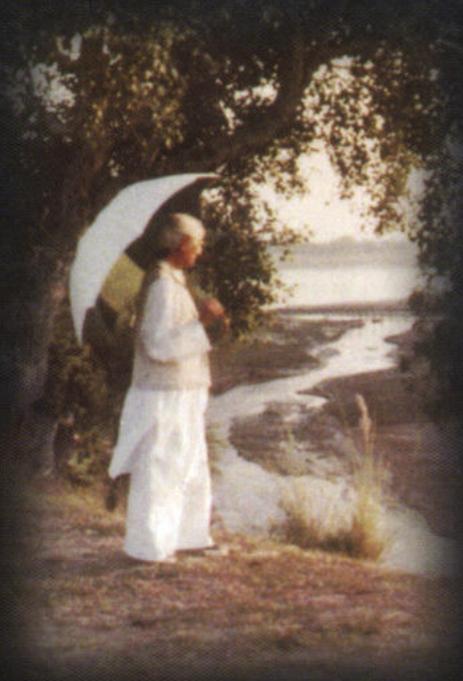


A Timeless Spring

KRISHNAMURTI AT RAJGHAT



A Timeless Spring: Krishnamurti at Rajghat
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A Timeless Spring

Krishnamurti at Rajghat

Contents

Foreword

Introduction

The Landscape

Talks to Students:

A timeless spring

The sea of life

On fear

The art of seeing

On feelings

Students' questions

Discussions with Teachers:

The seed of a new thing

Uncovering the process of thinking

Freedom, intelligence, and care

Talks to the Public:

Truth has no abiding place

You are the world

The basic cause of human corruption

Motives distort

Understanding disorder

Death, meditation, and silence

Dialogues:

What is the Teaching?

Can the observer free himself from that of which he is a part?

Is there something sacred in this part of the world?

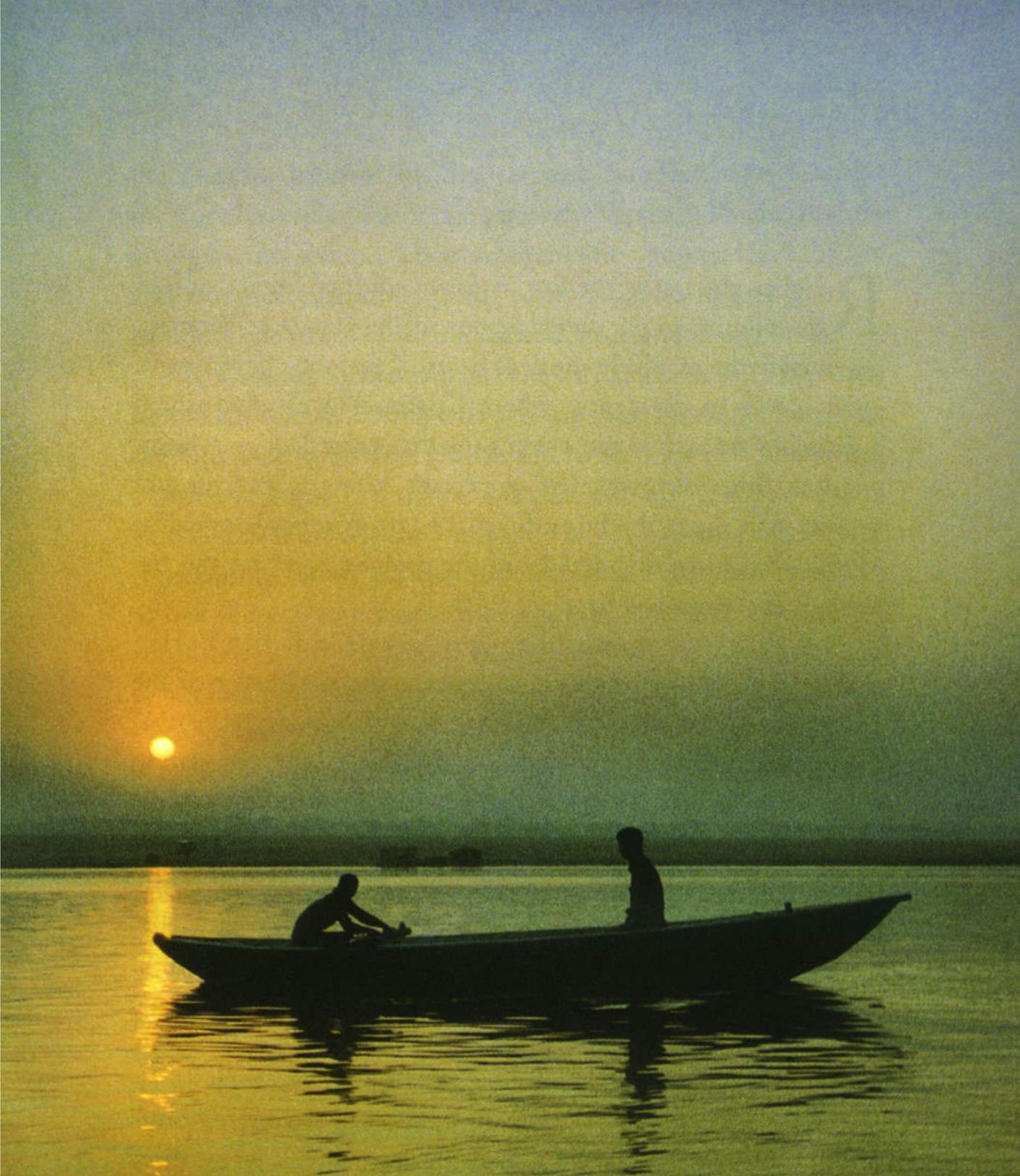
Foreword

During his long and peripatetic life, J. Krishnamurti spent more than fifty winters in India, dividing his time between the large cities of Madras, Bombay and Delhi and his schools in Rajghat and Rishi Valley. *A Timeless Spring—Krishnamurti at Rajghat* is the first of a series of books intended to evoke the flavour of Krishnamurti's presence in the places in India to which he returned year after year. These books will provide a record of Krishnamurti's teachings in a specific locus, and highlight the universal as well as the particular aspects of these Teachings.

Rajghat is situated on the outskirts of the city of Varanasi, on the banks of the Ganga. Rajghat's classical past, its philosophical and religious traditions, its extreme conservatism, the beauty of its countryside and the poverty of its rural population, form the background against which Krishnamurti spoke—to students, teachers, and to the public at large. Rajghat also provides the setting for several of Krishnamurti's reflections in his diaries and notebooks, selections from which are included here.

The selections in this book, taken largely from Krishnamurti's unpublished work, cover the period from 1955 to 1985. Selections from his writings on Rajghat are included to communicate his feeling for the place. Following this are samples of his talks with students, which show the delicacy and sensitivity with which Krishnamurti was able to pose eternal questions about the meaning of life to young minds. They are followed by illustrative samples of questions children raised with him. Then there is a selection of his public talks and several discussions with teachers, scholars and friends which illuminate the nature of dialogue as a mode of communication. An underlying hope in putting together this book is that the spirit of the place to which Krishnamurti gave of himself so abundantly would come alive through its pages. An introduction provides a brief history of Rajghat and Krishnamurti's association with it.

*Ahalya Chari
Radhika Herzberger*



Introduction

Myth and history, the sacred and the profane, the past and the present, are telescoped here.

Rajghat, the last of the five *tirthas* or spiritual fords that lead the pilgrim to the sacred waters of the Ganga at Varanasi, lies outside the relatively modern heart of that city. Green, with open spaces in the centre where Krishnamurti's educational institutions are located and a river bank that today draws sannyasis, pilgrims, fishermen, wrestlers, musicians, weavers, students and tourists to its shore, this beautiful ghat has truly a timeless quality. Myth and history, the sacred and the profane, the past and the present, are telescoped here.

Much of Varanasi's historical record still lies buried underneath the high plateau overlooking the confluence of the Ganga and the Varana that is Rajghat. Two archaeological excavations have uncovered the evidence of a flourishing city dating back to the 6th and 7th centuries B.C. described by the Buddhist texts: beads made of lapis lazuli and carnelian, toy carts and rattles, part of a city wall, coins. The city was a manufacturing centre then, famed for its textiles and its perfumes; it lay along the *uttarāpatha*, the ancient trade route that connected Magadha in the east with Gandhara in the north-west. Even now, when the foundations for new buildings are to be laid at Rajghat, the spade occasionally will turn up a headless god or a smiling *yaksi*.

Myth places Rajghat outside the framework of time; it is Siva's place, never forsaken by him. Even during *pralaya*, when all of creation is swallowed by the rising waters, Siva holds this piece of land on the tips of his trident, high above the flood waters. The ancient temple of Adikesava at Rajghat is a symbol of the gods' eternal covenant with the place.

Myth and history coalesce on the pilgrim's paths and in the ashramas. The ancient Panchakrosi path extends today beyond the village Kapiladhara to connect Rajghat with Sarnath, where the Buddha delivered his first sermon. Buddhist texts describe the Buddha fording the bridge across the Varana at Rajghat, before giving his first sermon. There are numerous temples, small shrines and ashramas that attest to the many religious figures who left behind some token of their historical associations with Kasi.

Krishnamurti's first visit to Varanasi dates back to 1910, when he and his brother Nityananda accompanied Dr Annie Besant to the Theosophical Lodge. He was fifteen then, and Dr Besant was a powerful figure. Equipped with an ideology that saw in the Theosophical movement and in the boy Krishnamurti a way of regenerating India's spiritual past, identified with the movement to free India from colonial rule, a great orator and a woman of enormous energy, Dr Besant was friends with the leading citizens of Varanasi, including the famous scholar Gopinath Kaviraj and Dr Bhagavan Das.

Dr Besant saw her role in Krishnamurti's life as that of a catalyst: 'Amma never told me what to do' Krishnamurti gratefully recalled in later life. She merely tried to put him in touch with the best of what was available in the world and, so, Krishnamurti visited Varanasi frequently and was encouraged by Dr Besant to meet people, to talk and eventually to lead the spiritual discussions that were part of the Society's annual programme. She also set up a separate organization within the Theosophical Society, the Order of the Star, dedicating it to Krishnamurti's work.

In 1928 Krishnamurti was inspired by the great university at Berkeley to set up educational institutions in his own right. In looking for land, from the very beginning, Krishnamurti seemed to know what he wanted: 'Four hundred acres of land on the banks of the river at Banaras (Varanasi)'¹. The task was entrusted to Sanjiva Rao, a young man close to Dr Besant, who was also a member of the Indian Educational Service. Sanjiva Rao set out on this 'mad adventure'² to buy the land, even though it was to him 'a staggering proposition'³. After locating a hundred-and-fifty acres of land on the banks of the Ganga which belonged to the British Military Cantonment Board, with single-minded devotion and tenacity he managed to persuade the authorities to sell the land. Money was found and, then, in due course, Sanjiva Rao negotiated the purchase of the two-hundred-and-twenty-five acres that lies across the Varana, near the village of Sarai Mohana.

Between 1928 and 1948, Sanjiva Rao built a coeducational, residential school at Rajghat, calling it the Rajghat Besant School. Later, the Vasanta College for women students, and Vasantashrama, a women's dormitory, were located here.

When Krishnamurti returned to Varanasi in 1948 after an extended absence, he stayed at Rajghat in a house overlooking the Ganga. And during the next thirty-eight years he returned to this house again and again, talking to students, scholars, and visitors from all over the world.

The Ganga rises in the Himalayas and flows across the great plains of North India into the Bay of Bengal. Except along one stretch lying between the ghats of Varanasi where the river suddenly turns and flows northward towards its source, it follows a south-easterly course. For the ancient geographers, the river turned back on itself, like the meditating mind of the sage, was symbolic of the river's sacredness.

In Krishnamurti's writing, the river Ganga as an image for the meditating mind is a recurrent metaphor. Writing at Rajghat in his *Notebook*⁴, he says: 'Meditation was like that river, only it had no beginning and no ending; it began and its ending was its beginning.'

The metaphor is carried forward, for the life-giving waters of the Ganga share with the meditating mind the power to end:

*The river curves majestically as it flows east past the villages, town and deep woods, but here, just below the town and the bridge, the river and its opposite bank is the essence of all river banks; every river has its own song, its own delight and mischief, but here, out of the very silence, it contains the earth and the heavens. It is a sacred river, as all rivers are, but again here, a part of the long, winding river, there is a gentleness of immense depth and destruction.*⁵

He told the children of the Rajghat School:

'Life is like a river, never still, always moving, always alive and rich ... we all have to prepare for it. ... A place like [Rajghat] should provide an atmosphere

¹ Sanjiva Rao, B. A History of Rajghat (Unpublished). From the Archives at Rajghat. Not dated.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ *Krishnamurti's Notebook*. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd. 1977. p. 226.

⁵ Ibid. p. 228.

where you are given every opportunity to grow uninfluenced, unconditioned, untaught, so that when you go out of [this place] you can meet life intelligently, without fear.’⁶

Education was central to Krishnamurti’s declared aim of ‘setting man unconditionally free’; and learning about life was essential to this process. The challenge posed by him, of creating a new generation of young capable of asking fundamental questions, of freeing themselves from the actions of fear, anger and envy, of setting aside the past, the burdens of tradition, dogma and belief, was unique. It included both the educator and the educated. And it contained within itself the seeds for the regeneration of humankind and of society.

The very manner in which Krishnamurti posed the challenge was unsettling. He allowed the educator no space for settling down into the working out of pedagogical theories. Sensing the hold that millennia of tradition had upon the minds of the teachers, he was passionate, impatient, unrelenting in his discussions with them, demanding their highest attention. ‘Is there a group of people working together to bring about a radical change in themselves and in the students?’ he would ask, over and over again. And over the years many teachers came to Rajghat and tried in their own way to keep the intention alive. But the task has always been overwhelmingly difficult, for here, in these places set up by Krishnamurti, you are not dealing with systems or methods, but with the world of the within that is living, moving, changing and ever eluding your grasp. Walking with Krishnamurti was like walking with fire; if you kept the flame within you alive you came upon the joy of discovery suddenly, in an instant, otherwise not.

With the students Krishnamurti was gentle and affectionate. He talked about fear and unravelled with immense patience the many ways in which parents, teachers, the society at large and religion use fear to mould their minds. He pointed out in different ways how habit, imitation and conformity destroy minds and hearts. And he shocked the elders who were present by awakening students to ‘the violence of obedience’. Krishnamurti was impressed by the children of Rajghat, by their ability to sit quietly and to listen, by their sense of wonder. ‘Where in the world would you find such innocence?’, he once remarked. And students felt free in his presence to ask all kinds of questions.

The plight of women in India was a matter of deep concern to Krishnamurti. He reached out to the young women of the college patiently and with immense affection. The girls too listened and wondered if they could ever lead independent lives of their own, free of superstition and free of the domination that men had over them.

Krishnamurti’s compassion for the poor of the land was profound. He wanted our schools to learn to care for their neighbours. Again and again he would prod the children and ask if in any way they felt related to the poor. In one of his public talks he spoke pointedly to his audience:

You know, one of the strange things is that though India is a very sad country, there is always a smile. The poor smile. They are starving,

⁶ ‘Talk to Students, 4 January 1954’ from *The Collected Works of J. Krishnamurti, Volume VIII, 1953-1955*, Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company. 1991. p. 59.

*downtrodden, they have no happiness, they are perpetually working and, yet, as you go by the street, especially in the countryside, they smile at you. This happens nowhere else in the world. This is the miracle of this country.*⁷

In 1954, Krishnamurti invited Achyut Patwardhan, a close friend of his younger days, to Rajghat to help with the rural work. Austere himself and committed to bettering the lot of the poor, Achyut Patwardhan's presence brought a new quality to the place. A group of very dedicated people joined him and they were able to work with the poor by helping to provide medical facilities, a school, better methods of agriculture and housing.

In the early fifties Krishnamurti's audience at Rajghat consisted chiefly of the students and teachers of the educational institutions and a few visitors from the city. By the sixties his audiences had grown to include Gandhians from their institute which was also located at Rajghat; unknown men and women from different parts of India who came to him with their personal problems; and numerous young people from the West, the 'flower children' who, disenchanted with the world view of an industrialized world, now roamed the world in search of answers to the basic problems of living. In the seventies the audiences grew so large that special camps had to be organized to accommodate those who wished to attend, and his speaking schedules were enlarged to include public talks and discussions. It was during this decade that a group of Buddhist and Sanskrit scholars also began regular discussions with Krishnamurti on traditional themes, like perception, time and preparation for the spiritual path. Pandit Jagannath Upadhyaya, a professor of Buddhist studies, led these discussions which form a separate and important chapter in the unfolding of Krishnamurti's Teachings.

Krishnamurti interacted with these diverse audiences at their own level, speaking directly to their particular concerns yet, at the same time, challenging the assumptions behind these concerns. To the Gandhians who were dedicated to the uplift of society and the poor, Krishnamurti said that any action done should help in the understanding of the 'self', for it was only in the changing of the 'self' that there was the possibility of bringing about a different world order. And he pointed out to the flower children that the answer to social problems lay not in revolt against society but in the transformation of the individual. 'Must we not first put our own house in order?' he asked.

On the platform addressing his large public audiences, Krishnamurti was as stern and compelling as he was compassionate. On the banks of the Ganga, in the ancient city of Kasi, Krishnamurti took upon himself the spiritual task of breaking the encrusted layers of traditional religiosity. To minds that set great store by the wisdom of the past, he talked about 'tradition that had lost its soul'. And he attributed this loss to dependence on gurus, mantras, rituals and pujas that weigh down the mind and prevent free enquiry. His anguish was that in a place that had once nurtured the truly creative spirit of doubt, the dead weight of dogma enslaved people's minds.

⁷ Public Talk. 11 November 1984. (Unpublished).

In the city of death, he talked of love and creation. To an audience that believed in spiritual evolution through practice, he negated time as a means to inward growth. To those accustomed over a lifetime to saying ‘Yes’, he said: ‘To say no is the highest form of thinking.’ He shocked those who chased the ‘illusion of what should be’ by unravelling the dark facets of their reality, the ‘what is’ of their daily lives.

With the trustees of the Foundation, Krishnamurti was at his most challenging, not allowing them to lose themselves in good works, forcing them out of their complacency to realize the true significance of what they had heard. Sometimes insistently,

*I ask you something that is a challenge. Will you respond with your highest excellence? Somebody has left you the Upanishads. What have you done with them? Translated them into English, Marathi, Telugu? Who cares? What have you done with the jewel in the Upanishads? Is something wrong with you? What is it? Put your blood into finding out what is preventing you from rising up to the level of challenge. The Upanishads are the greatest thing you have and, yet, you cannot respond to them completely. What is wrong?*⁸

and at other times more poetically,

*I hear the Buddha talking; and all that I say is ‘Marvellous, sir; you are saying the greatest thing the world has ever heard but, unfortunately, I am just as I am.’ So he says, ‘Don’t open just one petal; open the flower entirely.’ And I ask, ‘What is wrong with me? Is it that I have responded intellectually—which is just the opening of one petal? And, if it is not intellectual, what is it? Is it emotional sentimental, romantic? I must find out.’ So I remain with the fact and, if it is none of these things, I respond completely.*⁹

he demanded that the trustees heed the central focus of his Teachings.

The ancient pilgrim’s path cuts through the Rajghat Besant School campus, and leads across the Varana, past the northern bank of the river, to Sarnath. The Rajghat Rural Centre is located on the northern bank of the Varana, surrounded by the villages of Sarai Mohana, Kapildhara and Kotwa. Walking along this pilgrim’s path through tamarind, neem and mango groves, watching the ripening winter wheat, Krishnamurti was very much an integral part of the place; indeed Krishnamurti’s writings serve to guide us to the river’s other shore. We cross

*the bridge with a huge buffalo, several bicycles and the crossing villagers; it was ready to collapse but somehow we all got across it, and the cumbersome animal did not seem to mind.*¹⁰

On arriving, he draws our attention to the ‘huge tree, its roots exposed, that is the glory of the bank’. Under this tree, we observe the little white temple with ‘its gods that are as the water that goes by’. Climbing up the river bank, the

⁸ Discussion with some Trustees. 3 November 1978. (Unpublished).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ *Krishnamurti’s Notebook*. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd. 1977. p. 232.

countryside suddenly opens up in front of us, 'the sky fills the earth and the horizon is beyond the trees, far, far away'. The soil here is 'rich with the silt of many centuries'.

If the time is right we participate in the ancient rites of the villagers and, perhaps, learn to share in their sense of the sacredness of nature:

On holy days the villagers came down to the water's edge, singing, joyous, lilting songs. Bringing their food; with much chattering and laughter, they would bathe in the river; then they would put a garland at the foot of the great tree, and red and yellow ashes around its trunk, for it too was sacred, as all trees are. When at last chatter and shouting had ceased, and everyone had gone home, a lamp or two would remain burning, left by some pious villager; these lamps consisted of a home-made wick in a little terracotta saucer of oil which the villager could ill afford. Then the tree was supreme; all things were of it; the earth, the river, the people and the stars. Presently it would withdraw into itself, to slumber till touched by the first rays of the morning sun.¹¹

He leads us to:

a small village of mud and sun-dried bricks. There are quantities of children, screaming and playing; the older people are in the fields or fishing, or working in the nearby town. In a small dark room an opening in the wall is the window; no flies would come into this darkness. It was cool in there. In that small space was a weaver with a large loom; he could not read but was educated in his own way, polite and wholly absorbed in his labours. He turned out exquisite cloth of gold and silver with beautiful patterns. In whatever colour of cloth or silk he could weave into traditional patterns, the finest and the best. He was born to that tradition; he was small, gentle and eager to show his marvellous talent. You watched him, as he produced from silken threads the finest of cloths, with wonder and love in your heart. There was the woven piece of great beauty, born of tradition.¹²

He takes us to another villager's house:

The whole family was there, father, mother and children, and the old lady must have been the grandmother. They all seemed so cheerful and strongly contented. Verbal communication was impossible, as we did not know their language. We sat down, and there was no embarrassment. They went on with their work, but the children came near, a boy and a girl, and sat down, smiling. The evening meal was nearly ready, and there was not too much of it. As we left, they all came out and watched; the sun was over the river, behind a vast, solitary cloud. The cloud was on fire and made the waters glow like remembered forest fires.¹³

And with him we reflect on the contrasting populations of Varanasi:

¹¹ *Commentaries on Living Third Series*. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd. 1978. p. 61.

