

Vasanta Vihar

Newsletter



KRISHNAMURTI FOUNDATION INDIA

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22

Our very seriousness may prevent understanding...

Excerpts from J. Krishnamurti's talks

Question: *Does not this process of constant self-awareness lead to self-centredness?*

Krishnamurti: It does, does it not? The more you are concerned about yourself, watching, improving, thinking about yourself, the more self-centred you are, are you not? That is an obvious fact. If I am concerned with changing myself, then I must observe, I must build a technique which will help me to break up that centre. There is self-centredness as long as I am consciously or unconsciously concerned with a result, with success, as long as I am gaining and putting aside—which is what most of us are doing. The incentive is the goal I am pursuing; because I want to gain that end, I watch myself. I am unhappy, I am miserable, frustrated, and I feel there is a state in which I can be happy, fulfilled, complete; so I become aware in order to gain that state. I use awareness to get what I want; so I am self-centred.

Through awareness, through self-analysis, through reading, studying, I hope to dissolve the 'me', and then I shall be happy, enlightened, liberated, I shall be one of the elite—and that is what I want. So, the more I am concerned with gaining an end, the greater is the self-centredness of thought. But thought is ever self-enclosing anyhow, is it not?

So, what? To break down the self-centredness, I must understand why the mind seeks an end, a goal, a particular result. Why does my mind go after a reward? Why? Can it function in any other way? Is not the movement of the mind from memory to memory, from result to result? I have acquired this, I don't like it, and I am going to get something else. I don't like this thought, but that thought will be better, nobler, more comforting, more satisfying. As long as I am thinking, I can think in no other terms; for the mind moves from knowledge to knowledge,

(Continued on page 7)

A journey with the teachings

The following is a talk given by S.P.Kandaswamy, Secretary, Krishnamurti Foundation India, at the KFI Annual Gathering held at Rishi Valley in November 2001.

Friends,
I wonder whether I should talk at all; we have done so much of it during the last few days! After you listen to Krishnaji, you often wonder whether there is anything further to talk about. However, I shall speak—not as one who has understood the teachings fully, nor as one who is completely ignorant of the teachings, but rather as one who is suspended somewhere in between, oscillating between moments of attention and inattention.

From far and wide we have come and gathered here. We have come triggered by an ancient human impulse to inquire, to probe. Many of us must have begun the journey with the

teachings at different stages in our lives and at different points of time. What has been the nature of this journey? I intend, if you permit me, to share with you the nature of my journey. In a sense, it is not *my* journey, but rather one that most of us as human beings have undertaken.

The ground of my life

I see that the nature of my journey is very closely related to the ground of life on which I stand. The first thing I see when I look at my life is that life and living do not mean just carrying on one's physical existence, but rather being in contact with a series of relationships from the time I am born till the time I die. When I am born, I am related as a baby to my

father and mother, then as a brother, then as a fellow-student at school, at college, then as a colleague in an office, if I opt for a career or a profession, then as a husband, father, grandfather, and so on. I see I am in a series of relationships on the ground of life. I see that I am also related to my belongings, my ideas, my images, my opinions, and my expectations.

The next thing I see is that I am caught in a daily grind, outwardly and inwardly. I am caught in a daily grind outwardly, in the sense that I keep to the same schedule, go to work in the morning, do the same type of work every day, maybe with some modifications here and there, till the evening, and then I start all over again the next day—this I do day after day, month after month, year after year, for many years, twenty, thirty, forty years. I see that I am caught in a grind inwardly also, in the sense that I continue to live within a very limited and narrow field of my consciousness, bound by my desires, hopes, longings, and expectations day after day. I see that my life has become a routine, with no sense of deep spontaneity.

The next thing I see, when I look at this ground of life, is that my brain is under tremendous assault and pressure from many quarters: the mass media, cable television, magazines, newspapers, political upheavals, terrorism, wars, overcrowding, competition, the pressures of globalization, environmental degradation, and so on. I somehow manage to cope with all these. But when the pressure becomes severe, my mind breaks down and goes into depression. The capacity of my brain to function clearly and efficiently declines.

