

# Vasanta Vihar

## NEWSLETTER

KRISHNAMURTI FOUNDATION INDIA

March - June 2020

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### INSIDE

Photo exhibition in Nashik:.....4

News & Notes.....5

New books.....6

## An experiential exhibition



of life is that the perception of truth is not a matter of time but happens at any moment to a mind that is attentive..

From 1 to 8 February, the tree-filled campus of Vasanta Vihar was transformed into a place for engaging with the contemporary and yet timeless teachings of Krishnamurti. The driveway, the lawn, the hall downstairs, the twin staircases, the balcony, The Study, and the verandahs around it formed the venues of the exhibition, which covered, besides his life, themes such as relationship, violence, fear, love, death, nature, education, and religion. Throughout the day, Krishnamurti's voice could be heard from a speaker hidden atop the wild *badam* tree on the lawn—these consisted of snippets from his talks on various themes. Separate spaces for listening, through headphones, to Krishnamurti's talks and a bookshop were the other features of the exhibition, which later travelled to the Rajghat Besant School in Varanasi and The Valley School in Bangalore.

Krishnamurti Foundation India is commemorating the year 2019-2020 as the 125th birth anniversary of J. Krishnamurti, who was born on 11 May 1895 and passed away on 17 February 1986. The intention behind this is to introduce Krishnamurti and

his teachings to a new generation that may not have even heard of him. The centre-piece of this commemoration was an audio-visual exposition titled 'The First Step is the Last Step'—a statement derived from the title of one of his books. Central to his vision

Alongside the event was held the annual talk under the auspices of KFI's Centre for Continuing Dialogue; the speaker was S. P. Kandaswamy, KFI Secretary, and the theme was 'My journey with Krishnamurti's teachings'. ■



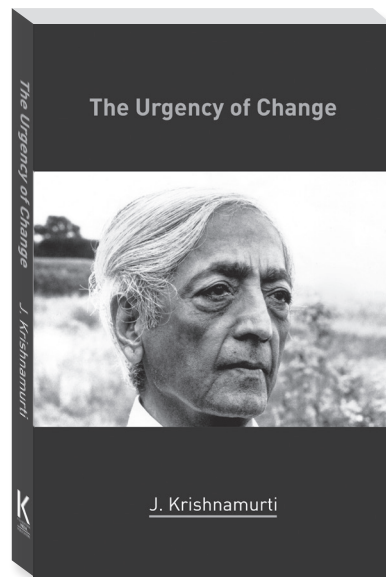
## Is there a God?

**QUESTIONER:** I really would like to know if there is a God. If there isn't, life has no meaning. Not knowing God, man has invented him in a thousand beliefs and images. The division and the fear bred by all these beliefs have divided him from his fellow men. To escape the pain and the mischief of this division, he creates yet more beliefs, and the mounting misery and confusion have engulfed him. Not knowing, we believe. Can I know God? I've asked this question of many saints both in India and here, and they've all emphasized belief. 'Believe and then you will know; without belief you can never know.' What do you think?

**KRISHNAMURTI:** Is belief necessary to find out? To learn is far more important than to know. Learning about belief is the end of belief. When the mind is free of belief, then it can look. It is belief, or disbelief, that binds; for disbelief and belief are the same: they are the opposite sides of the same coin. So we can completely put aside positive or negative belief; the believer and the non-believer are the same. When this actually takes place then the question, 'Is there a God?' has quite a different meaning. The word *God* with all its tradition, its memory, its intellectual and sentimental connotations—all this is not God. The word is not the real. So, can the mind be free of the word?

**Q:** I don't know what that means.

**K:** The word is the tradition, the hope, the desire to find the



KFI has brought out a new edition of a fifty-year-old classic by Krishnamurti—*The Urgency of Change*. The topics in this book range from conditioning and awareness, fear and God, to morality and art, suffering and suicide. The dialogues here sparkle with a crispness and clarity that would be the delight of any reader who seeks to deepen his understanding of Krishnamurti's teachings;

absolute, the striving after the ultimate, the movement which gives vitality to existence. So the word itself becomes the ultimate, yet we can see that the word is not the thing. The mind is the word, and the word is thought.