¹² *Krishnamurti's Journal*. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd. 1987. p. 37.

¹³ *Commentaries on Living First Series*. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd. 1976. p. 190.

How kind we naturally are, especially away from the towns in the fields and the small villages! Life is more intimate among the less educated, where the fever of ambition has not yet spread. The boy smiles at you, the old woman wonders, the man hesitates and passes by. A group stops its loud talk and turns to look with surprised interest, and a woman waits for you to pass her. We know so little of ourselves; we know, but we do not understand; we know, but we have no communion with another. We do not know ourselves. And how can we know another? We can know the dead, but never the living; what we know is the dead past, not the living. To be aware of the living, we must bury the dead in ourselves.¹⁴

And finally, he teaches the lesson of compassion, which we can learn if we are so inclined:

How essentially simple life is, and how we complicate it! Life is complex, but we do not know how to be simple with it. Complexity must be approached simply, otherwise we shall never understand it. We know too much and that is why life eludes us; and with the too much which is so little we meet the immense; and how can we measure the immeasurable? Our vanity dulls us, experience and knowledge bind us, and the waters of life pass us by. To sing with that boy, to drag wearily with those fishermen, to spin thread on one's thigh; to be those villagers and the people in the car—to be all that, not as a trick of identity, needs love. Love is not complex, but the mind makes it so. We are too much with the mind, and the ways of love we do not know.¹⁵

Krishnamurti loved Rajghat as indeed he did all the places he created by the austerity of his presence. It was home, a place where he could feel at ease moving about the house, watching the river and the fisherman set sail, slipping into the kitchen or getting into bed with a thriller in hand. He loved his walks in the extensive playground where friends and children joined him, and he asked that a path be made encircling the entire campus. He would walk around this path or go across the Varana to the countryside that is so vividly recalled in his diaries.

The people of Rajghat too looked forward to his annual visit. Students, teachers, the rural staff, the office staff, gardeners, everyone would gather outside his house, waiting. Each time as he alighted from the car, wanting anonymity and never wishing to be prominent, he would at first shrink at the sight of the large gathering, then, spotting a child's smile or recognizing a familiar face, he would greet one and all affectionately before moving beyond the assembled people to greet his long-time friend the river, in a gentle gesture of home coming.

His visits were a time for celebration, with the students of the Women's College putting up a play, and sometimes the great musicians of India including Bismillah Khan, Kishan Maharaj, Girija Devi, and Rajam performing for him.

Krishnamurti himself liked to sing and to chant. In the early days at Rajghat he would join in when some local lyric was sung—a boatman's songs, songs

¹⁴ Ibid. pp. 242-243.

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 210.

welcoming the monsoon, songs likening life to the river which the agonized wayfarer has to cross to get to the other shore; and he would chant under his breath the Vedic stanzas that the specially invited pundits recited, following the ancient metres precisely. These resonant old chants completely engrossed his attention and drew enigmatic comments from him, like the following one: 'Last night when they chanted we went back centuries and centuries to the old mind, the mind that created all this, solid and strong.'

Several of the trees on the campus were planted by Krishnamurti, and he took special delight in inviting his friends to also participate in the planting. The banyans, mangoes, amlas and arjuns that shade the campus today are a testament to his deeply held sense that human beings should live on this earth as guests, nurturing it and treading gently on its soil.

Krishnamurti last visited Rajghat in the winter of 1985. Records of this visit survive in footage shot by the late Aravindan who was making a film, 'The Seer Who Walks Alone', at that time.

On 26 February 1986, Krishnamurti's ashes were brought to Rajghat and placed in a silver urn under a peepul tree. Rajghat stood still that morning, infinitely quiet. A few days later, the ashes were immersed in the Ganga, the river he loved so well, with all of Rajghat looking on.

Ahalya Chari



The Landscape

From Krishnamurti's Writings

*There is something curiously pleasant
to walk, alone, along a path, deep in the
country ...*

There is something curiously pleasant to walk, alone, along a path, deep in the country, which has been used for several thousand years by pilgrims; there are very old trees along it, tamarind and mango, and it passes through several villages. It passes between green fields of wheat; it is soft underfoot, fine, dry powder, and it must become heavy clay in the wet season; the soft, fine earth gets into your feet, into your nose and eyes, not too much. There are ancient wells and temples and withering gods. The land is flat, flat as the palm of the hand, stretching to the horizon, if there is a horizon. The path has so many turns, in a few minutes it faces in all the directions of a compass. The sky seems to follow that path which is open and friendly. There are a few paths like that in the world though each has its own charm and beauty. There is one [at Gstaad] that goes through the valley, gently climbing, between rich pasturage, to be gathered for the winter to be given to the cows; that valley is white with snow but then [when he was there] it was the end of summer, full of flowers, with snow mountains all around and there was a noisy stream going through the valley; there was hardly anyone on that path and you walked on it in silence. Then there is another path [at Ojai], climbing steeply by the side of a dry, dusty, crumbling mountain; it was rocky, rough and slippery; there wasn't a tree anywhere near, not even a bush; a quail with her small new brood, over a dozen of them, was there and further up you came upon a deadly rattler, all curled up, ready to strike but giving you a fair warning. But now, this path was not like any other; it was dusty, made foul by human beings here and there, and there were ruined old temples with their images; a large bull was having its fill among the growing grain, unmolested; there were monkeys too and parrots, the light of the skies. It was the path of a thousand humans for many thousand years. As you walked on it, you were lost; you walked without a single thought and there was the incredible sky and the trees with heavy foliage and birds. There is a mango on that path that is superb; it has so many leaves that the branches cannot be seen and it is so old. As you walk on, there is no feeling at all; thought too has gone but there is beauty. It fills the earth and the sky, every leaf and blade of withering grass. It is there covering everything and you are of it. You are not made to feel all this but it is there and because you are not, it is there, without a word, without a movement. You walk back in silence and fading light.*

Along the top of the long, wide bend in the river was the town, very holy and very dirty. The river made a big sweep here, and its main force struck the edge of the town, often washing away the steps leading down to the water, and some of the old houses. But whatever damage it did in its fury, the river still remained holy and beautiful. It was particularly beautiful that evening, with the sun setting below the dark town, and behind the single minaret, which seemed to be the reaching up of the whole town towards the heavens. The clouds were golden-red, aflame with the brilliance of a sun that had travelled over a land of intense beauty and sadness. And as the brilliance faded, there, over the dark town, was the new moon, tender and delicate. From the opposite shore, some distance down the

* *Krishnamurti's Notebook*, 3 January 1962. Victor Gollancz Ltd. pp. 235-236.

river, the whole enchanting sight seemed magical, yet perfectly natural, without a touch of artificiality. Slowly the young moon went down behind the dark mass of the town, and lights began to appear; but the river still held the light of the evening sky, a golden splendour of incredible softness. On this light, which was the river, there were hundreds of small fishing boats. All afternoon thin, dark men with long poles had been laboriously poling their way upstream against the current, in single file close to the bank; starting at the fishing village below the town, each man in his boat, sometimes with a child or two, had pushed slowly up the river past the long, heavy bridge, and now they were coming down by the hundreds, carried by the strong current. They would be fishing all night, catching big, heavy fish, ten to fifteen inches long, which would afterwards be dumped, some of them still writhing, into larger boats tied up along the bank, to be sold the next day.

The streets of the town were crowded with bullock carts, buses, cycles, and pedestrians, with here and there a cow or two. Narrow lanes, lined with dimly-lit shops and winding endlessly in and out, were muddy with the recent rains, and filthy with the dirt of man and beast. One of the lanes led to the wide steps which descended to the very edge of the river, and on these steps everything was going on. Some people were sitting close to the water, with eyes shut, in silent meditation; next to them a man was chanting in front of an enthusiastic crowd, which extended far up the steps; further on, a leprous beggar held out his withered hand, while a man with ashes on his forehead and matted hair was instructing the people. Nearby a sannyasi, clean of face and skin, with newly-washed robes, sat motionless, his eyes closed, his mind intent with long and easy practice. A man with cupped hand was silently begging the heavens to fill it; and a mother, her left breast bare, was suckling her baby, oblivious of everything. Further down the river, dead bodies, brought from the neighbouring villages and from the sprawling, dirty town, were being burnt in great, roaring fires. Here everything was going on, for this was the most holy and sacred of towns. But the beauty of the still-flowing river seemed to wipe away all the chaos of man, while the heavens above him looked down with love and wonder.[†]

She was carrying a large basket on her head, holding it in place with one hand; it must have been quite heavy, but the swing of her walk was not altered by the weight. She was beautifully poised, her walk easy and rhythmical. On her arm were large metal bangles which made a slight tinkling sound, and on her feet were old, worn-out sandals. Her sari was torn and dirty with long use. She generally had several companions with her, all of them carrying baskets, but that morning she was alone on the rough road. The sun wasn't too hot yet, and high up in the blue sky some vultures were moving in wide circles without a flutter of their wings. The river ran silently by the road. It was a very peaceful morning, and that solitary woman with the large basket on her head seemed to be the focus of beauty and grace; all things seemed to be pointing to her and accepting her as part of their own being. She was not a separate entity, but part of you and me,

[†] *Commentaries on Living Third Series*. Victor Gollancz Ltd. pp. 64-65.

and of that tamarind tree. She wasn't walking in front of me, but I was walking with that basket on my head. It wasn't an illusion, a thought-out, wished-for, and cultivated identification, which would be ugly beyond measure, but an experience that was natural and immediate. The few steps that separated us had vanished; time, memory, and the wide distance that thought breeds, had totally disappeared. There was only that woman, not I looking at her. And it was a long way to the town, where she would sell the contents of her basket. Towards evening she would come back along that road and cross the little bamboo bridge on her way to her village, only to appear again the next morning with her basket full.[‡]

Something went off with an explosive bang. It was half past four in the morning, and still very dark. It wouldn't be dawn for an hour or more. The birds were still asleep in the trees, and the violent noise didn't seem to have disturbed them, but they would commence their quarrelsome chatter just as soon as it began to get light. There was a slight ground mist, but the stars were very clear. After the first explosion, several others followed in the distance; there was a period of quiet, and then fireworks began going off all over the place. The festive day had begun. That morning, the birds didn't carry on with their chatter as long as usual, but cut short and rapidly scattered, for those violent sounds were frightening; but towards evening they would assemble again in the same trees, to tell each other noisily of their daily doings. The sun was now touching the treetops, and they were aglow with soft light; lovely in their quietude, they were giving shape to the sky. The single rose in the garden was heavy with dew. Though it was already noisy with fireworks, the town was slow and leisurely about waking up, for it was one of the great holidays of the year; there would be feasting and rejoicing, and both rich and poor would be giving things to each other.

As it grew dark that evening, the people began to assemble on the banks of the river. They were gently setting afloat on the water small, burnt-clay saucers full of oil, with a wick burning. They would say a prayer and let the lights go floating off down the river. Soon there were thousands of these points of light on the dark, still water. It was an astonishing sight to behold, the eager faces lit by the little flames, and the river a miracle of light. The heavens with their myriad stars looked down on this river of light, and the earth was silent with the love of the people.[§]

The river was very wide here, almost a mile, and very deep; in midstream the waters were clear and blue, but towards the banks they were sullied, dirty and sluggish. The sun was setting behind the huge, sprawling city up the river; the smoke and the dust of the town were giving marvellous colours to the setting sun, which were reflected on the wide, dancing waters. It was a lovely evening and every blade of grass, the trees and chattering birds, were caught in timeless

[‡] *Commentaries on Living Third Series*. Victor Gollancz Ltd. pp. 32-33.

[§] *Commentaries on Living Third Series*. Victor Gollancz Ltd. pp. 54-55.

beauty. Nothing was separate, broken up. The noise of a train rattling over the distant bridge was part of this complete stillness. Not far away a fisherman was singing. There were wide, cultivated strips along both banks, and during the day the green, luscious fields were smiling and inviting; but now they were dark, silent and withdrawn. On this side of the river there was a large, uncultivated space where the children of the village flew their kites and romped about in noisy enjoyment, and where the nets of the fishermen were spread out to dry. They had their primitive boats anchored there.

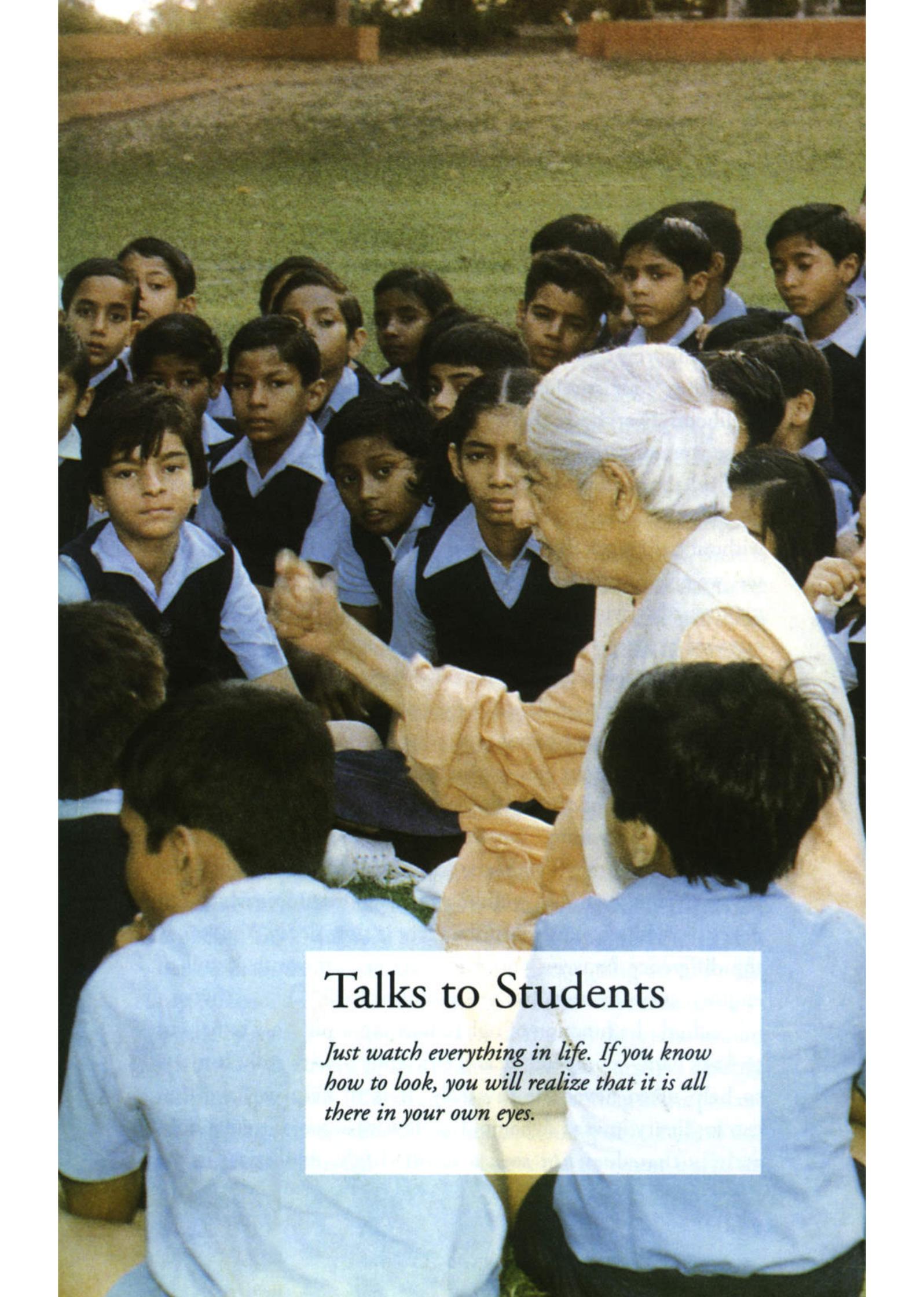
The village was just above, higher up the bank, and generally they had singing, dancing, or some other noisy affair going on up there; but this evening, though they were all out of their huts and sitting about, the villagers were quiet and strangely thoughtful. A group of them were coming down the steep bank, carrying on a bamboo litter a dead body covered with white cloth. They passed by and I followed. Going to the river's edge, they put down the litter almost touching the water. They had brought with them fast-burning wood and heavy logs, and making of these a pyre they laid the body on it, sprinkling it with water from the river and covering it with more wood and hay. A very young man lit the pyre. There were about twenty of us, and we all gathered around. There were no women present, and the men sat on their haunches, wrapped in their white cloth, completely still. The fire was getting intensely hot, and we had to move back. ... The bright yellow flames were reflected on the dark water, and so were the stars. The slight breeze had died down with the setting of the sun. Except for the crackling of the fire, everything was very still. Death was there, burning. Amidst all those motionless people and the living flames there was infinite space, a measureless distance, a vast aloneness. It was not something apart, separate and divided from life. The beginning was there and ever the beginning.**

The river that morning was grey, like molten lead. The sun rose out of the sleeping woods, big, with burning radiance, but the clouds just over the horizon soon hid it; and all day long the sun and the clouds were at war with each other for final victory. Generally there were fishermen on the river, in their gondola-shaped boats; but that morning they were absent, and the river was alone. The bloated carcass of some large animal came floating by, and several vultures were on it, screeching and tearing at the flesh. Others wanted their share, but they were driven off with huge, flapping wings, till those already on the body had had their fill. The crows, furiously cawing, tried to get in between the larger, clumsier birds, but they had no chance. Except for this noise and flutter around the dead body, the wide, curving river was peaceful. The village on the other bank had been awake for an hour or two. The villagers were shouting to each other, and their strong voices came clearly over the water. That shouting had something pleasant about it; it was warm and friendly. A voice would call from across the river, rolling along in the clear air, and another would answer it from somewhere upstream, or from the opposite bank. None of this seemed to disturb the quietness of the morning, in which there was a sense of great, abiding peace.

** *Commentaries on Living Second Series*. Victor Gollancz Ltd. pp. 213-214.

The car went along a rough, neglected road, raising a cloud of dust which settled on the trees and on the few villagers who were making their way to and from the filthy, sprawling town. Schoolchildren also used that road, but they didn't seem to mind the dust; they were too engrossed in their laughter and their play. Entering the main road, the car passed through the town, crossed the railway, and soon was again in the clean, open country. It was beautiful here; there were cows and goats in the green fields and under the huge, old trees, and it was as though you had never seen them before. Passing through the town, with its filth and squalor, seemed to have taken away the beauty of the earth; but now it was given back to you again, and you were surprised to see the goodness of the earth, and of the things of the earth. There were camels, big and well-fed, each carrying a great bundle of jute. They never hurried, but kept a steady gait, with their heads held straight up in the air; and on top of each bundle sat a man, urging the awkward beast forward. With a shock of astonishment you saw on that road two huge, slow-swinging elephants, gayly covered with gold-embroidered red cloth, their tusks decorated with silver bands. They were being taken to some religious affair, and were dressed for the occasion; but they were stopped, and there was a conversation. Their huge bulk towered above you; but they were gentle, all enmity and anger were gone. You stroked their rough skin; the tip of a trunk touched your palm softly, curiously, and moved away. The man shouted to get them going again, and the earth seemed to move with them.^{††}

^{††} *Commentaries on Living Third Series*. Victor Gollancz Ltd. pp. 127-128.



Talks to Students

Just watch everything in life. If you know how to look, you will realize that it is all there in your own eyes.

A timeless spring

It is important—is it not?—to work very hard. You work very hard at your studies; your parents work hard at earning a livelihood. Everybody about you and around you is very busy—those women carrying merchandise to the town, the villager in the field, the *rickshaw-wallah*. Everyone is working—the politician, the reformer, the writer. It is necessary to work hard, because without hard work there can be no real understanding. But, you see, we give so much importance—and in a way quite rightly—to outward activity. Unfortunately, while we are so occupied with outward activity—like the ants that are everlastingly busy—we do not see that, inwardly, we are slowly dying. We spend our days talking about the past. The older we get, the more important the past becomes. Have you not noticed your parents and your older friends talking about things that have gone, things that are so trivial and unimportant? They talk about experiences that have been, about how much they know and what they know. They quote scripture; they live in the past. And take the idealist—he always lives in the future, building a marvellous utopia which can never be, while inside, inwardly, there is slow decay. You know, the difference between youth and age is that youth is full of enquiry, curiosity, zest, and age has burnt itself out in activity.