The next thing I see is that I live in a society that is extremely aggressive and acquisitive, a society where the survival of the fittest is the norm, a society where most of the relationships are formed, sustained, and terminated by economic, financial considerations. And when I look around, I see a big rat-race—more and more people spending the money they don't earn, buying the things they don't need, and trying to impress people who don't care. And I see that the urge to join the rat-race is tremendous, and unless I am alert, I too will just slip into it.

I somehow meander through all of my relationships at a superficial or formal level, without any depth or substance to all that. And I go on like this in my life and die.

This is the ground on which I stand. Now, placed in this setting, in this milieu, I came into contact with the teachings. What do I mean by the word 'teachings'? To me the teachings are a body of insights, which a great seer has brought forth out of his perception. What are those insights?

The teachings tell me that there is in me psychological fragmentation as a separate entity, as the 'me', the 'I', which is consolidated, nourished, and sustained by the search for security, and that as long as I live in this prison, real freedom is not possible. They tell me that I am held in the sense of psychological time, which is only a creation of thought, an illusion. They tell me that the observer is the observed, and the distinction between the two is a creation of thought; that I am deeply conditioned by many factors, and so unless a mutation takes place in my brain cells, fundamental transformation is not possible.

Now, having come into contact with these insights, what has been the nature of my journey? My journey with the teachings began many years ago when I was a student. When I look back, I see that it has been a long stretch of time, and I find it very interesting.

The initial phase

There was this initial phase when I first heard K, which I would perhaps describe as a phase of romantic idealism. During this phase, there was great veneration of the teacher; one was just taken with the extraordinary presence of the teacher and the elegant phrases in which the teachings manifested. There was great excitement that one had started an exciting journey, had taken the first step and would soon reach the destination, a point of 'psychological ramarajya', if I may use the expression, where everything in me would be full of peace, bliss, harmony, and contentment. During this phase, the word was the thing, the word 'fear' was fear, the word 'compassion' was compassion. Also, there was contempt for other teachings and other teachers! This romantic phase ended soon when I felt a tap on my shoulder and saw Life telling me, 'My dear boy, don't get excited, I am here.'

The next phase was one in which I was able to test the validity of some of the insights in my day-to-day life much more clearly and see whether they were really true or merely the opinions of the teacher. And I found them to be completely true. The fact that I am deeply conditioned by many factors and I respond out of that conditioned state; that I live most of the time anchored either in the past or in the future but never in the immediate present; that I am related to another only through my image about the other; and that whenever I am faced with a problem of choice, I am bound to be in conflict. All these things I understood as being true in my own life. Not only did I see the validity of these insights, but I was also able to understand much more clearly the implications of a state that the insights pointed to.

Website on the teachings

A new website, **Teachings of J.Krishnamurti—International Website**, was launched on 15 May 2002. A joint venture of the five Krishnamurti Foundations worldwide—in India, UK, USA, Spain, and Canada—the website aims at making Krishnamurti’s teachings available to a newer and wider readership. It marks a big leap in our dissemination work.

Implicit in the structure and content of the website in the message that Krishnamurti’s teachings are more important than the organizations built around it. Thus the website offers no information about the Foundations and their activities; nor does it offer for sale books and tapes. Its sole aim is to provide readers with the depth and the width of the teachings. This will be done by adding, every month, a rich variety of texts—talks, writings, dialogues, excerpts, and so on—and also audio and video clippings.

The website has the following features:

Home Page: The Home Page presents a brief profile of Krishnamurti’s life and work, for the benefit of the newcomers. Its chief feature, however, is a module, ‘Daily Meditations’, which presents each day a quotation from Krishnamurti’s books. These quotes—one-liners or short paragraphs—will, over the weeks and months, cover the major aspects of the teachings.

Public Talks: Three public talks, drawn from the 17-volume *Collected Works of J.Krishnamurti*, will be uploaded every month. The selections begin from the year 1933.

Problems of Living: In this menu, three chapters from the three-volume *Commentaries on Living* will be presented each month.

For the young: Krishnamurti’s statements on education and the problems of young adults form the content of this menu. To begin with, there are excerpts from the new compilation, *What are You Doing with Your Life?*

Audio-video clippings: Brief, ten-minute excerpts from Krishnamurti’s talks and discussions will be presented here—these will be activated shortly.

Additional Materials: Besides these materials, which will be rotated every month, there are permanent features such as the two major statements Krishnamurti made: ‘Truth is a pathless land’, and ‘The core of the teaching’.