**Q:** And you're asking me to strip myself of the word? How can I do that? The word is the past; it is memory. The wife is the word, and the house is the word. In the beginning was the word. Also the word is the means of communication, identification. Your name is not you, and yet without your name I can't ask about you. And you're asking me if the mind can be free of the

and the art of inquiry through the medium of dialogue finds its finest expression in many passages. To the discerning reader, every chapter presents new insights. The falsehood behind lofty ideals is exposed in statements such as: 'Forgiveness comes only after you have accumulated rancour; forgiveness is resentment.' Art is redefined as the absence of the 'me'. A discussion on the ethics of suicide becomes an occasion for reflecting on right living. A question about fear turns into a discussion on dependence. The question 'How am I to live in this world?' turns into 'How am I to change?'

Pp. 176+vii. This is being sold at Rs 80 as an Economy Edition, instead of the cover price of Rs 220 in order to make it available for new readers.

Excerpts from the book are given here. ■

word—that is, can the mind be free of its own activity?

**K:** In the case of the tree the object is before our eyes, and the word refers to the tree by universal agreement. Now, with the word *God* there is nothing to which it refers, so each man can create his own image of that for which there is no reference. The theologian does it in one way, the intellectual in another, and the believer and the non-believer in their own different ways. Hope generates this belief, and then seeking. This hope is the outcome of despair—the despair of all we see around us in the world. From despair hope is born; they also



## Is there a God?

are two sides of the same coin. When there is no hope there is hell, and this fear of hell gives us the vitality of hope. Then illusion begins. So the word has led us to illusion and not to God at all. God is the illusion which we worship; and the non-believer creates the illusion of another God which he worships—the State, or some utopia, or some book which he thinks contains all truth. So we are asking you whether you can be free of the word with its illusion.

Q: I must meditate on this.

K: If there is no illusion, what is left?

Q: Only *what is*.

K: The *what is* is the most holy.

Q: If the *what is* is the most holy, then war is most holy, and hatred, disorder, pain, avarice, and plunder. Then we must not speak of any change at all. If *what is* is sacred, then every murderer and plunderer and exploiter can say, 'Don't touch me, what I'm doing is sacred.'

K: The very simplicity of that statement, '*What is* is the most sacred', leads to great misunderstanding because we don't see the truth of it. If you see that *what is* is sacred, you do not murder, you do not make war, you do not hate, you do not exploit. Having done these things, you cannot claim immunity from a truth which you have violated. The white man who says to the black rioter, '*What is* is sacred, do not interfere, do not burn', has not seen, for if he had, the Negro would be sacred to him, and there

would be no need to burn. So if each one of us sees this truth, there must be change. This seeing of the truth is change.

Q: I came here to find out if there is God, and you have completely confused me.

K: You came to ask if there is God. We said the word leads to illusion which we worship, and for this illusion we destroy each other willingly. When there is no illusion, the *what is* is most sacred. Now let's look at what actually is. At a given moment the *what is* may be fear, or utter despair, or a fleeting joy. These things are constantly changing. And also there is the observer who says, 'These things all change around me, but I remain permanent.' Is that a fact, is that what really is? Is he not also changing, adding to and taking away from himself, modifying, adjusting himself, becoming or not becoming? So both the observer and the

observed are constantly changing. *What is* is change. That is a fact. That *is what is*.

Q: Then is love changeable? If everything is a movement of change, isn't love also part of that movement? And if love is changeable, then I can love one woman today and sleep with another tomorrow.

K: Is that love? Or are you saying that love is different from its expression? Or are you giving to expression greater importance than to love, and therefore making a contradiction and a conflict. Can love ever be caught in the wheel of change? If so then it can also be hate; then love is hate. It is only when there is no illusion that *what is* is most sacred. When there is no illusion, *what is* is God or any other name that can be used. So God, or whatever name you give it, is when you are not. When you are, it is not. When you are not, love is. When you are, love is not. ■

**We are afraid** to know ourselves because we have divided ourselves into the good and the bad, the evil and the noble, the pure and the impure. The good is always judging the bad, and these fragments are at war with each other. This war is sorrow. To end sorrow is to see the fact and not invent its opposite, for the opposites contain each other. Walking in this corridor of opposites is sorrow. (Chapter 17)

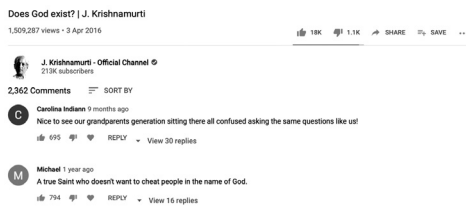
**You may build** a better house, but has experience taught you how to live more nobly inside it? We have learnt through

experience that fire burns, and that has become our conditioning, but we have also learnt through our conditioning that nationalism is good. Yet experience should also teach us that nationalism is deadly. All the evidence is there. Experience has taught us to have better food, clothes, and shelter, but it has not taught us that social injustice prevents the right relationship between man and man. So experience conditions and strengthens our prejudices, our peculiar tendencies and our particular dogmas and beliefs. (Chapter 26) ■





## To watch videos with subtitles, visit Youtube



**Hindi:** [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCveodIIPPM2FmnhGmFIDzMA?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCveodIIPPM2FmnhGmFIDzMA?view_as=subscriber)

**Marathi and Gujarati:** J. Krishnamurti Official YouTube Channel: After opening the video, click on the Settings icon and select the subtitles.

