So there is no entity here that is claiming it. No entity here holding you to ransom; 'You hand around for another twenty years and you might get it. I'm telling you it's yours right here, right now. Just a matter of opening up and seeing it, realising and functioning from that point. If you're new here and have any questions or any doubts, or want to know a bit more about it, I might say something about it, somebody else might put it a different way, but try and keep on that, at what we are pointing to. We don't want to go into the stories, it's easy enough to go into the story – what will happen and what might happen, and how is this and how is that. Stay with the only fact you are absolutely certain of, the fact of your own being.

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Eliot: If you want to talk about an enlightened being, there is nothing other than enlightened being.

BOB: You don't even need that concept. There's just being. The label on it is the problem. We call God the supreme being, we call ourselves human beings and we call others enlightened beings, take away the 'enlightened' 'human' and 'supreme' those labels, what's left? Just the being.

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Nisargadatta said, 'Your own self is your ultimate teacher Your outer teacher is merely a milestone. It is only your inner teacher that will walk with you to the goal, for he is the goal.'

That's it for now from the urban guru café. If you have any comments to make about this story or any ideas you would like to hear about, you can find our contact details at [urbangurucafe.com](http://urbangurucafe.com). Thanks for visiting.