Archives: All materials, including the short quotations and audio-video clippings, will be stored in the Archives.

A search facility that enables you to scan the texts for particular words and a feedback menu are the other features of the website.

Do visit us at www.jkrishnamurti.org

For instance, I saw not only that I was heavily conditioned but also, and much more clearly, the implications of such a state: that if one is conditioned, one’s senses and faculties do not function to their optimum, the sense of hearing, seeing, touching do not operate fully; there is an inability to see facts as they are, leading to conflicts. The image, the word becomes more powerful than reality, and one’s understanding of these insights is only at the intellectual level and ‘real perception’ is not possible.

Years rolled by, and I moved on to a phase in which I was able to read between the lines of what K talked about, understand the subtlety of the teachings. From literal understanding there was a shift to a contextual understanding. For instance, during the initial romantic phase, when I heard K saying, ‘Throw the Bhagavad Gita into the Ganges’, I took it literally and responded accordingly. But later on it occurred to me that what he actually meant was that I should not live on borrowed perceptions and that any insight must be my own.

I am reminded of an episode that took place at Vasanta Vihar, in the late seventies or the early eighties. Krishnaji was having a dialogue with a small group in the main hall, and a youngster stood up and said: ‘Krishnaji, I am in a deep dilemma, I don’t know what to do. Will you please guide me? I want a straight answer from you.’ Krishnaji looked at him quietly and said: ‘Yes sir, go ahead.’ The young man said: ‘Sir, I am passionately in love with a young girl. I want to marry her at any cost. But I am in a fix. I love my parents very much and they are dead against this marriage. I don’t know what to do.’ I was curious as to what Krishnaji would say. And his retort was sharp: ‘Sir, run away with the girl or throttle your parents.’ I was aghast that Krishnaji could be so ruthless to a youngster who was in such a difficult predicament. But later I realized that he was stating an irrefutable fact that whenever we are caught in choices, there is bound to be conflict.

Similarly, when I heard K saying, ‘Knowledge is dangerous’, I took the statement literally and felt quite

puzzled, because I saw all around me the benefits of knowledge. It took me a while to understand that what he was referring to was psychological knowledge: knowledge in the area of relationships, and not functional knowledge. Of course, I am not *now* so sure that functional knowledge is not dangerous. I now feel that functional knowledge could be equally dangerous! You can see this from the fact that it is the people who have functional knowledge, such as the scientists and professionals, who have caused more destruction and misery in the world than those who are ignorant, such as the tribals in the hills—at least in the way they use functional knowledge.

A matter of the heart

Then came the phase when I saw that the teachings have to do more with the heart than with the head, that they have to do less with capacities, talents, and skills, and more with the empathy of the heart, with a feeling of being open and reaching out to the things of the earth. The teachings began to reveal to me their sweep and range: the insights contained in them and the interconnectedness of the various expressions in which the teachings manifested—thought, time, fear, fragmentation, conflict, disorder, sorrow, order, love, compassion, meditation, the sacred, and so on. I saw the interconnectedness of all these words. They appeared to have a common thread. And I began to grow more sceptical and doubtful. For, the word was *not* the thing any more!

I began to see that K was talking not to any particular mind or to *my* consciousness but to the whole of human consciousness. Sometimes I wondered whether K was far ahead of his times and whether human consciousness had to evolve further to receive his teachings deeply. I felt that K was hinting at something of an immensity that lies beyond human consciousness and that I was receiving it with my limited consciousness, which is soaked in different kinds of 'vasanas'.

During the course of my journey with the teachings, I travelled through these various phases. Most of you might have done so too. Having passed through those phases, where am I *now*? It is quite difficult to articulate this. I seem to be caught in a paradox: I seem to see clearly and yet do not seem to see clearly. I can only say that there is an increasing urgency in me to see whether my life is reflective of these insights. I see that I have taken a few steps, but what is required is a giant leap, and I am unable to take that leap. I have a vague sense of what K is hinting at, but at the same time I am not quite clear about what it means; and in that sense I am caught

in a paradox. Of course, K would not approve of these expressions. He would say that it is not a paradox but just my laziness and lack of energy! I don't know. Yet, when I look deeper, it *is* a paradox.