I think the function of right education is not only to help us to work hard—competently and efficiently—outwardly, but also to help us to never die inwardly. It is to help us have that extraordinary inward dynamo, that inward sense of tremendous activity that does not seek a result. Right education is the integration of activity—the inner with the outer. Inner activity is not merely the remembrance of some books that we may have read or the ability to quote the Gita, the Upanishads, the Bible or the latest Communist writer, but to have a sense of being reborn anew every day; it is to be free. This can be done, but it demands great work. It demands hard, persistent enquiry which is much more strenuous than learning from books, because to be inwardly very alert, very alive, we must be totally free from all dependence. To not only find out how much we are conditioned, held, and influenced, but also to be free of all that is very hard work. Unfortunately, we think that outward activity is important—which it is—but it is inner activity which has much more significance, because it controls the outer. So education, it seems to me, is to help us to not die inwardly. You know, there is a spring, a fountain, that can never be exhausted, that can never go dry. Most of us have lost that or have never even found it. To find a spring that is timeless, deathless, a fountain that never dries, never fades away, one has to be very alert, and not be either caught in one's own past achievements or burdened with knowledge, information and systems that are dead. When a mind is occupied with things that are dead, the mind will also be dead. That is why it is very important to understand, from childhood, this extraordinary problem of death.

You see a body being carried to the *ghats* to be burnt. This physical death would have been a recent phenomenon but, probably, from the very beginning, from childhood until that person died, there would have been a decay going on

inwardly, psychologically, because he would have been—like most of us—bound by tradition, authority, and fear. You see, there is no inward enquiry or discovery of something which we ourselves directly feel and experience. Education is the understanding of the process of living and dying and, in the understanding of it, to find out if—as we live through life—it is possible to renew ourselves inwardly each day so that our minds are very fresh, innocent and eager. Education is the cultivation of that deathless state in which the mind never loses its resilience, its vitality.

You know, the other day a boy remarked that I had talked here for several years, and he went on to ask what the good of it was. I think that that was a very good question. You see, we listen, but we do not change. This indicates what I have been saying, namely, that inwardly, we are dead. We hear a lot of words, acquire knowledge, new techniques, new ways of expression, new methods of teaching but, inwardly, that thing is dead. That is why there is no change, there is no revolution. You know, the most revolutionary person is the religious person—not the so-called religious person who believes in certain formulas, who goes to the temple, performs puja three times every day or who repeats the Upanishads backwards and forwards. Such a person is not religious; he is merely a machine, a disc, on which is written ‘religion’; that is all. Inwardly he is dead.

So it is one of our problems, whether we be educators or parents, to see that this inward excellence, innocence and vitality, which is destroyed through fear, through anxiety, greed and ambition, is never destroyed. Not to die inwardly is hard work; it is as hard as getting up at 4 o’clock and meditating. It requires a great deal of perception and insight. That is why it is so important, while we are young, to be educated properly. And it is the function of the educator—is it not?—not only to so educate himself in his relationship with the student, but also to help the student have this extraordinarily creative mind, a mind that is timelessly learning.

STUDENT (S): The *rishis* and the sages spend years searching for God. They leave the world, and sit in caves. Do they really find God?

KRISHNAMURTI (K): You know, it is a very odd fact that children in Europe and other places never ask such questions; they want to know about other things, about other countries—the people, their manners, whether they are rich or poor and, if they are poor, whether anything is being done for them. They want to know what the latest machines, the latest gadgets, are. But here, apparently, we are extraordinarily occupied with activities related to God—which does not mean we are superior here, but it may, perhaps, have its own importance. The boy asks whether those people, the sannyasis who withdraw from the world, really ever find God.

You know, it is only a very simple mind, a mind that is really innocent, that is always in a state of not-knowing, and of not-accumulating, that can find God or Truth or Beauty or Goodness. And it is very difficult to have such a mind.

You see, what we do is to give up worldly things; we put on a loincloth or a robe but, inwardly, remain very complex. That is, outwardly we may renounce

the world, but inwardly we never renounce anything. We never give up all our beliefs; we never give up all the formulas and the things that we have learnt from books and from teachers. We are never, inwardly, at any moment simple. We are never, at any moment, not asking or not begging or not seeking. If we go into it very deeply, we will realize that God cannot be found. *That thing* must come to us; we cannot go to it. Therefore we cannot seek it. But, because we want to get hold of that reality, we chase it up and down the world, and it eludes us, it escapes from us. We think that the Real will solve all our problems and give us happiness, peace. So we find various methods by which we can pursue it more persistently, determinedly. But it is only the mind that does not ask, that does not seek, that is infinitely simple and innocent, that is really very clear, uncluttered by innumerable pieces of knowledge, and that is sensitive to everything—to the cruelties of man to man, of man to animal—that can find God.

S: When you leave this place, don't you regret leaving us, and parting from us all?

K: It is rather difficult to answer that question. Please do not misunderstand me when I say that I don't regret parting from all of you. I don't regret it because, you see, love is something that is very curious. It is something that somehow bridges, abolishes, time. Love is not something extraordinarily mysterious and divine. You know, when the heart is full, there is no space for anything else, and that is the beauty of love. You see, one is probably sorry to leave, but there is no space for sorrow because, after all, what is going to happen? You will lead your own lives, won't you? You will have to go through the mill of existence. You see, society squeezes you to fit into its pattern—whether as a sannyasi or a householder, a politician or a teacher. Either you will get squeezed dry and empty and die or, having had the right kind of education, you will come out of it and blossom. So, whether the other is sorry to leave or not has very little meaning, because it is *your* life, and *you* have to live it. It is you who have to face all the struggles, the miseries, and the joys. And to help you come out of it all, innocent, simple, and with a clear mind, is the function of education.

S: Why do we have such implicit faith in God?

K: A little boy asks why one has such implicit faith in God. Do you really have such faith, or have you been told by your elders that you must have implicit faith in God? If you have been told that you must have faith and you repeat that, then you are merely a gramophone record. As you grow to maturity, if you begin to enquire—and enquiry can only be when there is freedom—you will find out for yourself that that very enquiry, that very capacity to enquire, to probe, is the faith, not in something, but that the very enquiry, the very probing is its own devotion, its own faith.

S: Sir, the other day you said that one of the sources of danger to a country was its armed forces. But if a country disbanded its defence forces, it would

encourage other countries to invade it. For example, if India disbanded its defence services then, immediately, Pakistan would invade it. Therefore, isn't there an inconsistency in maintaining that a country's armed forces are a source of danger to it?

K: This is the argument put forth by every country: If my country disbands its armed forces, then other countries will invade it. So, let me arm. And each country arms itself to the teeth, if it has the capacity, the money and the industrial efficiency. Each nation arms itself in the name of peace. This is a fact. Russia talks everlastingly of peace, but arms itself to the teeth; so does America, so does England, so does every country. Therefore, this is not a problem of just one nation but of every nation, every group, which means, it is a problem for the world. And the world being yours and mine, it is an individual problem—yours as well as mine. Do you understand?

So, how is the world to disarm and, yet, have peace? It can have peace when there is one government, and not different, multifarious governments with separate armaments, armies, and all the rest of it. Only when there is one government, which means, only when there is no nationality, no frontier, can there be peace. Only when there is no Hinduism, no Buddhism, no Christianity, can there be peace. Only when there is nothing which divides people even in the name of God, can there be peace. So if you really felt all this, and worked hard for it—very hard—as you work for your puja, your examinations, and for your livelihood, then we would have peace in the world. To work hard for something really worthwhile demands great insight. Unfortunately, most of us are occupied with working very hard only for ourselves. If we want a little more money, we will work very hard. If we think that we are going to gain spiritually, we will perform pujas all day long. You see, to have peace in the world requires a great deal of insight, intelligence and efficiency, but for that very few of us are willing to work hard, because we think that that can never happen. There can be peace in the world if we know what the facts are, and are not deceived by them. Then we will really create a peaceful world.

S: Sir, when you leave Rajghat why do we feel depressed?

K: Why should you feel depressed because one person is leaving? If someone leaves, including myself, why should you feel depressed? Is it because that person has pumped a lot of enthusiasm and vigour into you, and that the moment that person leaves, you feel deflated? That means you depend on that person, isn't it? When you depend on somebody, you will be lost; you will wither away. So don't. That is what I have been saying. One has to find out, through right education, this source which is imperishable, for then there will always be this extraordinary creativity. Then you will never be depressed; you will never feel lonely.

27 December 1955

The sea of life

Many of you probably do not know me, because I haven't been here for a year and a half. Therefore you can have no idea of what I am going to talk about. Those of you who do know me may have a lot of questions but are, probably, too shy to ask them. So I will talk a little and then, perhaps, you will be good enough to screw up your courage and put what you think into English, because I do not understand Hindi or any other Indian language. You may wonder why I don't learn an Indian language. First of all, I left this country when I was quite young, and since then I have not been able to stay in any one place—either in Europe, in America, or here—for very long. Besides English, I know one or two European languages. I have tried to learn Hindi, but to be able to think in the words of another language one has to stay in that country for a couple of years and keep on hearing it spoken. Unfortunately, that is something which has not been possible for me to do. So I hope you don't mind if I speak in English.

I wonder what you are all going to be, or do, when you grow up. You now go to school and will later go on to college, where you will be trained as scientists, engineers, lawyers, doctors, businessmen, and so on. When you graduate from college you will be twenty-years-old or more and, then, you will enter what is called life. Now, what society calls 'entering life' is really the fitting into a particular frame or pattern, that is, the movement in a predetermined groove. That, unfortunately, is what most of you are educated for. Going to the office, getting married, having children, competing with one's neighbours to get a better job—that is what you call life, and you are generally satisfied with that.

But, you see, that is only a very small part of existence. There are many other things involved in life. There is not only your individual life, but also the collective life of society. The society in which you live tells you what you must and must not do, but your own wants, ambitions and desires come into conflict with all that. You are educated to fit into the social pattern, and with that education you meet life, which is like a little river meeting the vast sea. All that you know is the placid little river on which you have been sailing for twenty or thirty years and, then, suddenly you come to this enormous expanse of water, which is very rough and full of danger. To navigate the vast, uncharted ocean of life demands an extraordinary capacity to meet its many hazards but, unfortunately, you are not educated for that; you are not told anything about it.

Now, it seems to me that education should prepare you not only to sail on the river, in which there is not much danger, but also, at a certain time in your life, to meet the sea with all its deep currents, its strong winds and tremendous storms, because all that is life. But, unfortunately, what actually happens is that you are educated to fit into a pattern. If you are interested in science, you are trained in that particular subject and, till you meet the sea, you may have fairly smooth sailing. But when at last you meet the sea of life, the battle begins: there are fears, anxieties, despairs; there is deep questioning. Life becomes, for you, a terribly complex problem, a problem for which you want a very simple answer. And there are experts who will give you simple answers. Some will say,

‘Become a Socialist’, or ‘Think along the Communist line, and everything will be solved’. If you don’t do this, you become a Gandhi-ite, or pursue some other philosophy or ideal in the hope of having a simple answer to everything. But there is no simple answer along any particular line.

Life is a most complex affair which most people do not understand and, being disturbed, they seek what they call God. They believe that there is a God who is looking after them, who is patting them on the back, or holding their hand when they are troubled, and this belief makes them feel comfortable, happy; it gives them strength to meet life. Besides these so-called religious people, there are the social reformers, the Communists, the people of the left, of the right, and of the centre; there are the Christians and the Hindus, the Muslims and the Buddhists, each with their own particular window through which they look at this extraordinary sea of life. So, being surrounded by all these conflicting theories and beliefs, what is one to do?

Here you are, being trained to pass examinations—that, and not right education, is your chief concern. You are not in this school to awaken more energy, more curiosity, more drive; you are not concerned with adventuring beyond mere words. You are studying certain subjects according to a fixed curriculum and, if you can pass your examinations in those subjects, you are satisfied. That is all you and most of your teachers are concerned with. As a student you are trained to think in this narrow way, with the result that, when you grow up and get a job which gives you a little money, you don’t want to be disturbed. You are not encouraged, from childhood, to look beyond the book. Therefore, you never question, ask, and demand. Your teacher doesn’t want you to be too curious, or to demand too much because, probably, the poor chap doesn’t know either. Your questioning disturbs him, so he tells you to pay more attention to your books.

You keep on like this for a number of years and, suddenly, you get married and find that you must have a job. You are plunged into this chaos which we call life and, then, you want a satisfactory solution, a simple answer. So, what are you to do? Do you understand the problem I am putting before you?

Most educational institutions are not interested in what kind of life you are going to lead afterwards, in what your relationship is going to be with your wife or husband, or with society; they are not concerned with how you are going to resolve your many conflicts, your many despairs. The chief concern of most schools and colleges is to help you get some kind of book learning, and they expect you, while answering examination questions, to repeat what you have learnt like a gramophone record. If you can do this successfully, you are declared a B.A., an M.A., or a Ph.D. and, then, you go out into this rotten society without the awakened intelligence that is required to fight its ugliness, its corruption, its cruelty, and its bestiality. You are not encouraged to be intelligent. You are merely trained to be clever, to compete, to get a job and to hold on to it at all costs. So you cheat, if you can get away with it; you become corrupt, and do all the stupid things that almost everybody else is doing. Am I making myself clear?

Now, what is intelligence? When you say, ‘He is a very intelligent man’, what do you mean? I feel that even though you may never pass an examination,

or read a single book, you can still be extraordinarily intelligent. So, listen carefully as I go into the question of what intelligence is.

To me, intelligence is the capacity to think very clearly. It is the capacity to think without any personal wants, fancies, hopes or fears being projected in one's thinking. It is to see facts as they are. To see corruption as it is, to see ambition as it is, sexual demands as they are, to see everything clearly—without any kind of distortion—is the beginning of intelligence. However difficult it may seem, if you can do this right from the start—beginning at the school level—you will find that as you go along and enter college, you will have the capacity to question what you are doing. You will want to know what the significance of tradition is and why you should follow, why you should obey. In this very questioning you will be releasing the energy you need to go beyond the book, beyond the teacher, beyond the framework of society.

I wonder if you have read about how monkeys are learning to paint pictures. There is a chimpanzee who has painted several pictures, and some of them are quite beautiful. There are electronic brains which can solve complex mathematical problems far more quickly than the human brain. The electronic brains have also written poems, some of which I have read, and they are really extraordinary—very poetic and precise. I doubt that very many human beings could write such poems. So machines are doing things which are beyond human capacity, and this means that we are being left behind.

All that we know is what we have learnt from books. We merely repeat what we have read in the Gita, the Quran or the Bible and, thereby, think that we have solved our problems. We must be educated to go beyond the trained monkey, beyond the programmed machine, beyond the repetitive process which we call modern existence. To go beyond the repetitive process demands a brain that is extraordinarily alert, perceptive; and, surely, it is the function of education to bring about such a brain, rather than a brain which mechanically records and repeats what it has read in a book or heard the teacher say. The machines are already doing better than that.

You see, what is happening in this country is that there are expert repeaters of what Gandhi said, or of what is written in the Gita, or in some other sacred book. We regard this as a marvellous way of thinking about life, and do not realize that when we think in terms of what somebody else has said, we are not really thinking at all.

One of our major difficulties is that the teachers themselves are not aware of this problem. Many people take up teaching, unfortunately, because they cannot get a better job anywhere else. I am sorry to put this so brutally, but it is a fact. Such teachers, quite naturally, have not the capacity to question, to discover. They lack the driving intelligence which questioning and discovery demand, so they teach you only what they have gathered from books and, therefore, you also get caught in that vicious circle. To help to awaken your intelligence is the function of right education and, I hope, you are getting that kind of education here.

Will you kindly discuss this with me?

STUDENT (S): Can one be free of influence?

KRISHNAMURTI (K): Do you see what this question implies? It implies being free of all influences, and not of just one particular form. It implies being free of the so-called 'good' influences as well as the so-called 'bad' influences. So the problem is extremely complex.

From childhood you have been influenced by a tradition which has been built up for millennia—generation upon generation. You are the result of influence, and nothing else. You call yourself a Hindu and, if you were to marry a Muslim, your father would ask, 'How could you do such a thing?' Now, why do you consider yourself a Hindu? Is it because your parents have told you that you are a Hindu? Is it because your parents have told you that you are a Hindu that you put a mark on your forehead, perform some rituals, go to a temple, and eat in a certain way? This would mean that you have been influenced to think along a particular line, as have the other people in India. In Europe they are influenced to be either Catholics or Protestants. All over the world people are influenced by propaganda. You read something in the newspapers, or you see a poster, and you are influenced by it. You hear a voice on the radio constantly telling you to buy such-and-such thing and, presently, you go into a shop and buy it. So the question is: Can you be free of all influences? In other words, can you cease to be a Hindu, a Catholic, a Protestant, a nationalist?

To be free of all influences is one of the most difficult things. You are consciously or unconsciously being influenced all the time. In order to be free of influences, it is first necessary to wake up to this whole process and see how you are constantly being influenced, subtly or crudely, by every cinema poster, by half-naked women, by the magazines, the radio, and the books that you read. You are influenced by your parents, your teachers, your gurus, and your religion. Everything around you is pouring its influence into you, and the first thing is to be aware of this, to become conscious of it, and not ask how one is to get rid of it. You have to be conscious, all the time, that you are being influenced.

In America, a few years ago, they experimented with what they called subliminal propaganda. At the cinema theatres, while people were watching a film, an advertisement was momentarily flashed on the screen—even while the film was running—with such rapidity that the conscious mind was not aware of seeing the advertisement at all. But it had nevertheless been seen, and its statement went into the subconscious mind. Fortunately, however, the government refused to allow the use of this means of advertising. Before the last war, the American government appointed a committee to enquire into the whole question of propaganda. And do you know who objected to it? The religious people, the army, and the businessmen—the mainstay of society.

There was a man in Delhi who could think of nothing but the Gita, and he became quite annoyed when I said that the Gita was only a book and that there was no reason to get so excited about it. For him that particular book was the beginning and the end of life, and probably most of us are that way about some book or the other. I do not know how much you are being influenced by me now,

but probably you are not even aware of the significance of what I am saying. Because you have been so heavily conditioned, you cannot see anything new.

To be free of influence, you have to begin by being aware of all the many influences which are constantly pouring into your mind. You have to become conscious of the *fact* that you are being influenced. Later on, as you observe the more obvious influences, you will also become aware of being unconsciously influenced by a word or by a gesture; you will notice that you walk the way you do because you have seen a cinema actor walk like that, and so on.

Freedom from all influence is really the essence of an enlightened mind, because the enlightened mind is a light unto itself, and does not depend upon another.

S: All that you have said refers to external influences, but what about the influence of our own thinking?

K: Can you separate external thinking from your own thinking? Is not your own thinking shaped by the influence of your external environment? Is there in you a process of individual thinking apart from the collective? You call yourself a Hindu, which is collective thinking, and if you were to break away completely from that collective thinking, what would you have left? Is your thinking individual at all? Individual thinking is unique thinking; it is not the continuity of, nor is it a reaction to, the collective. Are you really an individual? You have a separate body; you are a man, and someone else is a woman; you may be rich, and someone else may be poor. These and other superficial differences obviously exist between people. Who is an individual inwardly, in the psychological sense? Isn't what you call the 'individual' only a continuity of the collective? When you say, 'I am a Muslim', or 'I am a Hindu', or 'I am a Christian', that 'I' is the result of the collective outward influence, is it not? And if you completely break away from that influence, will you still think as a Muslim, a Hindu or a Christian, or will you think as a human being who is free from all tradition? And, if you are free from tradition in every form—which means not only ceasing to be Muslim, or whatever it is, but also being free from the past which is made up of your own experiences—what will you have left? You will have nothing left. And, when the 'I' is completely wiped away, you *will* reach that point—the point of having *absolutely* nothing. Only when the mind is purged of all influence, outward as well as inward, can it really think clearly, act freely, and have a feeling of tremendous affection. Otherwise you will be just a machine that is running on and on; a machine that is endlessly repeating itself.

S: As a student I have to listen properly in class in order to understand the subjects taught. How am I to listen properly?

K: First of all, do you ever really listen to anything? When I say, 'Nationalism is poison', how do you listen to it? Do you listen with your prejudices? To feel nationalistic is so thrilling, and you also consider it extremely important. Therefore, when I say that it is poison, you do not listen at all. When you resist

something which another is saying, you will not be listening. When somebody asks, 'Why are you a Hindu? Why do you profess non-violence? Why do you believe in God?', and you resist instinctively, it means that you are not really listening. To listen with resistance is to not listen at all. That is one thing.

But there is another factor which blocks listening. When you hear something new, you compare it with what you already know. You either say that you have read the same thing in the Gita, or that it is written in the Bible, or you quote some other book. When you compare, as your mind will be elsewhere, you will have ceased to listen. So, when you resist what you hear, or compare it with something else, you will not be listening. Furthermore, you will not be listening when you condemn what is being said. The moment you say, 'What nonsense you are talking!' you will have stopped listening, because what is important to you is your own opinion, and not finding out what the other fellow is saying.

You stop listening when you resist, when you compare or when you condemn. You resist because you have your own values and ideas as to what right and wrong are—and those values are the outcome of your conditioning; they all depend upon the environment in which you happen to have been brought up. In other words, you do not listen when your mind is chattering, that is, when it is occupied with itself and its own thoughts.

You listen only when your mind is not chattering, that is, when you really want to find out what it is that another is saying. To want to find out is neither to accept nor to reject. It implies listening; it implies being attentive with your ears, with your eyes, with your nerves, that is, with your whole body. When you so listen, you will be listening not casually, but with the vitality of total attention. That is the only way to listen, and that is the only way in which you can learn.

S: It requires energy to observe and be free of all influences. How are we to get that energy?