J Krishnamurti—Tamil

J Krishnamurti—Telugu

J Krishnamurti—Malayalam.

## Vacancies in Sahyadri

Fully residential and co-educational, Sahyadri School is situated not far from Pune, amidst great natural beauty, in the Western Ghats. It is not only a centre of academic excellence but also a place where children and educators explore together the fundamental questions of life. The discovery of self-awareness, right living, and right relationship with the earth are at the heart of its intent.

The school is looking for teachers in: History (+2 and high school); Physics (+2 and high school); Chemistry (high school); Biology (high school); Mathematics (high school); Accounts (+2). Those with varied interests, capabilities, and experience will be preferred. The school is also looking for a Finance Officer. Kindly apply through the school website: [www.sahyadrischool.org](http://www.sahyadrischool.org). Address: Sahyadri School, KFI, Tiwai Hill, Rajgurunagar, Dist. Pune—410 513. ■

## Exhibition in Nashik



Set up to disseminate Krishnamurti's teachings in Marathi, the Krishnamurti Abhyasak Mandal, Nashik, entered its third year in 2019 through its widely publicized activities, chiefly video screenings, dialogue sessions, university programmes, and public exhibitions in Nashik city. The latest in the string of

events was an encore of the exhibition *J Krishnamurti: To the Young* held at the Kusumagraj Smarak Sanstha on 15, 16, and 17 November 2019. Exactly a year earlier, the exhibition had been held at the same venue and had received good public response, thanks to the use of social media platforms to highlight the event.

The footfall was as good as in the previous year and comprised almost entirely of first-timers. Interestingly, it was observed that this time the visitors showed deeper interest in the issues raised by the texts. A large number of visitors spent a great deal of time poring over the entire contents of the exhibition. Many approached the organizers with searching questions, discussed with other visitors, and enlivened the atmosphere of the exhibition. The sales counter recorded good sale of English and Marathi books. A booklet containing the entire texts presented in the exhibition was a big draw. The Abhyasak Mandal has now received invitations to conduct its programmes—the exhibitions in particular—in towns and cities in the region. ■



## KFI calendar of events

**VASANTAVIHAR:** Following are the programmes to be held in Vasanta Vihar, Chennai, during 2020-2021:

### Half-day retreats:

- 7 June – Aren't we wasting our lives?
- 5 July – Why do we seek methods and techniques?
- 2 August – The significance of being free
- 6 September – An introduction to J. Krishnamurti
- 4 October – Why do we worship skill and talent?
- 1 November – Where can peace be found?
- 6 December – Why are we being educated?
- 3 January 2021 – Are we aware of our conditioning?
- 7 February – Is there such a thing as love in our lives?
- 7 March – Why do we get hurt?
- 4 April – Why do we live under pressure?

### Week-end residential retreats:

- 27 & 28 June – The urgency of change
- 20 & 21 July – Structure of the unstable self
- 22 & 23 August – Vanity of knowledge
- 18 & 19 October – Prisoners of the past
- 21 & 22 November – Can the mind be in a state of meditation?
- 20 & 21 February 2021 – What is the nature of our relationships?
- 20 & 21 March – Beyond evil and good
- 24 & 25 April – Intelligence is not personal.

### Regional gatherings

- 11 & 12 July – Telugu Gathering

14, 15 & 16 August – Kerala Gathering (in English)  
25, 26 & 27 December – Cuttack Centre Gathering.  
For more details, contact Vasanta Vihar, Chennai,  
or e-mail [vvstudy@kfionline.com](mailto:vvstudy@kfionline.com)

**BANGALORE:** The Study Centre in Bangalore holds residential retreats every month; the dates and themes are:

April 9—12: Karnataka JK Adhayana Shibira: Freedom and responsibility. (proceedings in Kannada & English)

June 11—14: Exploring harmony in relationships

July 9—12: What does it mean to be a responsible parent?

August 6—9: Dealing with stress, anxiety, worry, and conflict

September 10—13: What is holistic education?

October 8—11: Emotions—express, suppress, control? Or is there a different way?