K has talked about the 'great denial'. Many of us have talked about this during the last four days. I see that negation is not an act of the intellect or an outcome of my conflicts, that there cannot be any reconciliation, compromise in this great denial. As long as I am held in the clutches of psychological time, the great denial would be only a romantic idea. For the great denial to happen, there has to be a radical shift in my consciousness—a 'psychological pralaya', if I may use that expression, that would wash away all the content of my consciousness. And when I look at myself objectively, quietly, with no remorse or guilt, I see that the great denial has not taken place. What has taken place are many great escapes from facts. What has taken place are small denials and peripheral renunciations.

The enigma of the teachings

To me the teachings have an enigmatic quality, like an unsolved puzzle. I have considered very many seers and many streams of religious thought, but I find K standing apart—completely different, authentic, original. I sense that the teachings point to the Real, but it demands 'my head' as the price for getting it! I see that the teachings offer me a jewel, but demand the highest price—a price I am either unwilling or unable to pay. Perhaps I want the jewel at a concessional or discounted price! But the teachings tell me: 'Impossible, take it or leave it.'

Of course, I would admit that the teachings have given me considerable strength, clarity, resilience, and a capacity to tackle problems with a certain poise and confidence. I have no doubt about that. One also doesn't get stuck in problems of relationship, one doesn't get rooted there. One moves and keeps moving.

When I am here with friends who have similar impulses, who use the same vocabulary, the teachings look so extraordinarily clear, simple, and true. But when I face the world with all its complexities, pressures, and challenges, when the waves of life hit me hard, it is then that reality seeps in. That reality stares at me, making me poignantly aware of my deep imprints, deep wounds, and all the debris in my consciousness. I also see that these deep imprints, wounds, and the debris in my consciousness just won't disappear in a flash. They have to surface, work their way through, wither, and die. And this takes time; in a sense it is a 'maturing' process.

But I see K denying all that. For him, awareness is like a laser beam, a fire which instantly burns away

KFI Annual Gathering 2002 at Sahyadri

The Annual Gathering of the Krishnamurti Foundation India will be held this year on the campus of the Sahyadri School and Study Centre, near Pune, from 16 to 20 November. Your participation in it is most welcome.

The Gathering will consist of talks, group discussions, video-shows, and cultural programmes. Participants are expected to arrive by the evening of 16 November and leave on the morning of 20 November. They will share rooms in the school hostels. The fee per head is Rs 1250 (US \$ 80 for those coming from outside India). For brochure and registration form, contact:

The In-charge, Krishnamurti Study Centre Sahyadri, P.O. Tiwai Hill, Taluka: Rajgurunagar, District: Pune, PIN 410 513, Tel: (02135) 84278, 84346. Fax: (02135) 84348.

E-mail: kscskfi@pn2.vsnl.net.in

Study Workshops: The Krishnamurti Study Centre at Sahyadri holds every year a series of study workshops of 5 or 7 days' duration. The dates of the forthcoming workshops are: In 2002—9-13 August; 8-12 September; 21-25 September; 16-22 October; 23-29 December. In 2003—8-12 January; 17-23 February; 10-16 March.

Special Workshops: The Study Centre also organizes special workshops, in Marathi and Hindi, besides in English, for groups of ten or more,

around themes of your choice and on dates convenient to you. Those who wish to participate in these workshops may contact the Study Centre for brochures and registration forms.

Individuals who wish to undertake retreat and study on their own are also welcome.

Marathi Gathering 2002: The Marathi Gatherings at Sahyadri in May have become an annual feature. This year the gathering was held between 9 and 13 May. The theme was 'Krishnamurti's teachings in daily life'. More than 100 people (in the age group of 12 to 80 years) from various parts of Maharashtra and Karnataka attended. The gathering opened with a reading of the Marathi translation of 'The core of the teachings'. The Marathi translation of Sunanda Patwardhan's book: *A Vision of the Sacred, My Personal Journey with J. Krishnamurti*, was released by Mrs. Leela Arjunwadkar. A videocassette and a video CD of the film 'The Challenge of Change' dubbed in Marathi was released by Dr. Satish Inamdar. Mr. Kishore Khairnar gave a talk on the theme of K's teachings in daily life; this was followed by a question-answer session. Meetings to discuss the functioning of the Krishnamurti Study Centres and the progress of Marathi translations were the other features of the gathering.

these deep imprints. For him, in the vibrant and intense heat of awareness, the mass of conditioning melts and evaporates. For an ordinary mortal like me, it sounds too good and too simplistic to be true! Perhaps the teachings are like a fire or a laser beam, but I am reducing its intensity by receiving it through the prism of my own conditioning, comfort, and convenience. Perhaps the teachings are a ruthless and relentless exposure of the facts of Life. But my mind refuses to disengage itself from ideas, faiths, and beliefs. Of course, the engagement is no longer gross but subtle.