K: How do you get the energy just to move from here to your room?—by eating, sleeping, being in good health, and also by having the desire to move from here to there. You also move when it is profitable to do so, or when there is fear, or when there is any other form of urgency. Similarly, when you really want to find out what is true, and you see the necessity of breaking through all influences, you will have the energy to do it. Energy comes with urgency. When the house is on fire, you have to do something about it at once, don't you? It is no good picking up a book to see what it says about putting out a fire. The burning house demands that you act, and the very urgency of that demand gives you the energy to act. Similarly, when you realize the urgency of living without being influenced, and the urgency of doing something about the corruption and the rottenness that exist in this world, then you will have the energy to do it. Your life is a series of challenges which are constantly demanding immediate action and, when you face these challenges all the time, you will always have the required energy to meet them.

S: What about the person who has to support a family? Can he have the sense of urgency that you speak of?

K: Everybody has a sense of urgency, to some degree, about something or the other. For example, a hungry man has a sense of urgency about eating; a man who has made himself responsible for the education of several younger brothers and sisters has a sense of urgency about what he has undertaken; an unemployed man urgently feels the necessity of a job. But most of us have become dull. We have no real sense of urgency because we refuse to face the challenge of life. The challenge is there under our noses, it is not just for the few; any man can pick it up.

You see, most of us just play with life. Yesterday, as we were sitting in that room, we heard *Ram nam satya hai*¹—a dead body was being carried to the river. I personally felt the urgency of seeing for oneself the extraordinary significance of death, which is a thing that is happening every day. This challenge is there in front of us, but we refuse to look at it. We refuse to respond, because we have answers like reincarnation or resurrection—life after death—or are so terribly preoccupied with the immediate necessity, the immediate desire, that we give no thought to anything else. The real challenges, the deep challenges, like a bird falling from a tree, are taking place around us all the time, but we refuse to recognize them. We want some superhuman challenge to wake us up, and that will never come.

20 November 1963

¹ These words, meaning that *Rama*'s name is eternal and true, are repeated by those carrying and accompanying a corpse.

On fear

I don't know if you have ever wondered why we imitate, copy, follow, obey, and fashion our thoughts after what somebody or the other has said. Life is extraordinarily swift and vital, but we reduce it to a few fixed patterns and live within those patterns. I think very few of us have ever asked ourselves why we do what our parents, our elders, our gurus, our saints and our political leaders tell us to do. Why is it that we accept their authority? Acceptance of authority is a form of imitation. The moment you accept authority, you are setting up a pattern, a framework within which your thoughts will begin to confine themselves. This is very important to understand, because where there is acceptance and imitation, there will be fear. When you love, you will not imitate. You cannot. If you love someone, you will not copy that person, you will just love. You know, imitation begins only when you accept what another person says, and you accept, you imitate, because you are afraid to stand alone.

First of all, you are not encouraged to question, because your parents won't have it. If you question your parents, they will think that you are impudent and, perhaps, you are. Furthermore, if you are allowed to question their authority, you will begin to disobey them and, if you don't obey, they will think that you are lost. So there is fear, both on the part of your parents and on yours—fear that you *might* go wrong. That is why you accept authority and imitate others. Also, as it makes you feel secure and important to follow a successful leader, you never question his authority.

All of us have this instinct to imitate. I wonder if you have ever watched a bird building its nest. Nobody has taught the bird how to build a nest; it is an inherited instinct, which goes on repeating itself. This is a form of imitation. Most of us are like the birds in this respect. We have this imitative quality, which is responsible for the deep cultivation of fear.

It is very important to understand fear. Do you know what fear is? It begins when we are children, and continues throughout our life. We are afraid of our elders, of our parents, of our teachers. As we grow up this fear continues, and we are afraid of our gurus, afraid of public opinion, afraid of our wives or of our husbands, afraid of not becoming a success, afraid of not being beautiful or clever, and afraid of death. Most people in the world—the old as well as the young—have this extraordinary sense of fear. There is the normal biological instinct to protect oneself, which makes one stay away from a venomous snake, and so on, but I am not talking about that. I am talking about the fears which are psychological, the fears which are under the skin.

All of us have these fears; and the more afraid the mind is, the less it is capable of acting freely. A fearful mind imitates, accepts and obeys, which means that it will cease to function freely. A fearful mind is incapable of living completely, wholly, with an intensity of its own. Imitation, acceptance and obedience are the indications of deep-rooted fear; and unless you begin now—as you are growing up—to understand this extraordinary instinct to imitate, to

accept, to obey, you will find yourself functioning from day to day like a repetitive machine.

The man who wants to live a rich, complete life, a life full of beauty and vitality, has to be really free of fear. And to be free of fear is one of the most difficult things. Most of us try to run away from fear; we cover it up with garlands of words, or with ceremonies, or by accepting certain comforting beliefs based on what others have said.

How are you to be free of fear? There is fear of the snake, fear of the big bully in the class, fear of your parents, fear of society, fear of religious and political leaders. How are you to be free of all this fear, and must you not be free of it? Because if you are not free of fear, you will live for the rest of your life in darkness. You may have a nice house with electric lights, you may be married to a good husband or a sympathetic wife but, if you have fear in any form, you will always live in darkness. So, it is very important to find out how to be free of fear. To be free of fear, you must first know that you are frightened. And, secondly, you must not run away from it; you must not escape from fear, but look at it.

Once, when I was out walking in California—if I may be anecdotal—I was not particularly looking where I was going, as I was watching a bird. Suddenly I heard a sharp rattling sound. I looked in the direction of the noise, and I jumped back, because there on the path before me was a big rattlesnake. As you probably know, the rattler is venomous. But it is called a gentleman-snake because it generally gives a warning before it strikes. It is not like a cobra or some of the other snakes which just strike without warning. This rattler was quite large and fat. I stood a few feet away from it, and we watched each other. I could clearly see all the patterns on its skin, its large head, its unblinking eyes—snakes have no eyelids—and its black tongue shooting in and out. We continued to watch each other for some time and, then, it began to move away but, as it did so, I moved nearer and, then, it coiled again, ready to strike. We kept this up for half an hour or more. By that time the snake was getting rather tired, and didn't know what to do. Finally it began moving away again, but it kept its head and tail towards me, ready to coil and strike if I came too close. Then it very quietly disappeared in the underbrush.

In the same way, watch every fear that arises within you. Whether it is fear of a snake, fear of your parents, fear of an older boy, fear of your teacher, or fear in any other form, do not run away from it, but observe it, question it, find out what that fear is. Watch your fear, and learn from it.

You know, they are experimenting with learning-by-doing—that is, learning how to do a job in the very act of doing it. Big businesses are trying this. They find that when people learn on the job, they often do much better work. Therefore, the big businesses earn more. In the same way, learn about fear while you are feeling afraid. If you do this whenever fear arises, you will find that you no longer merely accept what older people say; you will find that you have ceased to imitate, to obey, and that you will, instead, be listening to find out if what they are saying is true in itself. When you listen—it does not matter who is doing the talking—you must not only question what you hear, but also observe your response to what you hear so that your mind will not be clouded by fear or

prejudice and, therefore, will become sharp, clear, precise, reasonable, healthy. It is only then that you will be able to see the facts as they are.

Look at all your faces! You are frightened children—and it is a terrible thing to be frightened, especially while you are so young. Fear prevents you from studying properly. You can study well and learn quickly only in a happy atmosphere, and not in a state of fear. But ‘how to study’ is a different problem, and we shall talk about that another time.

Fear is a crippling thing; it destroys love, sympathy, compassion—and you must have love, sympathy, compassion, for otherwise you will not be a human being. If you do not know how to hold the hand of another happily, easily, then, for the rest of your life, you will be in misery.

STUDENT (S): We have a tendency to escape from whatever problem is before us. Is not this tendency the cause of our fear?

KRISHNAMURTI (K): Let us find out. There is fear in the movement of escape itself, is there not? If I do something of which my neighbours don’t approve, they are going to say that I am a terrible man, and I am afraid of their opinion. But I don’t face the fact that I am afraid—afraid of public opinion, afraid of what people will say; I cover it up, run away from it and, *in this very movement away from the fact*, there is fear.

Let us take my fear of death. Instead of understanding the whole problem, I run away from the fact of death—run away in the sense that I have comforting beliefs. I say that there is life in the hereafter—reincarnation, resurrection, and so on. This flight from the fact is a cause of fear. Not that there is no fear of the thing from which I am running away; but the very running away from the fact increases fear, does it not? To understand fear and to be free of it, I have to face the thing from which fear arises. When I see a snake, I must face it; I must find out all about it. I must observe its colour, the patterns on its skin, its unblinking eyes, and the triangular shape of its head. I must look at the thing, be with it; but if I run away from it, the running away will cause fear.

S: We want to be free and, yet, we are afraid of freedom. Why?

K: We are afraid of freedom because we do not know what freedom is. Parents, particularly in this country where traditional rules are chiefly concerned with getting children married off quickly and settled into a job, say, ‘This is a free country; this is a democracy’. But those are just words, because they don’t really know what freedom is.

What does it mean to be free? It means standing up for something which you think is true, even if the whole of India says that it is false. But, you see, it is immensely difficult to find out for yourself what is true, because you are not encouraged to be free. No saint talks about freedom. The saints always talk about discipline: You must do this in order to get that. If they talked about freedom—freedom from tradition, freedom from authority—they would not be popular. I know that what I am saying is a dangerous thing to tell a student, because one has

to first understand the whole problem of authority before one can be free of authority. It is only then that one does not just blindly obey.

Now, why should you obey at all? Freedom from authority is an extraordinary thing. The so-called spiritual people have said that you must discipline yourself, that you must not look at a woman or at a man, that you must not do this, that you must not do that, and so on. The saints and the leaders have made you slaves and, therefore, you are frightened of the one thing that you must have, which is freedom. You must have absolute freedom, otherwise you will be bound, you will be like a dead person. But to have freedom is one of the most difficult things on earth. It means being free from fear, from ambition, from greed, from envy. That is why you must be educated not merely to read books and pass examinations, but to demand freedom. If you have no freedom, how can you love, even though you may have sex and children?

Here, in India, nobody wants you to be free. Everybody wants you to be respectable, and the moment you are respectable, you are finished; there can be no freedom for you. To find out what freedom is you must have tremendous energy, and that energy comes into being only when there is no fear.

S: Are we not afraid of doing something wrong?

K: For most people that is one of the factors which prevents freedom. If you are afraid of doing the wrong thing, you will never discover what the right thing to do is. As your parents are afraid that you will go wrong, and do something outrageous, they say that they must protect you according to their ideas. And you, in turn, say, 'My parents know better than I, therefore, I must obey them.' So there you are! Your parents are afraid, and so are you, with the result that you will lead a dull, stupid life for the rest of your years.

If your parents say to you, 'Let us sit down and talk things over. Let us find out what marriage, what sex, what life and living are. Don't let us be afraid, but let us go into it together and discover what it means to be gentle, compassionate', then there will be love, there will be companionship, there will be cooperation. Therefore you will develop intelligence and, as you grow up, you will find out things for yourself and lead your own life. But if your father or mother behaves like a boss and says, 'You must do this, you must not do that', and you merely obey, then your life will become a tragedy. You will just be married off, and you will lead a miserable, sorrowful existence. You may have a house, procreate, and all the rest of it, but what significance will that have if you are in misery for the rest of your life?

Unfortunately, very few people want freedom. The Socialists and the Communists talk about freedom; they write books about it, but they don't want you to be free. They want you to think along their own lines and to fit into their particular pattern; that is their only interest. And you are not educated to be free, to observe, to question, to ask, to demand, to seek, to tear everything to pieces in order to find out what is true and what is false. On the contrary, you are educated to be a perfect copybook.

S: When I am alone, questions arise, but not when I am in the presence of older people. Why is this so?

K: That is a very good question from a little boy. Let us see what is implied in it. When he is by himself questions arise, but they do not arise when he is with older people because he is frightened. By being absorbed in their own importance, in their own worries, their own preoccupations, and their own ambitions, they have prevented the little children from asking questions. That is what the older people have done to little boys and girls. That is why questions arise only when they—the little children—are walking by themselves or sitting in a corner of the garden. So, it is the responsibility of the older people to see that the little children are not afraid to ask questions. And you little children must ask, push, enquire, cry out; you must do everything but be frightened of the older people.

You know, one of the greatest sorrows of this country is that you have divorced religion from love. You say that you have love for Sri Krishna, for all the images and the saints. But you are not loving; you are frightened. What is missing in this sad country is love.

S: Why do people believe in God?

K: That is fairly simple, is it not? Have you not noticed that when you are very happy and feeling full of life, you have no belief in God? Then you just live. You see, it is only the people who are frightened, who have not understood this complex thing called life—with all its agonies, miseries, aches, despairs, frustrations—it is only they who believe, who escape into something which they call God. And there are innumerable images of God in this country; you see them by the thousands.

People believe in God because they are afraid of life. But it is only when you love life that you find out what God is. But most of us avoid life, just as all the saints, the so-called religious people, do. They—the saints—want to suppress life, they want to shape it, discipline it, control it, beat everything out of it, and the result is that they are dry, withered human beings who everlastingly talk about God; but they are nowhere near God. To find out what God is, is quite a different matter. It requires amazing intelligence—not sitting around reading the Gita, or doing good works, or following some guru. To find out if there is God, the real thing, you need a mind and a heart that are completely mature, open, rich, and unspoiled by fear.

22 November 1963

The art of seeing

I wonder if you ever notice the sunrise and the sunset with all their astonishing colours. I wonder if you notice the light reflected on the water, the fishermen in their boats, the vultures wheeling high in the sky, the smaller birds among the trees, and the early morning sun shining on a single leaf. Do you see these things? You know, seeing is one of the most extraordinary things in life. I wonder if you really see the sky when there is no moon, or when it is just a bit of silver hanging in the sky. I wonder if you see the dirt, the squalor and the misery of those who are poor. I wonder if you see how the people around you look. We learn a great deal by seeing how people talk, how they walk, what kind of clothes they wear, what manners they have, whether they are rough or gentle, whether they are deeply considerate or superficially polite. If we do not know how to see, how to observe, how to listen, we will never really care about anything in life.

Do you know what it means to care? You care when you look after a pet animal, when you keep your clothes in order, when you wash and keep yourself clean. If you plant a tree in the garden, it requires to be watched over; it requires care. You may have to add manure to the soil in which it is growing, and it must be watered regularly when there is no rain. If you have a dog, you must brush it, give it the right kind of food, take it out for walks, and see that it has no disease. To do all these things—to have a feeling for people, for animals, for plants, for things—is to care. Caring is really a part of that profound thing called love. It begins with the care of little things.

Most of us, as we grow old, have no love at all. We talk about love, about being friendly, kind and gentle, but we have no love, no real affection for people. I do not know if you have noticed that ramshackle bridge across the Varana. Have you walked over it, and noticed how shaky it is? People use it every day, their bicycles laden with cans of milk. It is a public hazard, yet there it stays, and nobody does anything about it, for the government does not care. And if you do not care either, you will have no love in your heart. Do you know what it is to feel for people? You say that you love your parents, and your parents say that they love you. But do they know what it means to love? To love a child means seeing that he or she gets the right kind of education. To love a child means seeing that he or she is not made into a machine which merely repeats ideas learnt from a book, but is helped to be intelligent.

You cannot be intelligent if you do not observe everything around you—the birds, the trees, the poor people, the dirty roads, the cows that have no shelter, and the dogs that are hungry and diseased. If you do not notice all these things, you will grow up as most of the older people have grown up; you will grow up without any affection in your heart. Most people are self-centred; they are concerned about themselves. They are absorbed in their money, their position, their power and their success. They are absorbed in their ideals, in their saints, in their gods and in their saviours. And, beyond that, there is nothing in them. They may have a lot of property, they may call themselves by big names but, inside, they have nothing, because they do not know how to see. I really mean this.

So, do try to look, to see, to observe. Don't criticize or compare. Don't say, 'This is good, and that is bad' or, 'This is right, and that is wrong'. Observe how you walk, how shy or dull you are. Observe how the older people treat the young, how your teachers behave towards you, and how you respond to them. Just watch everything in life. Watching is a most extraordinary thing. Out of watching comes intelligence. If you know how to watch, you will not have to read all the complicated books on philosophy or religion. If you know how to look, how to listen, and how to speak, you will realize that it is all there in your own eyes, your own ears, and on your own tongue. To have real affection for people, one must not only look and listen, but also care. Do you care for anyone? Do you care for your parents? Do your parents care for you? Caring means looking after others, being kind, seeing to it that they are not treated cruelly. And you cannot really care for anyone if you do not see, if you do not observe.

If you begin to go into this whole question of observing, you will find that you never really observe anything. If there is an accident—let us say that two cars have come into collision with each other and that there are several witnesses—it has been found that each person describes the accident differently. The statements made by the several witnesses generally do not agree, because no one observes what actually happens. If you experiment with this, you will find out how difficult it is to really see things as they are, and not as you would like them to be. You would like things to be beautiful when they are ugly. You do not want to see the ugly things in the street—the hungry beggars—so, though you may not actually close your eyes, you don't see them; you look elsewhere; you escape.

To see everything as it is, is quite an art. It is as difficult to see things as they are as it is to learn mathematics, history or geography. When you go out for a walk, you really do not see the squalor and misery of the poor, the filth on the road, and the diseased dogs. If you began to see all this, you would do something about it, and that is the beauty of seeing. Seeing is action. If you see, if you observe, if you listen, you cannot help but act. But most of us are blind and deaf, so we do not act. And when we do act, it is according to some idea and, therefore, there is conflict between the idea and the action. But if we began to see and listen, then out of that very seeing and listening there would be direct action.

One day, a few months ago when I was in Switzerland, I was riding in a car with a friend. A little girl was cycling ahead of us and, suddenly, she got off and began pushing the cycle. I wondered why, and watched. She picked up a piece of paper that was lying on the road, threw it in a nearby trash bin, remounted her cycle, and went on. Do you understand the significance of what I am saying? There was nobody to tell that little girl to do what she did but, as she had a feeling for keeping the road clean, she picked up the piece of paper which she saw lying there. It was a natural, spontaneous desire to keep the countryside beautiful. People who talk about action do not act like that. They don't see what actually is and, therefore, do not act immediately. Unfortunately, this spontaneous feeling will probably be destroyed in that little girl as she grows up. She will go to a school where she will learn to read and write, study certain subjects and pass examinations, but this feeling will be gone.

So there is instant action if you see, if you observe, if you listen. If you observe, and if you listen, you will act; you will not have *ideas* about what right action is. I do not know if any of you drive a car. A good driver sees three hundred yards ahead and, up to that distance, he takes in all the activities on the road and observes what is coming out of the side roads. If he looked only a short distance in front of him, he would have accidents. Any good driver will tell you this. In the same way, if you know how to observe and to listen—observing and listening are essentially the same thing, it is all one act—you will find that you take in everything and are, therefore, immediately aware of everything around you. That will, naturally, make you highly sensitive; you will be tremendously awake, and your body, your whole being, will come alive.

Please do try this sometime when you go out of this place. Look at all the birds, the trees, and at the dirty streets. Look at people. Look at your parents and teachers; notice how they talk to you, what kind of words they use. Do not criticize them, because nobody likes being criticized. Just watch them very objectively, without criticizing, without judging. If you can do this, they will know that you are watching and, as this watching has a big effect on people, they will begin to be a little more alert, a little less careless and untidy. It will also have a big effect on you. If you can observe and listen all the time during the whole day, you will find that both your body and your mind become very sensitive and, therefore, naturally disciplined. Discipline and sensitivity go together. Those who force themselves to do certain things and not to do others, say, for example, to get up early in the morning and do all the things they don't like to do—they call that self-discipline—are very harsh people. But when you watch, when you observe, when you listen, you become highly sensitive, and with that sensitivity there comes an order, a coordination, a discipline which is spontaneous and unforced.

Just try this, and you will discover what beauty is. Beauty is not merely a matter of form and colour; it goes far beyond all that. Beauty is the *sense of beauty*. This sense of beauty is missing in India, because here we have lost all sensitivity. There are many historical and natural reasons why most of the older people have lost this astonishing sense of beauty, but what matters is that you who are young should see beauty, that you should feel it—the extraordinary beauty of the earth, of the skies, of the rivers, and of the trees. And you cannot be aware of all this beauty if you do not know how to observe, that is, how to see, and how to listen.

The other day a little boy asked why it was that when he was by himself he had so many questions, but not when he was with older people, and you all laughed. He probably felt ashamed of himself when you laughed at him and, therefore, he will not ask any more questions. If you were really listening, you would not have laughed. Your laughter was patronizing. Perhaps you thought that it was a silly question, but it was really a very good question.

So let us now talk about things and, please, don't be shy.

STUDENT (S): How is one to live happily in this competitive world?

KRISHNAMURTI (K): You can live happily in this competitive world only if you yourself are not competitive. Isn't that so? What do you say? You all look rather bewildered.

I was pointing out the other day that as people all over the world are violent, there are wars. There is competition, and competition is the very essence of violence. You compete for a good position, to become somebody in the world, to be the cleverest boy in the class—all of which implies violence. And you are trained from childhood to compete, to see if you can get better marks than your brother, or the pupil next to you. Our whole social structure is based on competition, and we accept it as inevitable. All the older people, especially those involved in big business, say that the more you compete, the better work you produce; but this is beginning to be disproved. Actually, you will do far better work if you have a job which you love. Then you will not compete, you will not say, 'I must do this work in order to have more money and get ahead'. You will do your job as well as you can and with all your energy because you love what you do. In this school we have talked for years about not having marks. It requires intelligence on your part—as well as on the part of the teachers—to work, not for marks, but because you really want to learn. Some schools in Europe and America have made experiments and found that when the student doesn't compete, when he loves what he is doing and does not keep an eye on marks and examinations all the time, he studies better and learns faster. Competition does not produce intelligence; at best it produces sharpness and cunning, so that when the student goes out into the world he can 'put something over' on other people.