November 5—8: Breaking out of your comfort zone—why do you resist change?

December 10—13: Exploring the art of living.

Visit [www.kfistudy.org](http://www.kfistudy.org) for further information or write to the Study Centre Coordinator, The Valley School Campus, off Kanakpura Road, Bangalore—560 082. Email: [kfistudy@gmail.com](mailto:kfistudy@gmail.com). Phone: 83174 19451 or 9482641389. Registration forms can be downloaded from the website under the heading Programs ■

## News & Notes

**KFI Annual Gathering:** KFI Gathering 2020 will be held this year at the Sahyadri School, near Pune, sometime in November; the exact dates will be announced in the next (July) issue of this newsletter and on our website.

**Event in Kochi:** The J. Krishnamurti Library and Information Centre in Kochi, Kerala, in collaboration with KFI, Chennai, had organized a programme on 21 and 22 December 2019, at the Renewal Centre in Kochi, to mark Krishnamurti's 125th birth anniversary. 'Krishnamurti's challenge to the human mind' was the theme of the two-day event, the

first day of which was devoted to his general philosophy of human existence and the second day to his educational vision. The events consisted of video screenings of Krishnamurti's talks, lectures and question-and-answer sessions by KFI trustees, and presentations on the educational practices of Krishnamurti schools. There was also a photo exhibition on Krishnamurti's teachings.

**Event in Kolkatta:** The Kolkata Centre of KFI had arranged a talk by Mark Lee, trustee of both the America and India foundations, on 4 February at the Indian Council for Cultural Relations. Based on the theme of the challenges

in working with Krishnamurti, the talk was full of interesting anecdotes that drew out many aspects of his teachings. This was followed by questions from the audience, after which Mark Lee signed copies of his biography *World Teacher: The Life and Teachings of J Krishnamurti*. On 5 February, he had an interaction with about 25 educators from various schools, colleges, and universities, where he shared his perception of what a Krishnamurti school attempts to achieve.

Doordarshan (Bangla) telecast a Bengali documentary on Krishnamurti on 17 February, his death anniversary

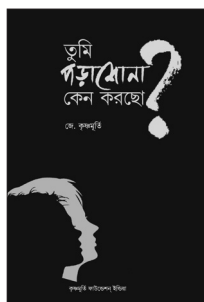


**Tamil Gathering:** The fourth Tamil Gathering was held in Vasanta Vihar on 15 and 16 of February on the theme 'Should we always live in the darkness of fear?' Videos of Krishnamurti's talks and dialogues on this theme were screened with Tamil subtitles, evoking good response from those who were not quite at home in English. Besides, there were talks, question-and-answer sessions, group discussions, and informal interactions. About 35 people from outside Chennai were accommodated on the campus, and nearly 25 attended as day participants. These Tamil gatherings are held every February. ■

## New Books

**Book Launch:** The launch of the new biography, *World Teacher: The Life and Teachings of J. Krishnamurti*, was one of the main events held alongside the photo exhibition in Vasanta Vihar in February. The author Mark Lee, a long-time associate of Krishnamurti and a Trustee of the Krishnamurti Foundation of America, highlighted the chief elements of the book, which he said was written mainly to serve an easy-to-read introduction to Krishnamurti's life and teachings for a new generation. The book, published by Hay House, New Delhi, contains colour photographs, runs to 204 pages, and is priced at Rs 350.

**Gujarati:** *J. Krishnamurti: Jeevancharitra*, translation of the biography by Pupul Jayakar. Pp. 625, Price Rs 650. Published by Gurjar Granth Ratnalaya. Available in bookstores, and can also be ordered from the Mumbai centre of KFI, kfmumbai@gmail.com, www.kfmumbai.org



**Bengali:** *Tumi pora shona keno korcho?* is the Bengali title of the book *Why are you being educated?* Released at the Kolkata

book fair on 29 January, it is now available at [www.kfikolkata.org](http://www.kfikolkata.org). Pp.134, Price: Rs 150. ■

## TO OUR READERS

- Those of you who wish to receive electronic copies of this newsletter through e-mail, kindly send us your e-mail IDs.
- Those who do not have access to computers, or wish to continue receiving hard copies of the newsletter, may inform us accordingly. We shall continue to send you the issues as usual through post.
- If you are getting this newsletter by mistake, and if you do not wish to receive it in future, let us know.
- Note that the newsletter is also available online at [www.kfonline.org](http://www.kfonline.org)
- Your prompt response will be much appreciated.

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(Dr. V. Aravind)

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