My journey with the teachings has not been like a smooth-flowing river: I have faced several rapids, strong currents, and boulders, and have capsized quite a few times and fallen into the waters of inattention and conflict. But the very same teachings have given me the strength to get back right on and continue my journey. I see I am as much sheltered psychologically as I am sheltered physically. The

teachings demand that I move out of these psychological shelters, they demand that my brain function differently—like a drum that resonates when played but otherwise remains empty, silent. But when I look at my inner drum, I find it vibrating with noise continuously, though the volume may be decreasing.

K began his journey by intending to set man unconditionally free. And as a human being who came into contact with the teachings many years ago, do I *now* live with a song in my heart? Am I somewhat nearer the threshold? Is there such a thing as a threshold at all in the journey? Or is it only an illusion?

Where am I?

Has the great denial taken place in me? No. The fact that the great denial has *not* taken place has to be accepted. But I don't want to make it into a problem, and psychologically bleed myself to death. I don't want to enter into a conflict between two states: the hypothetical state of the great denial and the reality of the only small denials in my life. Is it possible for

me to move out of this predicament? I don't know. But the teacher has also taught me to *stay* with the predicament and not escape from it. I see I am not radically, fundamentally, transformed in the sense K talked about. But the teacher himself has said: 'I came into the world not to transform but to awaken.' So, do I take comfort in this statement? In one sense I have moved. In another sense, in a fundamental sense, I have not. But I am not agitated, frustrated; I am quietly looking at it. I can only say now that I increasingly see a natural rhythm in my life—whether it is pre-set or accidental, I don't know, and I flow with that rhythm without interfering with it. For whenever I have meddled with it, whenever I have challenged the course of that rhythm, I have been knocked out. I also wonder whether there are forces and energies at work to which I have no clue.

I have been with you through these four days, probing and exploring questions that humanity has probed and explored for many centuries. At the end of it, where am I? Has there been a cleansing, a catharsis, a shedding from my consciousness? Or has it been only a subtler process of strengthening the defenses of my sheltered spaces?

When I go back from this valley—the valley of the rishis, as K would say—do I go back into the world with a consciousness that is calmer and lighter? Can I continue to nourish this eternal seed planted in my consciousness, or will I block it, destroy it? When I go back from here, what happens to my consciousness, to my relationships, to my way of living, to the various insights I came across? Will I

begin to lead a life that is simple and austere but elegant and in harmony with my understanding of the teachings?

I see Krishnaji as an extraordinary seer who has gone into the most profound depths of human consciousness. But I also wonder whether he has dug the *entire depth* of human consciousness and has brought forth *all* the human insights possible. I wonder whether some other equally great teacher would descend into the world in the future, dig further, and bring forth newer insights—insights that would be equally perceptive and radical. Are there spaces and dimensions unexplored and insights not uncovered by Krishnaji? Did he deliberately refrain from exploring those spaces and dimensions? And in this long line of seers, is Krishnaji a comma or a full stop?

I have no answers to these questions. But, like most of you, I am left with these questions. Of course, many times my head does say, with excitement, 'Here are the answers, here are the answers.' But I find that these answers are incomplete, limited.

And I also hear a whisper from my heart: 'Don't churn these things too much. Don't struggle with these questions too much. You can't get answers to any of these questions through your head. Just stay quietly with the teachings. Staying quietly with the teachings itself is a great blessing.' That is the whisper of my heart...and I would certainly listen to the whisper of my heart.

This is where I am, this is where one is, in the journey with the teachings. ■

News & Notes

Total Freedom: The Essential Krishnamurti: As its sub-title indicates, this book is both an introduction to Krishnamurti and an essential, extensive collection. It includes selections that range from his early works to the talks he gave at Washington D.C. in 1985, besides excerpts from his well-known books; these consist of talks, writings and dialogues. Pp 370+xiv, Price Rs 175.