To have peace in this world, you yourself must be peaceful. To live happily in this competitive society, you yourself must cease to be competitive. You say that it is very difficult not to be competitive, but that is only because you do not love what you are doing. If you love your work, you will not care who is ahead of you, or who is behind you. If you love what you are doing, you will do it with all your capacity—with your mind, your heart, your body. But, unfortunately, you are not trained to love what you do. All that you are trained for is to get high marks, to pass examinations, and to prepare for a good job. Since the present social structure is based on competition, what is one to do?

Does what I am saying disturb you? Does it upset you? If it does, then you will have to find out whether you should compete and have marks and, also, whether or not there is a different way of studying, learning, getting information, knowledge. As I said, they are experimenting with this in different parts of Europe and America. Here in India, in this school, you say, 'Why should we bother? We have a very good name as a school; the majority of our students go on to graduate from college, so why should we be concerned? We are better off than many other schools'. But that way you are not going to produce intelligence. Intelligence comes only when you are free of fear, when you are tremendously alive and not when you are disciplined, fighting, quarrelling, competing and being violent.

S: When we are young we have lots of imagination, but we seem to lose it as we grow older. Why does this happen to us?

K: When you are young, you are sensitive, alive, and full of curiosity. You want to know why a squirrel goes up a tree the way it does, why ants are always so busy, and why the birds sing. Later on, as you grow older, all that curiosity dies. Why? I wish you would tell me. Why do you lose it? Do you know? How are you to find out? Here is a question. Instead of asking somebody else for the answer, why don't you find out for yourself?

You are so used to being told. Your parents and teachers tell you; the gurus tell you; public opinion tells you; the newspapers, the radio, the television—all these things are constantly telling you what to think, what to do, and you have no time to say, 'No, I am going to find out for myself'. Do you know what happens when you are always being told? You do not think at all. Somebody does all the thinking, you swallow their thoughts like a pill, and you take it for granted that you have understood them. But you cannot understand that way.

When you are young, you have this extraordinary faculty of imagination. Why do you lose it as you grow up? When you see the river, you picture yourself in a boat, sailing down to the sea through tremendous storms. You have read some history, and when you think about it, you imagine the most fantastic things. When you see a cloud, to you it is a castle, and you are right in the middle of it. The sound of the wind immediately makes you think that you are hearing marvellous music, and when you see a big bird, you imagine you are riding around the world on its back. You imagine that you are a great man with plenty of money, or that you are a marvellous speaker to whom everybody listens and applauds. This wonderful imagination exists while you are young, but as you grow older it disappears. Why?

First of all, nobody encourages you to dream. Whether you are at school or in your own home, nobody says, 'Go on, have a good time; enjoy yourself with your imagination'. When you say something out of your imagination, the older people say, 'You are telling a lie. You must not tell lies, but must always speak the truth', and, perhaps, they punish you. You may have imagined yourself riding on a cloud, or on some other wonderful thing, and when your parents say that you are lying, you, naturally, come down from that cloud. Similarly, in the classroom, you are not allowed to look out of the window and see the sunlight shining on a green leaf, or sense the perfume of a solitary flower. If you are watching a buzzing fly, your teacher says, 'Why are you not looking at your book?' and, immediately, you lose the fascination for watching the fly. This goes on throughout your early years. Fear, despair, examination marks, competition in order to earn a livelihood—these things darken your life and, with them, the misery begins. You come off the cloud, the storm and the rainbow are gone, and you become an ugly little man, fighting, quarrelling, cheating to get a little money, or you may become a social worker with some idea that you want to put into action; but the dream is lost; the whole world of imagination has disappeared.

It is good to have imagination. You must have imagination to write a poem, or to paint a picture. Do you ever paint pictures? Does your teacher put a vase or some other object in front of you, and ask you to copy it? Is that what you do? Or do you see, let us say, a leaf in the sunlight, and paint it with all your feeling—which means that you are free to go with the clouds, with the rains, with the storm, with the river? There is beauty in that.

S: Why are we never satisfied with what we have?

K: Why should you be satisfied with what you have? Have you thought about it at all? If you have ten saris, or ten shirts, you want more saris, more shirts. If you have money, you buy them; if you have no money, what do you do? You cry; you are disappointed. You keep this process going, wanting more and more, hoping to be satisfied. But can you ever be satisfied, no matter how many things you have?

Let us say that you have a house with a beautiful garden, and you look after it nicely. Then you see a television set advertised and, if you have the money, you will buy it. You will keep buying more and more things and adding them to what you already possess and, yet, you will not be satisfied; you will want something more. You will want to be happy, you will want to be peaceful, you will want to be loved. As your wife or husband doesn't love you, you will turn to the priest, to God, or you will give your love to somebody else; but even then you will not be satisfied, and you will keep going on and on in this way.

Now, have you ever asked yourself if there is such a thing as being satisfied? Whatever you have, you always want something more. If you are the big man in your town, you want to be the Prime Minister of the whole country, and so on. You are everlastingly accumulating, climbing the ladder of success. At the end of it all, there is death; and you want, hope, that there will be something even after you die. You never question and find out if there is an end to wanting. One must have food, clothing and shelter—that is understood. But why should one have the desire to be well-known, to see one's picture in the newspapers, to be famous as a marvellous artist, a great thinker, or a self-sacrificing social worker? You never ask that question, do you? If you find out for yourself why this craving gnaws at your heart night and day, you will also discover that you can go beyond it—not in ideas, not in imagination, not lost in some cloud away from yourself, but factually. Then you will also find that you can live happily in this mad, stupid world with a few essential things, being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, but tremendously alive; and from that will come the discovery of something much greater, something far beyond all this wanting and not-wanting.

S: Why do you always say that the world is mad and stupid?

K: Is not the world mad and stupid?

S: I do not think so.

K: I am glad that you say what you think. But is it not stupid to have wars? Surely, it is only mad people who fight. Intelligent people do not fight, do not quarrel, do not compete; it is only unbalanced, stupid people who play that game. If you still think that the world is not stupid when it goes to war, then do not be shy, but stick to what you think, and let us talk about it. Do not give in easily.

When the earth is divided into India, Russia, America, France, Italy, Germany, China, and so on, and all these countries go on fighting each other, is that not a mad and stupid way to be? The earth is ours, yours and mine, and we have to live on it together; we have to cherish it and grow things in its soil, so that all the people in the world will have sufficient food, clothing and shelter. Actually, it is because the earth is divided into competing nations that millions of people haven't got these things. Don't you think that is stupid? Again, people all over the world are divided into Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and so on, and each group asserts that theirs is the only real religion. Is that not also stupid?

To call a thing what it is, is not to feel brutal about it. If I am ugly, I am ugly; it is a fact. Why should my mentioning that fact have any emotion behind it? You have to see the world as it actually is: extraordinarily cruel, with the clever and powerful people dominating the poor and the weak, taking all the money and leaving nothing for the others. Don't you see what is happening in the world? President Kennedy was killed the other day by somebody because of an idea. Wasn't that a mad thing to do? China attacked this country—was that not really a mad, stupid, incredible thing to do? We talk of God, and we keep up this game of violence. So the world is what it is: stupid, mad, and ugly. This is a fact, and one can point out the fact without harsh feelings about it. When you see the world as it really is, you can do something about it. You do not have to go on being a Muslim, a Hindu, or a Christian; you do not have to belong to any racial, religious, or political group.

S: When I see something cruel being done, I can't help having emotions about it.

K: When you see a man being cruel to somebody, what happens? You get angry, don't you? You say, 'That man is a bully and I must interfere. I must push him away'. But if you do not get angry, then your response to that cruelty will be quite different. You will act from a totally different feeling. If you observe an act of cruelty objectively, then the issue will be much clearer and there will be a more direct response to it. But if you get angry, your energy will be dissipated in that anger. Similarly, you can watch—objectively—everything that is going on inside you. You can see why you are angry, why you are ambitious, why you are brutal, why you tell a lie, why you are vain, why you are proud. To 'watch objectively' is to see without condemning or getting excited about the fact; you just watch the fact. You know, when you look at a green leaf in the sunlight, the more you watch it without any verbal appreciation, the more you will see its great beauty. But the moment you say, 'How lovely it is!', you will have ceased to look at it; you will have turned away your head.

27 November 1963

On feelings

I do not know if you noticed this morning, rather early, the waning moon and the morning star very close together. And did you see the light of that moon in your room, and on the river, if you were near the river? There were hardly any ripples on the water, there was hardly any breeze; the river was very, very still. It was really quite extraordinarily beautiful: the distant dark shore; the moon almost silver—bright, polished; Venus, the morning star, still bright; and the completely quiet water. And there was a fisherman, in a boat, rowing. The fisherman, the tranquil waters, the silver moon, the morning star, and the distant, dark shore—all that was most extraordinary.

Most of us have very little feeling about anything. Do you know what it is to feel, to care, to look? To watch the river, to look at the moon for a long time, to feel the movement of the trees, to see a bird—how it flies, how delicate its wings are and, yet, how extraordinarily strong they must be to support it through a storm—demands a great deal of feeling. Do you know what it is to feel? You feel not merely with your hands. When you touch something, you feel. When you touch a lizard, it gives you a rather unpleasant feeling. If you touch a toad, a frog, you will find that it is cold, slimy and, if you take hold of it in your hands and look at it, it will give you an extraordinarily unpleasant feeling. And if you have ever taken, in your hand, a bird that has been wounded and that just wants to escape, you would have felt its heart beating; everything in it would have been alive.

To feel the movement of a tree, to hear the breeze in the morning among the leaves, to feel for those poor women going from the village to the town, day after day, in their dirty clothes—unwashed, never having a hot bath, never having clean clothes, never having a full meal, never being able to stop working—makes one very sensitive. To hear, not the technique, not the repetition over and over again of a particular note, but a song sung really well by someone with a full heart, and who does not care whether anyone is listening or not; to listen to the call of a bird of a morning; and to listen to the fisherman across the river, calling, makes one very, very sensitive—it makes one terribly alive.

And that is why it is very important for you to have feeling, now—feeling about the way you dress, the way you sit, the way you talk, how you play games, how you look at a tree, how you pick up a piece of stone, a pebble or a brick from the road, how you treat a dog, how you tear the leaves off a tree, how you talk to your cook, to your servant, how people, your teachers, for example, treat you, how they talk to you. All that matters now, not tomorrow, not five years later—then it will be too late.

And if you do not feel everything now, when you are young, alive—if you do not see the lizard go across the roof, across the wall, and watch it moving, catching a fly; if you do not notice the people about you, the poor people, your teachers, your friends, the way the cook cooks—then, when you grow up, you will notice nothing; you will not feel anything. As all your emotions would have been destroyed, you will have no strong feelings about anything—about your

brother, your family, your children, about what happens to the people around you—and you will not notice the birds, the river, the trees, and the squalor.

As I was coming here to talk, I wondered why we, grown-ups as well as children, do not feel, do not care, for anything. Why? Are you following what I am talking about, or are you going to sleep? Why do we not feel, strongly, for something?—not about nationalism, not about ideas, flags (those come much later, or not at all) but about little things. Have you walked across that bridge on the river Varana? How rickety it is, how full of holes; it is put together with pieces of string! And if a big man, a big ‘saint’, or a well-known politician comes along, they—the authorities—will put up a new bridge tomorrow; they will all work furiously, level that steep slope, put a lot of flowers around it, and make the bridge very nice. But you and I and those villagers walk day after day on that bridge, and nobody cares. And I have wondered about the people who do not care. I have wondered what happens to their children—what kind of human beings their children will be when they grow up, what kind of thoughts they will have, what kind of feelings, affections, sorrows, and miseries they will have. I have also wondered what they will be when they are married, and when they have children of their own. You see, if you do not care now, if you do not have tremendous feelings now, while you are at school—when you are playing, laughing, amusing yourself—then, naturally, when you grow up, you will not have any feelings at all; life will be much too difficult then.

You have sudden feelings of great devotion to some temple, to some image; you may put a garland around the image and feel terribly emotional. You call that devotion, but that has no value at all. What matters is what you are. What matters is how you live, what your feelings are—not at the particular moment when you go to a temple, or when you look at a picture which you consider God, but every day.

Tremendous changes are taking place in the world—I mean by the ‘world’ countries like America, Europe, Russia, China—and you know nothing about these changes. You may read little bits here and there—how they are discovering new ways of communicating, new ways of looking at things, and how they are doing the most extraordinary things, like going to the moon. There are a whole group of people, led by a Frenchman, who have lived at the bottom of the sea, in a hut, for a month. Do you know what that means—to live under the sea? There are tremendous revolutions going on; people are questioning everything—gods, ceremonies, the family. Everything is being questioned anew; everything is being torn apart.

In America, and maybe in Russia, boys of six and seven are being taught higher mathematics and science, because there is so much to learn. You have to learn more every year in order to keep up with the new changes, the new techniques, and information. I was talking to a friend in Europe—a medical doctor. He has a first-class reputation. But he has to work much harder than any of you, because he has to keep up with the new techniques of surgery, new medicines, and so on. He has no time; he is worn-out, exhausted.

And when man is living at this speed, with this strain, this anxiety, and this tremendous stress, all feelings—the feeling of affection, the feeling for the

beauty of a tree, the feeling for somebody who has very little—disappear, and he merely functions in a narrow groove. If he is a Communist, he will have fallen into a groove and will function only there. If he is a scientist, he will work marvellously in the laboratory but, outside the laboratory, he will just be an ordinary, shoddy human being without any feeling, without any depth to his thought, to his mind.

You have to see this extraordinarily explosive change that is going on—not here in Banaras, not, probably, in this place, on this campus, because you are all very careful, you do not let anything come in here. Any change disturbs you and makes you anxious—you must have the same kind of food, the same kind of clothes, the same kind of thoughts, the same attitude towards girls and boys; you do not let anything disturb things here. But outside this place there is a storm going on, a terrific storm of change. And, as you grow up, you will be thrown into that storm, and you will not know what to do. Therefore, you will carve out a little space for yourself, for your little family, and live there, rotting, quarrelling, bitter, unhappy, wanting more children, more money, more this and more that—and that will be all.

So, seeing all these extraordinary things going on in the world, the teachers must ask how one is to prepare a young boy or girl to face that change outside, not just to succumb to it, and become a mere cog in this stupendous machine, but to understand it, to live with it, to fight it, and to do something with it.

It matters very much that from now on you become very sensitive. Have strong feelings; do not be frightened of them. Love somebody with all your being—with your heart, with your mind, with everything. Love a bird. Love a tree that you have planted; look after it. Keep your room in a spotless condition. Then you will begin to care, to care what you are. Then when you have a husband or a wife and children, you will care. Then you will know what to do. Then you will give your children the right education.

You see, in our lives we have very little love, very little affection, very little sympathy. And without sympathy, affection, and love, we might just as well be dead. You may be very clever at building a bridge, going to the moon, flying a jet at a thousand-five-hundred or two-thousand miles an hour, but if you have not got the substance of life—which is sensitivity, feeling, affection, vitality, energy—you will merely become a cog in the vast machine which is called society; and everybody is, unfortunately, concerned about reforming that cog, that piece of machinery.

So, if I may point out, right education is to make a human being highly sensitive to everything—not just to mathematics and geography, but highly sensitive to everything—because the highest form of sensitivity is the highest form of intelligence.

Now you can ask me questions, not about mathematics and geography, not about who the king in the eighteenth century was—I wouldn't know, and I wouldn't want to know either!

STUDENT (S): What is religion?

KRISHNAMURTI (K): Now, how do you find out what religion is? Do you find out by asking people, by going to some priest in a little temple, or to some pundit, some sannyasi? How do you find out? By reading a book, the Upanishads, or what some commentator has said about the Upanishads? How do you find out? Obviously not through some pundit, some sannyasi, some priest or even through your grandmother, because they all have set patterns, set ideas, of what religion should be. They go three times a day, or once in a blue moon, to the temple and put some flowers on some little image—that is not religion, is it? Nor is it religion when you repeat the Upanishads endlessly, quote from it or from the Gita or the Vedas, or this or that. Obviously that is not religion. You might just as well put on a gramophone and ‘turn on’. Nor is it religion when a sannyasi or a monk runs away from life—life being everyday existence: the battles, the terrible agonies, the miseries, the deaths, the famine, the butchery, the corruption. So the man who runs away from life, who puts on a yellow or a black or white robe—as certain sects, or orders, of Christian ascetics do—certainly is not a religious man.

So put away all that—going to the temple, reading the Upanishads or the Gita, meditating—for you can find out only when you say, ‘This is not it, this is not it, and this, certainly, is not it’. So you begin to negate, push away things which are not religion. By denying, by negating, you begin to find out. If all this is not religion, what then is religion? Not Hinduism—that isn’t religion; that’s just a belief. Not Christianity—that’s just a belief too. Belief is to cling to what you have been told, taught, from childhood. So you put away every kind of thing which man, no matter who—Krishna, the Buddha, Sankara—has invented and called religion and, then, you ask yourself, ‘What is religion?’

And how are you going to find out? You can only find out if you are not afraid. When you are not afraid, then you can look, then you can ask. But most people are terribly afraid. A mind that is frightened can never ask, can never enquire, can never discover for itself what religion is. It is only a mind that is not frightened, but that is clear, sane, healthy, and that has discovered for itself what is false in that which people call religion that can actually find out what the religious mind, the religious spirit, is.

And you will never find out what religion is if you do not have the capacity of seeing the beauty of a dead branch, the beauty of a river, the beauty of the golden sunset and the throbbing stillness of an evening. If you have no beauty, no sensitivity, you will never find out what religion, the real thing, is. So, one has to begin anew, while one is still young, fresh, sensitive, curious, wanting to find out; the moment you step into the world, the world will close around you, and you will then be lost.

S: When other countries are making atom bombs, why should not India also make them?

K: Other countries—China, Russia, France, England, and mostly America—are making atom bombs. China has just exploded an atom bomb and so, India says, ‘Hey, let us make one too!’

Now, first of all, to make atom bombs, the very latest, you need to be terribly rich. For example, one rocket that goes to the moon costs twenty-five or thirty million dollars, and that's a lot of money. India says, 'We must make one too, because China has one, and may attack us—as China did a couple of years ago. Therefore, we must have one to protect ourselves'. Right?

And you may have all the means. America may help you, or you may have your own scientists to build the reactors and all the necessary machinery to make an atom bomb. Are you going to compete with America, with Russia, with China, to make a bomb? Just look at what is involved in it. If you have one, then whom are you protecting yourself against? Against China, against Russia, against America? And what are you protecting? Please do tell me what you are all protecting.

Before we begin to say that we must or must not make a bomb, we must enquire—mustn't we?—why this machinery of destruction is wanted in this world. Apparently we need it, because we are divided as Indians, Chinese, Russians, Americans, English, and Germans. We are divided by countries, races, religions, beliefs, philosophies. And, in India, you are divided also by language—South Indian languages and North Indian languages. Why don't we attack this division, this feeling of being nationalistic? For me nationalism is poison, because it breeds wars, it breeds divisions, it breeds antagonism, hatred, and all the rest of it. So why aren't we human beings—all of us, not just in India alone—concerned with how to live in this world happily, sanely, reasonably? Nobody wants to do that. Nobody wants peace; you don't either.

So, you will end up probably, one of these days, having a bomb. And, then, you will have to have aeroplanes to carry that bomb, experts to fly those aeroplanes, and so on. And if you want all that, go ahead with the way you are living just now.

I feel that there is not only a different way of looking at it all, but also of living differently. But that demands a great deal of sanity; that demands a great deal of intelligence, a great deal of feeling, and a great deal of affection.

S: Is it true that you do not read newspapers and philosophical books?

K: The little girl wants to know how far it is true that I don't read newspapers, philosophical books—the Gita, the Upanishads, and so on. It is perfectly true. I do not read newspapers. I do not read the Upanishads, the Gita, or any other philosophical book. I occasionally read the Bible, not for what is said in it, but for the beauty of the language. I read, every week, an international magazine to keep up with the latest news. And I have friends all over the world who talk with me. They come to see me, and I talk to them. They tell me what is happening, and we discuss it; that's all. If I want to find out something—which I don't especially—I can always go to the encyclopaedia, can't I? Why should I carry all that in my brain?

S: How did stupidity start at the beginning?

K: Isn't that fairly simple? Can't you find out how it all started? Look about you, look at your fathers, your grandfathers, your great-grandfathers, your mothers, and grandmothers; look at them all.

I will tell you something rather interesting which I was told by someone. An American professor went to live among the anthropoid apes in Africa. Do you know what anthropoid apes are? They are the higher form of monkeys. At first they would not accept her, but gradually they did; they would let her come near, and watch a whole group of them. She found that they had a language, and could talk to each other. She found that they had matrimonial difficulties, that is, husband quarrelling with the wife, the wife looking at somebody else, the husband looking at another woman, and so on. She found that not only were they jealous, angry, and brutal, but that they could also use instruments. That is, they took a long blade of grass, wet it with their tongues, curled it, put it down an ant-hole, waited a few seconds and, then, drew it up quickly with a few ants stuck to it. They then put it into their mouths. Then there was another professor, who, thinking that man originated in a certain part of Africa, worked, searched, there. He searched for years and, then, one day, he and his wife came upon a skull. And this skull was two million years old. And he said a rather amusing thing. He said that these apes were so marvellous and so extraordinarily like human beings, that they could just as well be sitting at the United Nations.