Subsidized edition: Thanks to the generosity of a donor, we are now able to offer *Freedom from the Known* at a highly subsidized price of Rs 20. This, as you know, is a basic book, which has been responsible for making Krishnamurti's teachings known to a vast readership all over the world. More than thirty years after its first publication, it still continues to be popular.

Another subsidized book is *The First and Last Freedom*, available at Rs 50.

Commentaries on Living Third Series: The third and last volume in this series of books is now available in a new format. If you have bought the first two volumes, you can now complete your collection with this edition. pp 372+iv. Price Rs 175. The First Series and the Second Series are priced at Rs 125 each. If you buy all the three volumes, then the discounted price is Rs 350.

Under preparation: The following titles are under preparation:

The Flight of the Eagle: This book, containing the talks and dialogues held in 1969 in London, Amsterdam, Paris, and Saanen, is available in a redesigned edition.

Beyond Violence: A newly designed edition of this popular title is under print and will be available in August.

What Are You Doing with Your Life?: This book brings together excerpts from Krishnamurti's talks

and writings that are relevant for the youth of today. **Special Audio Tapes released:** Music Today, the largest distributor of audio tapes in India, has entered into an agreement with KFI to sell all over the country audio tapes and CDs of Krishnamurti's talks and discussions. These tapes were formally released at a Press conference held at Vasanta Vihar on 20 April. The chief guest of the function was Mr R. Venkataraman, former President of India. He handed over the first copy of the tapes to Mr M S Ananth, Director of the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras.

The pricing is as follows: Theme cassettes sets: Rs 110 per set of two tapes. Single cassettes: Rs 55 each. CDs: Rs 250 each. These tapes and CDs must be available in bookshops or cassette stores in your locality; if they are not, please inform us.

Journal of the Krishnamurti Schools: The Journal, launched six years ago, is published every July. The sixth issue is now available, and from now on the Journal ceases to be an in-house publication and will

reach out to teachers, teacher-educators, parents, administrators and anyone seriously concerned about the future of education. It contains articles such as Global violence and individual responsibility; An approach to teaching religion, Speaking of God, Competition and its educational consequences, A science curriculum in the making, Trekking in the Himalayas. Chief Editor: Ahalya Chari. Subscription: Rs.100. May be remitted by DD or cheque in favour of Krishnamurti Foundation India, payable at Chennai. (For outstation cheques add Rs.25 towards bank charges) Foreign subscription \$ 6.

Thanks: KFI gratefully acknowledges the donations sent in by our well-wishers in response to the appeal we made in the March issue of the *Newsletter*. Your contributions will help us to improve the facilities at Vasanta Vihar, so that many more people from all over the world can stay here in order to take a retreat and make use of The Study. We thank all our donors for their co-operation and generosity. ■

Our very seriousness...

From page 1

from memory to memory. Is not thinking self-centred in its very nature? I know there are exceptions, but we are not discussing the exceptions. In our everyday life, are we not consciously or unconsciously pursuing an end, gaining and avoiding, seeking to continue, putting aside anything that is disturbing, that is insecure, uncertain? In seeking its own certainty, the mind creates self-centredness; and is not that self-centredness the 'me', which then watches over and analyses itself? So, as long as we seek a result, self-centredness must exist, whether in an individual, in a group, in a nation or a race. But if we can understand why the mind seeks a result, a satisfying end, why it wants to be certain—if we understand that, then there is a possibility of breaking down the walls that enclose thought as the 'me'. But that requires an astonishing awareness of the total process, not only of the conscious, but also of the unconscious levels, an awareness from moment to moment in which there is no gathering, no accumulation, no saying, 'Yes, I have understood this, and I am going to use it for tomorrow', a spontaneity which is not of the mind. Only then is there a possibility of going beyond the self-enclosing activities of thought.

Ojai, 23 August 1952

Questioner: *I am already an introvert and it seems to me that from what you have been saying, is there not a danger of my becoming more and more self-centred, more of an introvert?*

Krishnamurti: If you are an introvert in opposition to an extrovert then there is a danger of self-centredness. If you put yourself in opposition then there is no understanding; then your thoughts, feelings and actions are self-enclosing, isolating. In intelligently comprehending the outer you will come inevitably to the inner, and thereby the division of the outer and inner ceases. If you oppose the outer and cling to the inner or if you deny the inner and assert the outer, then there is the conflict of the opposites, in which there is no understanding. To understand the outer, the world, you must begin with yourself for you, your thoughts-feelings and actions, are the result of both the outer and the inner. You are the centre of all objective and subjective existence and to comprehend it, where are you to begin save with yourself? This does not encourage unbalance, on the contrary it will bring creative understanding, inward peace.

But if you deny the outer, the world, if you try to escape from it, if you distort it, shaping it to your fancies, then your inner world is an illusion, isolating and hindering. Then it is a state of delusion which brings misery. To be is to be related but you can block, distort this relationship, thus becoming more and more isolated and self-centred which leads to mental disorder. The root of understanding is within yourself, in self-knowledge.

Ojai, 18 June 1944

Now, being aware of our own ceaseless struggling within the field of self-conscious activity, our self-concern—taking all this multifarious action and contradiction into account, how are we to come to that other state? How is one to live in that moment which is eternity? All this is not mere sentiment or romanticism. Religion has nothing whatever to do with romanticism or sentimentality. It is a very hard thing—hard in the sense that one must work furiously to find out what is truly religious.

Perceiving all the contradiction and confusion that exists in the outward structure of society, and the psychological conflict that is perpetually going on within oneself, one realizes that all our endeavour to be loving or brotherly is actually a pose, a mask. However beautiful the mask may be, behind it there is nothing; so we develop a philosophy of cynicism or despair, or we cling to a belief in something mysterious beyond this ceaseless turmoil. Again, this is obviously not religion; and without the perfume of true religion, life has very little meaning. That is why we are everlastingly struggling to find something. We pursue the many gurus and teachers, haunt the various churches, practise this or that system of meditation, rejecting one and accepting another. And yet we never seem to cross the threshold; the mind seems incapable of going beyond itself.

So, what is it, I wonder, that brings the other into being? Or is it that we cannot do anything but go up to the threshold and remain there, not knowing what lies beyond? It may be that we have to come to the very edge of the precipice of everything we have known, so that there is the cessation of all endeavour, of all cultivation of virtue, and the mind is no longer seeking anything. I think that is all the conscious mind can do. Whatever else it does only creates another pattern, another habit. Must not the mind strip itself of all the things it has gathered, all its accumulations of experience and knowledge, so that it is in a state of innocency which is not cultivated?

Perhaps that is our difficulty. We hear that we must be innocent in order to find out; so we cultivate innocence. But can innocence ever be cultivated? Is it not like the cultivation of humility? Surely, a man who cultivates humility is never humble, any more than the man who practises non-violence ceases to be violent. So it may be that one must see the truth of this: that the mind which is put together, which is made up of many things, cannot do anything. To see this truth may be all that it can do. Probably there must be the capacity to see the truth in a flash—and I think that very perception will cleanse the mind of all the past in an instant.

The more serious, the more earnest we are, the greater danger there is of our trying to become

or achieve something. Surely, only the man who is spontaneously humble, who has immense unconscious humility—only such a man is capable of understanding from moment to moment and never accumulating what he has learned. So this great humility of not-knowing is essential, is it not?

But you see, we are all seeking success, we want a result. We say 'I have done all these things, and I have got nowhere, I have received nothing; I am still the same.' This despairing sense of desiring success, of wanting to arrive, to attain, to understand, emphasizes, does it not?, the separativity of the mind; there is always the conscious or unconscious endeavour to achieve a result, and therefore the mind is never empty, never free for a second from the movement of the past, of time.

So I think what is important is not to read more, discuss more, or to attend more talks, but rather to be conscious of the motives, the intentions, the deceptions of one's own mind—to be simply aware of all that, and leave it alone, not try to change it, not try to become something else; because the effort to become something else is like putting on another mask. That is why the danger is much greater for those of us who are earnest and deeply serious than it is for the flippant and the casual. Our very seriousness may prevent the understanding of things as they are.

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KRISHNAMURTI FOUNDATION INDIA
Vasanta Vihar, 64 Greenways Road, Chennai - 600 028.
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