So, we began as animals, and we have evolved in time. We still are animals. A great deal, a great part of us is still animalistic, because we are still greedy, envious, dividing, and we have matrimonial difficulties just like the monkeys. We began there, and we are still carrying on. Unless we break this cycle—break it intelligently, break it thoughtfully, with care, affection, vitality, energy—we will just go on like this for another two million years.

S: By your type of education, can we have engineers and scientists who are needed badly?

K: With the right kind of education, of which I am talking, you will not only be a scientist or an engineer but also something much greater. You will be a human being. You will be, not a specialized entity—an engineer, a scientist, a politician—but a human being who is alive, fresh, eager. And, as a human being, you will have an intelligence that will allow you to become an engineer, a scientist, a doctor. Perhaps you are rather out of touch with things that are happening. Today specialists are made to learn other subjects, because it has been discovered that all specialization makes the mind very narrow, small, and petty. You must have noticed that a first-class engineer knows nothing about anything other than how to build something. If one is a human being, one is not a specialist, but a total entity. And it is only as a total entity that you can create a new world. To bring about a right human being, right education is needed. Right education means right food, right thinking, a right way of living. An educated mind is a mind that thinks, that is active, alive; it is a mind that looks, watches, listens, and feels.

S: What is right?

K: The girl asks, 'What is right?' If I feel that only what I think is right and if I, therefore, pursue that, it will create chaos because, as everyone thinks differently, I shall be in conflict with others.

So, to say that this is right and that that is wrong is rather a stupid way of looking at life. If I say, 'This is right', then I will try to persuade you all to think in that way, and we will form a group, and be against another group that thinks that this is wrong. So, there will be a battle between us. So, to think in terms of right and wrong, that is, to think in terms of a pattern which we call right and a pattern which we call wrong leads, obviously, to antagonism.

Now, how do you find out what is right? First, by not asserting, by not dogmatically saying, 'This is right' or 'That is wrong'. You say that something is right or otherwise because you are conditioned according to a certain society, a certain pattern, certain beliefs, certain dogmas, and certain concepts. So, one has to be free of all prejudices, of all the conditioning that has been imposed on one by society—by life at large. You have to be free of the prejudices and the ways of thinking which a particular society or family or group or race has imposed on the human mind. You have also to be free of your own particular idiosyncrasies, tendencies, and fears. It is only then that you will be in a position to find out. It is only then that you will find not what 'right' is, but a life which is constantly moving, living, functioning. And you will also find that you must flow with it. And to flow with it, you need tremendous intelligence; you need a great deal of sensitivity, a great deal of affection, a great deal of love. When there is this freedom, when there is this affection, love, and the highest form of intelligence, there will be not this question of right and wrong, which creates antagonism, but a living, a moving. Then there will be a movement, and in that very movement will be what is right.

1 December 1964

Students' questions

STUDENT (S): When I go for a walk by myself, my mind wanders. How am I to control it?

KRISHNAMURTI (K): You and I are both going to learn from your question. I am not going to instruct you, and you are not going to follow me. In discussing, both of us are going to learn. Do not control the mind when it wanders. I will tell you why. The mind wanders because it has innumerable interests. If you control the mind so as to concentrate on any one thing, you will build a resistance to all other things. That is not understanding. To understand, you have to explore every thought to its end. For example, if you think about a friend when you want to do something else, go into it and find out why you think about that friend; find out what the motives are. When other thoughts come, just ask these thoughts to wait while you go into the first thought. Your interest in finding out why the thought about your friend arose will bring about a quality of perception not only with regard to that thought, but also with regard to all the other thoughts.

Suppose you have ten thoughts, and you want the mind to have only one thought. How would you know which of these ten thoughts is the right thought for the mind to hold on to? Not knowing it, you would struggle, you would be in a state of conflict. You'd choose some particular thought because you liked it or would have been told that that was the right thought but, as other thoughts keep pouring in, there would be a conflict in your mind. Just as a machine soon gets worn out through friction, so also, through friction, through conflict, the mind soon wears out. When the mind understands the way conflict occurs, there will be no friction, and the mind will not wear out.

Therefore take every thought—good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant—and study it to the end. Then your mind will not be a battlefield. Then you will begin to know yourself, and there will be an extensive awareness which has no frontier.

What happens, in the case of most of you, is that when there is an unpleasant thought, you say, 'This is a terrible thought, so I must concentrate on the other thoughts'. This does not lead to the understanding of that thought. To understand that thought, you have to investigate it even though you consider it terrible. And, unless the mind is extraordinarily alert, it is very arduous to go into each thought, to enquire into and learn about it.

S: How am I to understand what is right and what is wrong?

K: How do people know what right and wrong are? Either they have been told by others, or through books, or through tradition, or by society, or by leaders—both spiritual and temporal. But how do they know whether what is said by these 'authorities' is either right or wrong? And how would you find out? When you do something which somebody says is the right thing to do either out of fear or because you consider it your duty to obey, then you are being silly—you are neither doing right nor wrong. The older people may say that they know, through

their own experience, what right and wrong are. You are young and you could either say to them, 'I don't know, so won't you tell me what I should do?' or 'I don't know, but I want to learn. So, please, help me to *learn* what right and wrong are. Do not merely tell me that this is right or that that is wrong.' Which of these two do you say?

Learning comes through direct experience. For instance, through pain we learn that fire burns. In a similar way, we also learn about the poisonous nature of a cobra, and the danger of being too near a precipice. However, there are other things which require deeper penetration. You have to be aware of all the things which are said to be right. Do not accept, but question, enquire, search, learn. In this process you may suffer, but you would have learnt. If you do not take the risk, you will not learn. There is learning only when the mind does not either seek encouragement through success or get depressed through failure.

The question of right and wrong is a complex problem. When you are young, you have to accept certain things. For example, in the matter of diet, whether you are to be a vegetarian or non-vegetarian is decided, explained as to why by your elders, and you acquiesce. To find out, you cannot revolt. When you are in a position to find out, then you can act according to what you have found out. But, in the meanwhile, you should not do anything merely out of a reaction, out of a sense of revolt.

Boys smoke when they are young because they have seen older people doing it. Smoking is a habit, which later on becomes a nightmare. Habit is thoughtless action repeated over and over again. When you are young if you say, 'I won't smoke now simply because somebody else is smoking; I shall first observe for myself and, then, decide whether I will smoke or not', then there will be vitality, there will be character. But to smoke because you see older people doing it is silly. It is silly to copy, to imitate somebody. I am not using the word 'silly' in a condemnatory sense, but merely to indicate that it is petty, imitative, and has no meaning.

S: Why do you say that where there is attachment there is no love?

K: Let us learn about it together. Have you considered what you are attached to?—the object of attachment, not what makes you attached, which is a different thing. You have to know what you are attached to. You are attached to property, to an idea, to a human being. Take the case of attachment to property. Property is dead; it has no vitality of its own, but you give it some vitality. Similarly with an idea. You may say that this is not so with attachment to a person, because people are living. But when you say that you are attached to your parent, what are you really attached to in that parent? You say that your parents love you and give you what you want—shelter, a home, money, property, education—and, so, you are attached. This means that you are really not attached to your parents, but only attached to the things that they give you. You cannot be attached to a living human being. You cannot be attached to a living thing like the running waters of a river or the moving mind. A living thing is a moving thing, a changing thing; how can you be attached to it?

You may have a *feeling* for a living thing, but you cannot be attached to a river which is a moving, living thing. A river is a living thing. Therefore, you can be attached only to the feelings, the pleasures, the memories awakened by that river or to the symbol associated with that river. You are all attached to the picture that is awakened in you by a tree, a flowing river, and your living parents.

14 January 1959

S: How is it possible to be aware of the things around us?

K: Are you asking me how it is possible to be aware of the influences around one?

S: Not the method, but...

K: I know. You are not asking about the 'how', but whether it is possible to be aware. When you have very good, tasty food, you are aware of it, are you not? You smack your lips, and eat a great deal of it. When you like or dislike something, you are aware of it, aren't you? When you are afraid of something, say, for example, a snake, you walk with an astonishing attention, do you not? When you are crossing a road where there is heavy traffic, your body and mind become very alert. I do not know if you have ever walked in a wood where there are wild animals. If you try it sometime, and you hear a distant noise—a branch being broken—your whole body and your whole mind will become intensely aware. There is no method which will make you sensitive, aware of the noises in a wood; you have to walk through the wood. Unfortunately, there are no woods around Banaras; but there are wild animals about you—the living men with their impressions, their dictums, sanctions, and their authority. And they will tell you that they have love for you. Be aware of them as you would be aware of poison, of danger. Watch, be aware, during the day, of everything that is around you—the tree, the river, the bridge, the song of the bird, the wayward swallow on the water, the bellowing of the cows, the beggar, your friends, the colour of the dress you are wearing, the manner of your speech, how you eat, what you say, what you are thinking. Watch all the people about you, and you will see how sharp your mind becomes; you will become aware of not only the danger of what the old people say but also of their love, their thoughts, and their duty. You will be alive, and not just a dead human being.

But, unfortunately, the education that you are receiving is making you die young; it is making you dull, stupid. You are satisfied, and 'they' are satisfied. You do not want to be disturbed. You do not revolt against the whole system. You are frightened; you accept. But it is only when you are aware, that your mind will become alert, and it is only with that mind that you can study. Then you will not be merely a technician but a human being. Then you will be a free entity—free to look, to enjoy, to love, and to be.

S: Is hero worship a wrong thing?

K: I am going to tell you something about hero worship. Find out whether it is right or wrong. Don't accept what I say. If you do, you will then be my slave. Why do we have heroes at all? You would like to be a hero, would you not? You give him—the hero—all the qualities which you think you want. The hero is a marvellously brave man, a handsome man, a man who is kind, generous. He is a man who will be a lovely husband. He is the essence of knowledge. You are not all this, so you project that on that hero, don't you? So what you are not, you hope he is. But he may be what he is, and not what you *think* he is. Why do you do all this? Because you want to escape from yourself, isn't it? You are nothing. You are ugly, petty, small. You cannot speak as beautifully or ride in as big a car and, so, you say, 'I am nothing, at least he is something; and I can worship that'. So, you put flowers at his feet or on top of his head. Now, what have you done? You have created a contradiction in yourself by saying, 'He is great, I am small'. Having created a contradiction, you are in conflict and, to escape from that conflict, you say, 'Let me worship'. You have compared yourself to him or her, and so made yourself inferior. When you say that you are nobody, it is really another form of conceit, because you want to be like him or her. But if you say, 'Let me find out what I am', and begin to enquire into what you actually are, you will see that at that moment you break what you are, and you will be something else.

So, do not worship anybody, including me. Worship nobody—which does not mean that you cannot love, be sympathetic and kindly to people. The moment you worship somebody, you draw a circle around yourself and around that person and you will not want anybody to come into that circle, excepting maybe those who think along the same lines as you do. Thereby you have no love, and you will create enmity. I know that all the books say: worship the example, the leader, the perfect man, and all that. That means following somebody, and being his or her slave. However, if you begin to be aware of everything, including the hero, then you will have a mind which has dignity and freedom. Such a mind knows what it is to love a human being. And, when you love a human being, you also love the gods.

1 February 1960

S: We look upon some people as being greater than others. Why should not all people be equal?

K: Can we all be equal? You are beautiful, and I am ugly; you are intelligent, and I am stupid; you see the heavens, and I see only the dirt on the road; you have some great capacity, and I have very little capacity; you have the gift of language, you can speak and write, and I am just a mediocre clerk in some little office. How can we all be equal? You suffer, and I do not suffer; or you are sensitive to everything about you, whereas I am dull, insensitive. So, there is no

equality. The Communist Revolution, like the French Revolution before it, started out to establish equality. Neither of them was able to do so. There is no equality in regard to position, money, capacity, power. There can be equality, in the real sense of the word, only when there is humility, when you do not think of yourself as being greater or more important than somebody else because you happen to have a gift or a talent of some kind. When you have real humility, you will see everything in a different light. But *humility* is not a thing that you can cultivate. It comes unasked when you really have no pride in your heart. And without humility, do what you will, there can never be equality in the world. How can there be equality when on the one hand there is the king, the queen, the big ones of the land, and on the other, the poor and the starving? If there was this feeling of affection, of love, this real sense of humility, then life would be entirely different.

S: What are we on this earth for?

K: You are on this earth to live fully, happily, with your whole being, free of ambition, greed and fear. If you are greedy or ambitious, you cannot live fully, because greed and ambition dissipate your energy. To live fully is to live without fear, without sorrow, without asking a thing of the gods, because you would be a light unto yourself. When you live fully—a light unto yourself—you will not follow anybody, you will have no nationality, or belong to any religious or political group. As you would be a free human being it would, therefore, be possible to live in this world richly, whether you had little or much and, in that very act of living, you would beautify the earth.

Look at all the horrors that are going on everywhere! It is because you do not know how to live that you give an artificial significance to life. If you asked ten different people what the purpose of life was, they would give you ten different answers; and then what could you do but choose an answer from among those ten and try to live according to it? You have to find out for yourself what it means to live fully. Obviously you cannot live fully if you are afraid of death, or of public opinion, or of making a mistake. If you are ambitious, seeking power, or clinging to a position, which in one form or another is what most people are doing, you cannot live fully, because you would be everlastingly in conflict, both with others and with yourself. It is most difficult to live without ambition in a world which is corrupt, a world where there are so many vested interests, so many gods who are always threatening, or offering rewards. It requires astonishing intelligence to live in such a world. And you can have intelligence only by seeing everything, and by listening to everything. Then your eyes will become alive and your ears sharp. From seeing and listening there comes self-knowledge and, in knowing yourself, you will have astounding vision. What better reason do you want for being on this earth than that?

23 November 1963

S: What is cooperation?

K: ‘Cooperation’ comes from a Latin word meaning ‘to work together’. Now, when do we work together? Let us go into it, because it is very interesting. When we want to do or change something, and we all think and feel together about it at the same level, at the same time, there comes a natural, spontaneous cooperation. If, for example, we all really wanted—with complete unanimity—to make this place into a paradise, a lovely thing, full of life and beauty, we would freely work together to create it. But most of us do not feel that way about anything—nobody does. So, what happens? We say that we must cooperate, work together for an ideal. But that is not cooperation at all, because the ideal has no reality; it is just an idea, an opinion, an organized thought, either rational or irrational. When we work together for an ideal, we are working for an opinion, which means that our action is not born of direct perception. Let us say that you have an opinion, and that I also have an opinion. If you can persuade me that your opinion is better than mine, I will yield to you and, for a time, we will work together but, presently, we will disagree and, then, our so-called cooperation will come to an end.

Another kind of working together occurs when someone dominates us, or offers us some kind of reward. Do you follow? We work together because a particular person has power, money, position, capacity, and he promises to give us something in return for our support. But that is obviously not cooperation either. There is cooperation in the true sense of the word only when both you and I feel, together, about something at the same level, at the same time, and with the same intensity. If there is love and perception on both sides, then we will naturally cooperate without having to be enticed, persuaded, or coerced.

Look, it is very simple. In a place like this, if we all really wanted to bring into being a marvellous school, we would sit down together and discuss in order to find out what it required. If we all agreed that a really good school is essentially one that helps the students to have alert, intelligent minds, and our first concern was to have such a school, then we would work together enthusiastically to create it. But if I was primarily concerned with my family, my personal woes, or if I wanted to become the headmaster, that is, if my chief interest was in myself, and not in bringing about the right kind of school, then cooperation in the true sense of the word would, obviously, become impossible.

So there is no cooperation when our working together is based on authority, on somebody saying, however subtly, ‘You must do this’. Nor is there cooperation when we hope to get something out of it, that is, when we are motivated by considerations of personal profit. There is also no cooperation when there is the domination of an idea, or an ideal. There is cooperation only when you and I, together, think and feel something with our whole being at the same level, and at the same time.

Now, can you and I think and feel together in that way all the time? Don’t immediately say, ‘No’. How eager you are to reach a conclusion! If we all, together, felt very intensely that we must create a first-class school and provide the kind of education that would help the student to be free of fear and have a

very good mind, then you and I would not quarrel. There would be no bitterness, no backbiting, no breaking up into competing groups. On the contrary, we would work together vigorously; we would discuss and see how best to create such a school, because that would be the one thing we would all want to do with our whole being.

S: What is ambition?

K: An ambitious man has an idea which he pursues. He says, 'I am going to be the chief man in this town'. What he wants to be in the future is an idea which he has conceived, which he has formulated. He wants to be the chief man in the town because then he will have money, position, power, and all the rest of it. He may be, at present, just a poor clerk, but he will battle his way up, pulling wires till he achieves his purpose. So, ambition is the pursuit of an idea; it is the desire to achieve something. Whether it is the so-called spiritual desire to become a great saint, or the worldly desire to become a great businessman or politician, it is essentially the same, because there is ambition behind it.

Ambition originates with the idea of becoming somebody; and becoming somebody gives pleasure. It is out of this same desire to have pleasure, or to feel secure, that you create the idea of the hero, the saint, and the leader whom you follow.

Now, can you live in this world without ambition, either spiritual or worldly? You can, if you have tremendous pleasure in everything that you do. If you have affection in your heart and feel very strongly about everything, then out of that intensity, that pleasure, that wholeness of feeling, you will act without ambition. The ambitious man is cruel, ruthless and, therefore, he has no love, no sympathy. He is ruled by an idea, consumed by a concept and, however cultured, noble or significant his concept may be, he is a calculating, brutal man and, therefore, has no affection.

S: Why are philosophers rather queer and absent-minded?

K: Probably because they are thinking of other things. There is a story about a famous professor who went out for a walk one day. When he returned he found the door locked, so he rang the bell. The servant, thinking that somebody had come to see his employer, announced from behind the closed door that the professor was out; whereupon the professor replied, 'I am so sorry, I will see him next time', and went away!

S: How can we overcome our inward brutality?

K: First, by being aware of it, by knowing that you are inwardly brutal. Do you know it? Do you see it as clearly as you see the colour of the clothing on your body?

What do you mean by the words 'inward brutality'? When you are angry, you are brutal, are you not? To be ambitious, to want your own way, to want

everything to be done for you, to think about yourself from morning till night and to be full of self-pity—all that is inward brutality. And it is also inward brutality to force yourself to think along certain lines, according to a particular faith or philosophy, according to an idea or a system of discipline. Most of us force ourselves to conform in some way, because we think that it is the right thing to do. Thousands of people say that so-and-so is a great saint, so we force ourselves to do what he says—this, also, is inward brutality. It is inward brutality to conform, to imitate, to be angry, jealous, ambitious, greedy. You can be free of this brutality only when you are fully aware of it all the time, and that requires a sharp, clear, precise and passionate mind.

4 December 1963

S: What is true love?

K: When you talk about ‘true’ love, it means that there must be ‘false’ love; and is there? If you love, can it be called either true or false? Just look at the question you have raised, and see the implications of the words that you have used. You have an idea of what is false and what is true love, which means that your mind has already put itself in a framework, enclosed itself behind a wall and, therefore, you will never find out what love is. So the important thing, surely, is not to think in terms of false and true love, but to find out what love is.

Now, what is love? What is this astonishing thing that man is crying for? You want to find it, feel it, enjoy it, to be companionable and to live with it, don’t you? And to do that you must not be satisfied with mere words. The word is not the thing. The word ‘love’ is not love. So you must see, very clearly, the difference between the word and the fact. The first thing that we must understand deeply is that the word is never the thing. My name is just a word; it is obviously not me. So, in everything, we must be very careful never to mix the word with the thing, but to keep the two apart. With this clearly in mind, let us proceed.

We want to find out what love is. How are we to do it? First of all, we must remove from the word itself all the things that people have piled upon it. Do you understand? We must remove all the ideas, opinions and expressions which have come to be associated with the word ‘love’: what the saints have said about it, what is written in the religious books, what our parents and other people have told us about it. ‘If you love me, you will follow me.’ ‘If you love me, you will do your duty.’ These and many other concepts have been piled on top of the word ‘love’. We have to begin by clearing all that away. To sweep away all the things that people—it does not matter who, including the speaker—have said about love is the first thing to do, for then alone can we begin to find out.

Now, when you are fully aware of the fact that the word ‘love’ is not love, and have put away from you everything that has been said and written about it, you will see that love is not jealousy. Do you understand? Where there is jealousy, there can be no love. Jealousy implies hate, pride, envy, and these things have nothing whatsoever to do with love. If you are jealous, competitive,

ambitious, envious, you will never know what love is. Politicians and saints may talk about love, but the moment they have ambition, envy, conflict, they will have no love. So, if you really want to find out what love is, you have to eliminate from your mind all jealousy, envy, competition, ambition, pride; and there must be no fear. Fear of public opinion, fear of being stupid, of not being a great man, fear of people who are supposed to be marvellously intelligent, fear of tomorrow, fear of death—all these fears must go if you want to find out what love is.

Also, to find out what love is, the mind must be free of sorrow—sorrow at losing someone whom we say that we love. We think we love another but we don't, because the moment we lose that person, we are full of tears. To love is to have no sorrow, no fear, no desire for fame. And love is really a most extraordinary thing, because without it life becomes very dull, mechanical, ugly—and that is how most of us live. We live in darkness and die in darkness, because we have never really felt this quality of love.

Do not depend on my words, but be this thing. What matters is what you are. Each one of us has to discover for oneself what love is, and that means observing and understanding all the time, every minute of the day, this strange, complex thing called life.

S: Is it true that love is everlasting?

K: When we say that something is everlasting, we mean that it goes on and on indefinitely, without an end. Now, you say that you love somebody. But what happens if that somebody does something which you do not like—criticizes you, says that you are wrong or stupid? You withdraw slightly, curl in upon yourself, and your love is not quite as full as it was, isn't it? Again, if that somebody turns away from you, you withdraw a little more. So every critical word, every displeasing experience, every flutter of sorrow, gradually makes your love turn cold; it becomes smaller and smaller until it dies away completely. This is a fact, is it not? And this is all we know.

Now, to find out if there is something which is timeless, everlasting, something which is beyond yesterday, today and tomorrow, you have to understand all the pleasures and pains, all the laughter and tears of relationship. But you see, that is exactly what you do not want to do. You want something everlasting to be handed to you on a silver platter. You want to swallow a pill and be full of love, but you cannot—you have to work furiously for it. You have to be tremendously awake to all that is going on both within and around you. You have to see everything—your own thoughts and responses, the lizard on the wall, the colour of people's clothing, the expressions on their faces, how they sit, how they yawn, how they talk. You have to observe the poor walking on the road, and the big politicians wading in their evil power. If you begin to see all this very clearly, you will find out for yourself whether or not love is beyond time.

S: I want to sleep well, but I am disturbed by my dreams. What am I to do?

K: Naturally you want to sleep well, but you wake up with a nightmare—isn't that your problem? If you eat too much of heavy food at night, you are likely to have a nightmare. Biologically that is fairly easily explained, and the answer is to eat a little more wisely. But, you see, you 'eat' a great many other things, psychologically, during the day; you cram yourself with things of which you might be either conscious or unconscious. There is the influence of the newspapers, and the books you read, the influence of the politicians, and the saints you follow. All these influences are pouring into you during the day, and consciously or unconsciously you are absorbing them. When you go to sleep at night, your brain, though still active, is somewhat quiet for those few hours; and, then, some of the things that you have absorbed or psychologically 'eaten' during the day project themselves into the mind which is asleep, or half-asleep. That is the basis of many dreams.

Things have occurred all during your life that you have not observed. There are dark corners of your mind which you have never explored or even thought about; but they are there. You have been afraid to examine those dark corners, afraid to listen to all their mutterings. So, when you go to sleep and the brain is fairly quiet, not reacting to outward impressions, some of the things that you have not understood project themselves into that quietness as symbols, and you have dreams.

A mind that is constantly agitated, whether the body is quiet or not, cannot be a healthy, fresh mind; and it is the agitated mind that dreams. During the day you are occupied with many things. You are working, thinking, talking, listening; you see the dirt, the squalor, the hunger of the poor, you see the tyranny of the big man who exploits the little man, and so on. Now, if you do not observe all these things closely and understand them, and if you are not fully aware of each reaction that arises in the mind, of each experience as it unfolds itself, of the influences of the past, the traditional superstitions, all the accumulated rubbish—if this whole process is not completely understood—then what you have not understood will be stored up in the unconscious, and you will have dreams. That is the mechanism of dreams.

Now, this is what the speaker says, but don't just accept it. Do not accept anything, no matter who says it, but observe yourself, and you will find that you do not have to read a lot of books by experts, by psychologists, to understand the mechanism of dreams. The real question is: Need we dream at all? To me, there is no need for dreaming. I will go into it, and you will see.

If you want to be completely free of dreams, you have to be aware at every movement of your own thought; you have to observe everything around you, and watch your reaction to it. When you get into a bus, watch the bus driver and the other passengers. Observe the rudeness of people. See the trees that you pass by, the crowds, the dirty streets—watch all this, and be aware of your reactions to it, so that your consciousness is constantly emptying itself. Then you will find, when you lie down and go to sleep, that you have no dreams at all.

If, during the waking hours, you have understood everything—all the motives and hidden intimations of your own consciousness—then, when you sleep, your mind will be completely quiet and empty. In that deep sleep, deeper things

happen—not the intimations of problems which some hidden part of the consciousness has stupidly gathered to itself, but something entirely different takes place, and the mind is made fresh, young, and innocent.

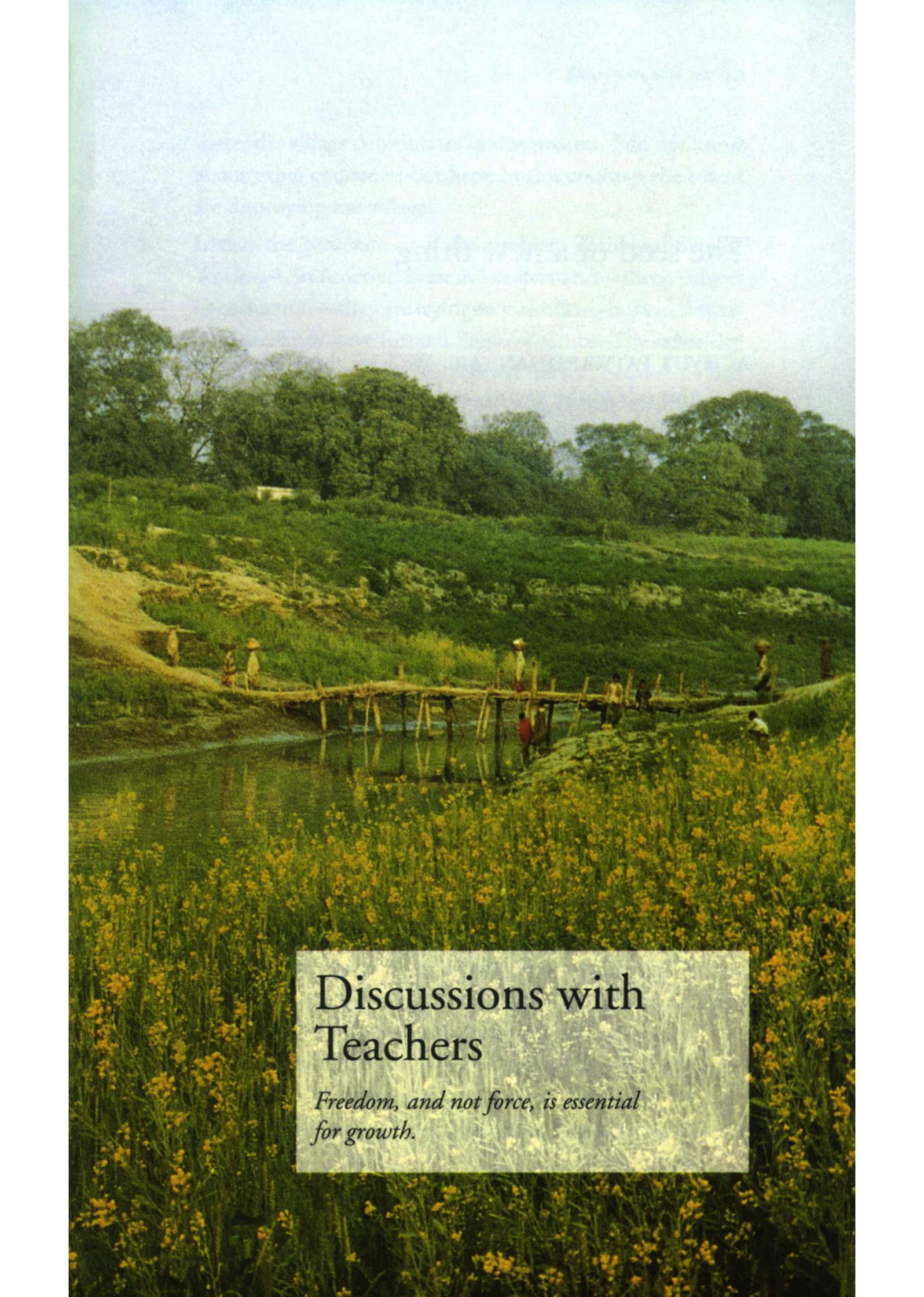
S: Is it right to keep boys and girls separate?

K: It is a tradition, especially here in India, to keep boys and girls separate. In America and Europe they do not do that any more, at least not to the same extent; there are coeducational schools there in which boys and girls associate with one another. You see, grown-up people feel that boys and girls might do what they consider ‘naughty things’, so they keep them apart as much as possible until they get married. Until then a high wall or a barbed wire fence is put between them, as has been done here. Naturally, the boys and girls look at each other whenever they can. But, as long as they do not get too close to each other, the older generation does not mind. What the grown-ups want is to preserve appearances—and appearances are not the reality of what is going on in the minds of the girls and the boys!

In America and in Europe, where boys and girls meet each other quite freely, they have all kinds of trouble. They have illegitimate babies and, as we consider that immoral and terrible, we say, ‘Keep them apart’. We never understand relationships at all. In a wise, sane, healthy school, which we hoped this would be when we started it, all these matters would be openly discussed, and the boys and girls would not be kept in watertight compartments.

Life is not just a matter of living in watertight compartments. To live together intelligently, happily, we have to understand everything—our desires, our urges, our sexual promptings—and not suppress anything. We have to look at our own feelings and sensations, explain them, go into them, but not with morbid curiosity, not with fear, admonition, and all the rest of that horror. If you do not begin to understand these things now, you will ill-treat your wife or your husband afterwards. Your life will be dark and deadly, because you would not have ever understood what it is to live considerately, happily, in relationship with another. All this requires intelligence and right education from the very beginning, and not just when you get married, because then it will be too late. You have to understand everything in your life: your body, your glands, your desires, your urges, your compulsions, and your fears. But nobody talks to you about all this; you are merely kept apart like male and female animals—society and your parents demand that. To freely associate with each other and not make more mischief, not have illegitimate babies, and all the rest of it, you have to understand yourself in relationship with another.

6 December 1963



Discussions with
Teachers

*Freedom, and not force, is essential
for growth.*

The seed of a new thing

ACHYUT PATWARDHAN (AP): We have three institutions on this side of the Varana, and a new one across it, where the social setting is distinctly different from all this. Therefore, I thought it would be good if you'd say something to us as to how you view an agricultural institution of this kind.

KRISHNAMURTI (K): Having an agricultural set-up like this, may I ask, sir, what the problem is? Is it with regard to our relationship to the earth and to the workers? Sir, why are we preparing the students 'agriculturally'? What is our intent?

AP: As far as I can see, our intention is clear. We see a certain process by which education, as it is now called, picks up boys from the villages and destroys them. It makes them unfit both for the village and for the town. We uproot a man from his own soil, and are never able to provide a soil in which he can live and develop; he grows with the feeling that society has wronged him. Now, can we not take a man who is not sophisticated, who is simple and who has had a direct relationship with the soil and help him to not only understand, and to rediscover the sheer joy of his relationship to the earth, but also to be able to give that joy to others?

K: Is that the problem, sir? Why need we compare the town and the village? Are we trying to keep the student tied to the earth and, therefore, prevent him from going to the towns, which apparently destroy him?

AP: No, sir, there is another aspect to this. We are impoverishing the village by taking away all the promising young men from there; the village deteriorates in this process. I do not know about other countries, but here, in this country, the towns are destroying the villages.

K: Is that the problem, or is the problem entirely different? You know, in America, as far as I understand—this is subject to correction—they are trying to make farm-boys love what they do. They have formed Farmers' Clubs. The other day we heard of a boy who had topped the list, because he had worked furiously at a farm of his own. Is that what you are trying to do, that is, make the villager love the place, improve it, and attend to his cattle better, more scientifically?

AP: It is essentially a human problem. Every day we are at war with the villagers, and there is no feeling that we are here to enrich their lives and vice versa.

K: Why is it that the town destroys these people? Why are they not capable of living their own lives? Why do the villagers get destroyed by the town? Is that the problem? If I was a villager, and even if all the attractions of the town—the

cinema or whatever else one has in the town—were before me, would I want to go to the town?

AP: I would.

K: Then are we concerned with preventing the boy, the villager, from going to the town?

RAOSAHEB PATWARDHAN (RSP): Sir, it is a very big problem. Today industrialization has brought hope of a high standard of living, and the present village may never again be the same. Although we want to find a pattern of living that will ensure better food, better clothes, employment, and so on, we must not fall into the habit of thinking that a higher standard of living means having more and more. So one hopes that this craze for higher standards will not go beyond a certain limit.

K: Who is the 'we', and who is the 'they'? Who is telling them?

RSP: The town-man, because he is the planner.

K: So the town-man, being more educated, more sophisticated, etc., is preventing the villager from becoming what he—the town-man—himself is. Is that it?

RSP: That is very crudely put.

K: Is the town-man preventing the villager for the villager's sake, or is it that he sees the villagers pouring into the towns and—knowing that unemployment is on the increase—is, therefore, scared?

AP: No, I don't think the latter is so. Sir, when I was living in Vitthalwadi, I realized that the towns, for centuries, had been taking much more from the villages than they had given in return. The towns—we—represent the educated, and the villages represent those people who are not. Can we so understand them that instead of becoming a threat, we start identifying with them?

K: You mean you, the sophisticated, want to represent the villager?

AP: I do not want to do anything; I want to know why I am a 'curse' to the man.

K: That is very simple. But do we want to cease to be a 'curse' to the villager?

B. SHIVA RAO (BSR): Is it not also true that people from the towns feel that they are being swamped and that their own standards are being lowered because of the enormous influx of villagers?

AP: I am conscious that the town has destroyed the village.

K: What is the problem? Is it village versus town and town versus village, or is it something entirely different? Are we getting confused? It may be that we are missing something because we are putting the two in opposition.

R. R. UPASANI (RRU): I think the question is this: What sort of education should be given to the boys so that they will love the land and not feel small when they go to the city?

K: Why do we make this contrast? Personally I have a horror of towns. I could go and live in Saraimohana and be perfectly happy, not because I am overeducated or undereducated but because there is some other factor which, it seems to me, we are missing.

RSP: What you are saying is that there should be no need to discuss the difference between the Agricultural and the non-Agricultural School because it is more a problem with regard to the nature of man. Now we feel that even to understand what you are saying, a certain amount of education—like going through college—and a certain amount of social security is necessary. To bring the villager to a level where he can understand what you are saying requires that he first have the fifty things that are denied to him. The villager sees this contrast in economic life and, naturally, he thinks that it is by having more amenities that life can be fulfilled. How can you teach him that this is not so?

K: I am trying to find out what the problem is first. I do not think that it is clear. Is it that, as the Principal says, we want to educate the villagers in such a manner that they are satisfied with their education and, therefore, do not feel inferior to the people in the town? Is that the problem? When we know the problem, we can do something about it. But I am questioning whether this is the problem, whether this is the central issue.

AP: In India we have had a certain way of life which was able to withstand all kinds of invasions, and the root of that was the village and its sense of integrity, its sense of togetherness. Today that has been destroyed; that inner feeling has gone.

K: Is that what you want to create? Do you want to rediscover something which you have had?

AP: Yes, to rediscover that feeling by which a man sees that he should not be at war with the environment, for he, actually, belongs to his environment, which may be the whole world.

KITTY SHIVA RAO (KSR): But you have introduced ideas which make him leave the village.

RSP: Sir, when you talk here, in Rajghat, you say that the purpose of education is not to help the student fit into the present society but, rather, that the student be enabled to go out and create something new. You point out that if the student is educated 'rightly', he ought to be able to do this. Unfortunately, however, the moment the student, the boy, leaves the village, he is out of it; for him, to go back to the village is not possible. So he tries to go forward, but there is no 'forward' either, because doors are closed to him. Therefore, his problem is more difficult than that of the other fellow from the town. So we may have to give the students of the village land here, where they will be able to create a new community life and they will then, perhaps, begin to love the soil.

K: Is this what you are thinking of, or is this what they think?

RSP: When we talk of these boys, we take into consideration what they think also.

K: I am sorry, but I have got to stick to this. I want to be clear, just as a doctor wants to be very clear. To solve any problem we must know what the problem is. You have not shown me the problem. I may be dumb or foolish, but I have not seen the problem. Before you speak of what is to be done, let us find out what the central issue with regard to the village is.

RSP: Then, as Achyut put it, the central issue is that I want right living.

K: Is that the problem we are confronted with? Do not twist it into something which it is not. From what has been said, I gather that what we want is to do something for the villager and his village. We are not thinking of it as a human problem, but as only a problem with regard to the village. When we say that we want to do something for the village, our problem is a problem only with regard to the village, and not with regard to human relationship. We are meeting here, therefore, not as human beings trying to understand the human problem with all its complexities, but as people who are merely concerned with the village. What we want is to find out what the relationship of the villager is to the village and to see if we can somehow change it, modify it, and revolutionize it so that he—the villager—remains there. Isn't that our problem?

AP: We see that we are missing something in the approach that seeks to change the environment. Let us find out what is missing. If we could take the right approach to our problem then, automatically, things will begin to make more sense.

K: I am the villager; I come to a place, and I find that I cannot enter it because my brains are not equal to the man from the town who has been educated for centuries. I get caught between that and the village I have left. I find—as the towns will not accept me, and as I can also no longer go back to the village—that I am, in fact, living in a vacuum. In this state, is my problem one of going back

and improving the village, or of how I would be able to join this? I am taking myself to be a villager. What is my problem?

AP: I say that each one of us here is a person who has no roots either in the village or in the town. Therefore, we are all in a vacuum.

K: I am trying to see what the problem would be. The villager leaves, and comes here to school; he has cut himself off completely from the village and cannot go to a town. If I was there, I would either want to destroy the town—if I had the guts and the vitality—because it was making me suffer in comparison, making me feel that I was lost, and that I was living in a vacuum, or I would create a town here. But that would again create the same problem. If I was educated to see that this would not lead anywhere, save to the creation of another town and to future generations having the same attitude, I would neither want nor go to a town. Then what would my problem be?

RSP: The real danger is that if these boys, who pass out from our school, are not given a ‘real’ education by us, they will cease to bother about the village and, immediately, be absorbed in a hundred different projects of the government, and they will be happy as they are.

K: So you want to prevent that. I am not sure that that is the major problem. Through right education you want to prevent me—the villager—from going to a town. You also realize that I cannot compete with the town yet. So you shut the door there, metaphorically. The government comes along and offers me a job, and I disappear into the strata of a lower middle-class villager, and I am satisfied. But you do not want that either. What is the next problem? Let us go slowly.

AP: Industrial man, whether in a town or a village, has lost his relationship with nature totally and, unless he rediscovers it, is going to land himself in trouble, in a mess.

K: You know, in America—and all the other industrialized places—automation is going to give man immense leisure. They have got new electronic methods of running machinery by machinery. So, man is being eliminated slowly. So, what would my problem be, knowing that machinery is going to eliminate the industrial worker gradually? It may be a slow process, but the fact is that man is going to have leisure.

RSP: That is not so obvious in India.

K: But I may not want to work for so many hours. I am a human being after all.

RSP: The problem here is unemployment. Here, in India, you have to reckon with that, because full employment cannot be reached.

K: Then what will my problem be, if I was a villager? My roots will have been cut off the moment I was educated, and I will not be able to enter the town, because the town will smother me. So, I will be caught in an empty space. The question is: Why should not the roots be cut off? The roots may be the poisonous thing.

BSR: Why should the villager not be educated in such a way that he does not feel that he is cut away from the village?

AP: The Gandhian tradition is to see that the roots are not cut. The problem of the village may be understood only by a man who has really cut his roots.

K: But that is what you are saying. Is that your problem?

RSP: The more I really see my relationship to the earth, and to the people around me, the more truly I evolve in the right pattern of living. Our education, unfortunately, makes us complete individualists. How do I create this feeling of right relationship?

K: I am not at all sure that that is my problem. Let us say that I am a villager who has cut himself off from the village. Have you helped me to understand that if I go to the town I will be destroyed? Have you helped me see that? If you have helped me see that I will be, as a town-man, only a small cog in a vast machine, then the pull will no longer be there. That would be a tremendous thing: The pull no longer being there. That is one of the fundamental objectives of agricultural education. You are educating me not to be absorbed by the town, but as I can't be absorbed by the village which I have left, what am I to do?

AP: That means: Do the teachers see clearly that the village boy can't meet his destiny in the town? Do they see that he can never blossom into fullness there?

RSP: The word 'town' must be written in quotes. Otherwise you will come back to the Gandhian idea; the town means an acquisitive society, overcrowding—

K: Town means town—the whole circus of it: the noise, twenty storeys, basements, and so on. You have educated me to see that by going into that I will merely become another cog, and that too a very small cog, in that vast machine. So I do not go there. Am I caught here then? Or, am I caught in a vacuum? You see, if that is not it, and this is not it, then what is happening to me? What, Raoji?

RSP: If that is now real, I need to know nothing further. In the knowing, I would have cut this also, and be where I am, namely, at the start.

K: What is wrong with that? I would ask myself, 'Where am I? I have no land. The town-man, or maybe even some villager, has all the land, but where am I?' This may be the real revolution, sir. Where am I, Raoji? You have shown me, let

us say, the fallacy of the 'town', in quotes. So I shall not enter it. I see its dangerous implications. And I do not go to the village—working, pottily, with a little land, fighting my neighbours, and misusing my education. So I have learnt two things. When you have educated me to see the fallacy of the town, have you not also educated me to see the still further insignificance of the village? If you have educated me thus, namely, to put away both—where will I be? Not in revolt against society—you follow? I will not be in revolt against society, because you have taught me to see that that also has no value. I mean by 'revolt' a sense of reaction.

So what will my position be? You see, I will be free of both; 'free' in the right sense. Is that what you are trying to do here? If you are, then would I still be a villager?

RSP: You cannot remain in a vacuum.

K: That is what is going to happen to me. I may work either in a village or in a town but, inwardly, I will not belong to either.

RSP: Inwardly what will you do?

K: Do not attribute anything to me. I may say, 'I want to work here because you have taught me agriculture' but, you see, the pull towards either the town or to the village would have ceased, and my action will not spring from frustration.

RSP: Then you will be the 'creative revolutionary'. If both the 'pulls' have gone, what exists will be the 'creative revolutionary'.

K: That may be the new *brahmana*. Yes, why not? That may be the seed of a new thing. You see, who are you to tell me that I must go back to the village and improve the hell there? Do not give me a colour which you think I ought to have.

AP: You are trying to tell us that it is not helpful to approach our problem with any preconceived ideology about what it should be.

K: Because you are producing a new man.

RSP: The only difficulty in accepting this is that that man is an imaginary man.

K: You are not accepting; it is not my theory. If you have really put me in a vacuum, then what is going to happen? I have to think of it anew, have I not? I have to find out, once again, what my relationship to the earth, to belief—to everything—is, because I cannot live without the earth; but you must not dictate to me how I should be tied to the earth. As far as I see, your function is to educate me rightly; that is all. But if you are a man from the town and are drawn by the town, you cannot teach me that.

*29 December 1955**

* This was a discussion on the 'direction' of agricultural education with some members of the Foundation and the teachers of the Agricultural School which was being run then as a part of the rural work at Rajghat.

Uncovering the process of thinking

KRISHNAMURTI (K): If we could take a subject and unravel it, that very process would be a part not only of our education but also that of the students. It would help us to think clearly and, perhaps, such clear thinking might be useful in our educational work. So, what subject shall we take up?

TEACHER (T): We feel that education is different from life; therefore if we could, very briefly, go into the relationship between the two, it might be helpful.

T: I feel that if we could take a problem that is closely linked with ourselves, like frustration, and unravel it, it would help us to know ourselves better.

K: S. says that although we are concerned with education, we have kept it in a watertight compartment away from our own existence. The question is: How are we to relate the two so as to make education a living thing? That is as close to our skin as frustration is, is it not?

Let us say that I have a son, and that I want him to be educated in such a manner that he has a fundamental understanding of life—life being not the life of Mr Gandhi or Mr X, but the life which he has to live and in which there is frustration, death, sex, meditation, religion, and God. If I send the boy here, I do not want him to merely pass an examination. I want you to help him to understand life in the larger sense. I want you to help him to face life as he grows up, and help him to ask fundamental questions and to find fundamental answers, not just to know the answers of Gandhi, the Buddha or those contained in some book. Let us say that you teach history, and that you cite ‘heroes’ as worthy of emulation. Now, whether one should follow an example is a fundamental question. In order to educate my son so that he can ask fundamental questions, you must ask fundamental questions yourselves and, also, be capable of finding answers to them. Only then can you help the boy. I want you to help him to live a rich life, and not just to have a bank account, a wife and cars. I want him to have a rich life, but I do not know how to enable him to have it. Of course my son does not know a thing about fundamental questions either. But can you, as educators, bring about a situation where the child is bound to ask such questions because you, as teachers, are asking them? Otherwise what is the good of sending my boy here?

What fundamental questions would you ask which are related to me and, therefore, to human beings and, therefore, to the boy? I want, as a parent, that the boy should not only have a first-class academic education, but also that the educator give him the capacity not just to curiously experiment with sex, and all that, but to be able to investigate life so that he gets a rich mind, which means really to be able to investigate fundamental things. I would consider that proper education, wouldn't you?

T: You talked about cooperation this morning. How does one cooperate?

K: I must first ask: What are the things that prevent a state of ‘cooperating without any directive’? I know what there has been in the past: authority, punishment, fear, or the coming together because of an idea—the idea being important, not you and I. I want to find out what real cooperation is. Now, can I cooperate with you and him, if I feel that I am frustrated? If in my being, in my outlook, in my life, there is always this sense of frustration, this sense of inward anxiety, I must ask the fundamental question with regard to that, and that is: Is it possible to be free of all frustration at every level? If it is possible, and I am actually free of all frustration, then the element of conflict in me would have ceased and, perhaps, then I can be in a state of being which will bring about cooperation.

I ‘cooperate’ in the true sense of the word, when there is no barrier between me and you. When I have nothing to lose or gain, I will cooperate with anybody. I will ‘cooperate’ when I have no authority, and when I have no sense either of failure or of success. Togetherness is the spirit of cooperation. If togetherness interests us, we can then go to plant a tree, to build a house, a school—then we can do anything.

T: The trouble is that we do not want to look into ourselves.

K: Is it that you do not want to look because you do not know how to look? Is that why you do not like to look into yourself, or is it because you do not want to? If I show you, will you look? If your intention is not to look, you will say, ‘You are perfectly right’, but you will not look. The moment you have the intention to look, to find out, to do something, you will have capacity. So, which is it? Is it that you do not want to look because you might uncover you know not what?

T: We do not want to.

K: Then you are not capable of educating the children. But if you want to look, then, when I say, ‘Come, let us discuss it, let us go and look; let us open the cupboard and see what happens’, you will look. When you do open the cupboard, what do you see?

T: The ‘self’ of which I am not conscious.

T: Sores, hurts.

T: Desires. There are conflicting desires. There are biases for or prejudices against.

K: Which means what? You see a cupboard full of old letters, new letters, letters that have been partially read; and you should say, ‘I will lay them by’. But not one of you has said, ‘I will read them and, if they are not worthwhile, I will

throw them away'. So, those of you who want to look into the cupboard, what do you see?

T: Memories and desires.

K: Desires which have been fulfilled and desires yet to be fulfilled. What do you discover in your cupboard?

T: Pain. I discover various feelings of pain. I recapture the processes of my thinking.

K: How do you explore? First of all, are you capable of looking? When you look into yourself, you must look very clearly and not just have a side-glance. First of all, you must know how to look. You do not know what is in the cupboard; you have not opened it. How do you look at the things, the contents, of the cupboard? Because that look decides what you will see and what you will not see. Before you open it, you must know how to look into the cupboard, for the cupboard is you. If you do not know how to look at the sunset, there will be no sunset. But if you know how to appreciate its light, its shadow and its depth, then you will see.

T: We have made an idea according to which we look.

K: Therefore stop; and, if you stop making an idea of it, will there be a cupboard to look into? Is this too much for you to understand? Let us begin again. You do not know what you are. You are lots of things at present. What is not the physiological, but the mental content of each of us? Take one thing at a time. You say that there is a censor watching, is that so? Be conscious of what you are, be conscious of what is inside. The opening, the looking, the observation, is the process of thinking.

T: I am looking at things, but I am not that which I look at.

K: Are you anything apart from that? You may wish, you may hope that you are something apart from that, but a wish means nothing. I am not what I think I should be. I am society. I am my religion. I am the background. The fact is that I am all that. I may be a God or a crocodile. I do not know.

Let us begin again. You open the cupboard, and you are confused; you see so many things at once. You see dozens of things at a glance—desires, memories, wounds.

T: These are tags. I have examined them before.

K: You say that you have already examined them—the desires which have been fulfilled, and which have brought pleasure with all their implications, namely, memories; the desires which have not been fulfilled, with all their pain; and the desires which you still want to fulfill. If one is as clear as that, then it is very

simple, is it not? But most of you are not clear. Therefore, look. What do you see? Memories, pleasurable and painful; memories of experiences which have either brought great excitement or which have not—both of which amounts to the same thing. So, fulfilled and unfulfilled desires and desires yet to be fulfilled—is not that our whole lot?

When you look into yourself you will see that these are the facts without any elaboration. Your reaction will block you, but you will have to push that a little further, and go deeper into it. You do not know what you are, but as you wait, pay attention, become precise, and watch, you will immediately notice the tendencies of your whole being. You must stick to it—not just for the moment, but as you function in daily life.

Examine, now, your daily life. You discover that you are a bundle of desires. Now, you ought to wait there for a minute, but you don't. You are already agitated, and want to do something about it, isn't it? There are these two streams: one pleasure and the other pain. You want everything to end in pleasure. You would like to have more money, to be married happily; you would like your every desire to be fulfilled. You want no pain, in any direction. Is not that the human demand?

T: Sometimes desires cannot be fulfilled. All desires cannot be fulfilled.

K: How have you come to that? Is it a verbal statement or a fact—in the sense that you have seen that and, so, are free of all desire? Or, are you merely making a clever, logical, verbal statement that desires cannot be fulfilled? How do you know? Have you tried all desires, that is, have you taken them singly, known them and come to that conclusion? Or, have you seen the truth that desire, per se, can really never be fulfilled? Which is it? Have you been released from your desires, or as your desires have been unfulfilled you, intellectually, say, 'Desires can't be fulfilled', while all the time you have a pain inside you? Which is it?

T: I do not know.

K: Do not withdraw. Either we discuss this very seriously or not at all, because if you do not go through to the end of it, it will cause you more pain; please realize this. Do not open the cupboard; shut it. In fact you can never shut it. I do not know whether you realize that you can never shut what you have opened. For the moment you peep into it, you will be caught. So, if you say, 'I do not want to be caught', for God's sake, for your own sake, keep out. It will be perfectly all right. The moment you open and look, you are going to be tortured until you find the answer. Therefore, discuss and find out so that you can help the boys and girls to understand and to know what this whole business of life is. If you understand it, they will be thrilled to be here.

19 January 1955

Freedom, intelligence, and care

TEACHER (T): Is it a theory to state that a society can be based on suppression and on compulsion? I would like to go into this.

KRISHNAMURTI (K): Is that what you all want? Or, would you like to talk about something else? It is up to you, sirs.

In a school like this, which is supposed to be a little different from other schools, how would you bring about discipline without resorting to any suppression? If you all decided that discipline meant conformity, suppression, adjustment, obedience to a pattern, if you thought that that is, and should be, the way of life, then there would be nothing more to be said. If you thought that children should be treated in the same way as soldiers, that is, drilled every day to obey orders instantly, then there would be no issue. Then you would just force them to conform to a pattern. But, if you thought that education is not merely the pouring of information into a mind, but also the bringing about of the total well-being of a human being, then you would have to consider this question of discipline—whether it is one of merely enforcement and obedience, or whether there could be a discipline which would help the child to be free.

T: Please continue, sir, you are right.

K: What do you say? How would you have discipline or order in a class, in the hostel, without any form of compulsion, without any form of threat, punishment or reward? How would you set about it?—because it is only in freedom, and not in suppression, compulsion, or within a traditional barrier, that one can grow. Freedom is obviously not the capacity to do what one likes. One has first to be clear within oneself that freedom, and not force, is essential for growth. Take, for example, the unfoldment of a plant—if you force open the bud, it will not flower properly. Then how would you set about it? As you are the teachers, the caretakers of the new generation, how will you set about it? I think we ought to solve this problem, because this is a problem that is disturbing the whole world. Well, sirs, how would you set about it?

T: To what extent should we give them freedom?

K: If you tied an animal to a tether or to a pole, it would have no freedom, would it? So, that question: To what extent should we give them freedom? indicates that there would be no freedom.

T: Freedom with restraint is necessary at times.

K: All right. How are you going to train the children to be, at the same time, both free and restrained?

T: That is the problem.

K: You say that there must be freedom within certain limits. But the moment there are restraints, there will be no freedom.

T: Who says that there should be licence? Suppose a child does not want to study, does not want to go to class...

K: He must go to classes, he must be punctual; but he must also be free, for otherwise he cannot grow. That is the first thing. Let us establish that firmly. You cannot grow in goodness, in beauty, in intelligence, unless there is freedom—not theoretically, but actually. Do you feel that it is absolutely necessary for you, as well as for me and for the child, to be free?—because it is only in freedom, and not out of the barriers of fear, tradition, and compulsion that we can grow. You see, you are not sure of that. If you and I felt that freedom was necessary, though we ourselves might not be free, we would work together to create this thing.

T: But doesn't one realize one's own limitations?

K: In helping the student understand what freedom is, one breaks down one's own limitations. But first you and I must see that freedom is essential. So how shall we, as teachers, see that the student is punctual for meals, that he attends classes, and goes to bed at the right time? Sir, how will you set about it? That is the problem, isn't it? If you say, 'In certain areas he must be free, and in other areas he must not', then it will be very simple. If you say, 'He is free to think what he likes, but he must be punctual', you will let him think what he likes, but you will force him to be punctual. But if you see freedom—in all areas—as essential, how will you do this?

T: I will talk to the boy and, if I love him—

K: I love because I have a purpose. I love you because you are going to give me a job.

T: No, sir, I love without the motive of a job.

K: Listen, sir; go into it a little. You have a motive in talking to the boy—that is, to make him punctual.

T: I am putting it differently. My motive in talking to the boy is simply to make him see that he has to go to school at the right time.

K: Please, sir, go slowly, step by step. As long as you have a motive, are you helping that boy to be not only free, but also, at the same time, highly disciplined? If I have a motive in loving you, I do not love you! So, if—in talking

to the boy—I have a motive, a purpose, an aim, a desire to make him do something, then I am not interested in freedom.

T: The father loves his son.

K: Fathers do not love their sons. It would be a different world, if they did. I am not talking of a golden world; I am talking of an ordinary, daily, factual world. If I loved my son, I would want him to be highly educated, to be smart, highly intelligent, and I would stop wars, for wars are going to destroy him. If I loved my son, I would find a way that is peaceful.

T: Then what, according to you, is love?

K: That is not the point for the moment.

T: You cannot love without a motive.

K: Is that love? You give him this and that—is that love? When you say, ‘I will talk to the boy because my motive is to help him to be punctual’, is that giving him freedom?

So, what matters very much is how I talk to him, and not the motive. I do not care if he is punctual. If I were a teacher, I would want to see that he is free and that he is, at the same time, intelligent, for that would make him punctual all the time. I would want to bring about an intelligence that will say: Do this rightly, do not do that. Now, how would you do this? I am concerned with two things—freedom and intelligence.

T: We will talk to him in such a manner that he will not be inhibited.

K: How will you do it? I am one of your boys, how will you do it?

T: I will see that you are not humiliated.

K: I want the boy to be free and intelligent; intelligence will help him to be punctual. How will you do it?

T: We must create in him an interest.

K: How will you create an interest?

T: Suppose he is not interested in mathematics, do you think you can teach him mathematics?

K: I will find out what to do... Probably you have not talked to him rightly about mathematics. You may not have helped him to be interested in anything. You are not playing with toys; they are children, and they have minds. So, let us begin

again. How will you deal with that boy whom you want to be free and, at the same time, intelligent? That is your concern—intelligence. Let us leave freedom for the moment. Because if you help him to be intelligent, he will see that mathematics is necessary.

T: Isn't wanting him to be both free and intelligent a motive?

K: Does not a motive mean a purpose, an aim? If I have a motive in helping him to be intelligent, I will not be helping him. I will merely be wanting him to conform to my motive. Our concern is to bring about intelligence. Right? So, what is intelligence?

T: Intelligence is to see things in their proper perspective.

K: Now, how will you help the boy to see things rightly? How will you help the boy to see things in the proper perspective, and in a right relationship, that is, to see the whole pattern of existence, and not just one pattern?

T: This brings in another problem, because 'right' is relative, isn't it?

K: I do not want to go on defining each word. So, we will drop the word 'right'.

T: What seems proper for one child may not be proper for another child.

T: Will there be freedom if I propose something and, then, everybody fits in?

K: Of course not. So, is there a way of looking which is neither yours nor mine? Is there a way of considering, of understanding, which is not personal?

T: There is this objective view, but there is also a subjective view.

K: You and I see that microphone. There is no dispute about it because we both have called it a 'microphone'. That word has a specific meaning with regard to a specific object, and we both see that. So, there is no contention about that. Now, with regard to the subjective, there is a contention because you have one opinion and I may have another. So we say, 'For God's sake, let us drop our opinions, and let us look. There is nothing personal here'. If you and I can both drop our prejudices, opinions, temperament, knowledge—if you and I can put all those aside—then we can both look with clarity, with quick precision. Can we do it? And, can we help a child to do it? Can we drop our prejudices and, together, look at things objectively? If we can do that, that will be intelligence. Right?

T: Right.

K: At last! So we see that intelligence is the functioning of a mind that looks without subjective feelings, opinions, tendencies. Let us proceed. I want my son

and daughter to be intelligent. And they can only be intelligent in freedom. How are you going to cultivate that intelligence?

T: How far can I play a part in that?

K: Obviously you play a part; you are the teacher.

T: How far can I help, and how far can a child help himself?

K: That is what I am asking you. How far can you help the child who does not know all this about intelligence? If you have really understood this, if you believed this yourself and have understood the nature and the structure of intelligence, and if you, also, wanted to help that child to feel that—to feel it, and not just think about it—then you would know what to tell him; you would know how to talk to him. And, because you feel it—with your hands, with your eyes—you will want to show somebody your affection. So, you will hold their hand. Your words, gestures—everything—will convey this feeling. Do you feel it?

T: Yes, sir, I feel it.

K: So you know how to convey it. If you feel affection for somebody, you touch his cheek. So, how will you convey this feeling? You have moved from ideas, words, explanations, to a greater depth—which is, to feel. If you do not feel it, then you will not want the boy to be free. Then you will pretend, you will imitate, you will do everything else; you will find substitutes for that feeling. Which means what? Now, go a little deeper. What does that feeling mean? Doesn't feeling mean that you care?

T: We feel inspired.

K: Throw that word out of the window; it is a dreadful word. 'To be inspired'—to me that's dreadful. Just look. I feel what it is to be intelligent. I am a teacher, and I want that boy to feel it also. The moment he feels it, he will do it—he will talk. It is not that I am making him conform; I am not moulding him into a pattern. I care very much that he must feel this. I care; do you?

T: When you love...

K: I am talking about *feeling*, not about love. Do you have that feeling, that care? If I care, I do not care only for the child; I care. I care how I talk, how I gesture. I care very much what I eat. I look after the trees. I do not care for just the child. As I am a teacher, I care for other things too, not just for the boy alone. Do you care that way? Care—how you look, how you walk, how you sit, how you eat, because that is all a part of intelligence. So, can you convey to the child this feeling of care? Do you care how he walks, how he talks, how he eats, what kind of clothes he puts on? Or, are you only concerned that he be punctual to classes?

If you do not care, if you have no feeling and, therefore, no intelligence, then what are you doing with the child? Are you just giving him some information in geography or some other subject and, therefore, making him dull, stupid? He will be very clever as a mathematician, or as an engineer, but he will not be very clear. So, is it not important for you as a human being to be in that state of intelligence first? Then you can come to the profession, which is teaching. Then you will ask: Now, can I bring that feeling of intelligence to the class? So, the problem is not the child at all. The problem is: How do I, as a human being, bring about in myself this intelligence? And, having a profession, how do I express that intelligence through it? But that intelligence may destroy my profession.

T: How, sir?

K: Say, for example, I have chosen to be a politician. Can I be a politician and also be intelligent? Can I be a soldier or a general or whatever and be intelligent? If I care, do you think I will kill somebody for my country, for my flag, for my God? Will I?

T: We will always have war.

K: If you accept war as a way of life—

T: We do not accept it; it is a necessary evil.

K: Then accept it, and do not talk about peace and brotherhood.

T: Why is it that our intelligence functions in one field of life and not in another?

K: If it functions in one direction alone, I question whether it functions at all. You see, how you stump yourself, how you block yourself!

T: If there is any hope, it is from the younger generation.

K: Then create, bring about, intelligence. There is certainly no hope from the old politicians, from the old traditionalists. So, here is a school, and you have the opportunity as teachers to bring about this intelligence. If you feel that freedom, intelligence, and care matter very much then, as a teacher, you will help the child to grow in that, and let him do what he likes afterwards. He may break through, he may be creative; what he does is his affair. Your business as a teacher, which is the greatest profession, is to change the world because you are responsible for the new generation. So talk to them not from your filthy little mind, but from your heart.

9 December 1965



Talks to the Public

*So, what is the cause of this corruption,
this degeneration, this hypocrisy, this
non-religious life?*

Truth has no abiding place

I am sorry you can't see the sunset... I think we said that we would, this evening, talk over the question of meditation. The root of that word is 'to measure', and the dictionary meaning is 'to ponder over', 'to consider very deeply', 'to think over something'; all that is implied in that word. I wish that you did not know a thing about meditation—either the Indian or the Tibetan or the Zen form. If you did not know a thing about it, then you would be curious to find out. But, unfortunately, most of you have heard of it or have practised some kind of meditation. Therefore your minds are already conditioned and, being conditioned, you are caught in a pattern, in a network of concepts and conclusions. So, if you could start anew, as though you did not know a thing about it, like a boy or a girl who does not know mathematics, we could, then, go into it together, and enquire into the structure, the nature, the beauty, and the deep significance of what is implied in that word. It is the fashion to meditate, but you never ask why you should meditate at all. You never ask what is implied in that word, and what its action and movement are.

The brain can function effectively, naturally, and easily, only when there is harmony, non-contradiction and complete stability, that is, only when there is real order. And this order is not a blueprint to be sketched out and then conformed to. Rather, it is the awareness and understanding of the disorder in which you live. In all your relationships there is disorder, contradiction, and part of meditation—only a small part of it—is to bring about this order, which is virtue. *Without that you cannot meditate.* Without that there is no meaning in sitting and breathing, and doing all kinds of tricks, like standing on your head or trying to awaken your *kundalini*. All that kind of stuff has no meaning. What has meaning is to bring order honestly and deeply into your daily lives, and you cannot bring about order without understanding the disorder in which you live.

As we said, meditation means 'to measure'. You have to understand that the whole world, the whole technological structure in which you live, is based on the 'technological' principle of measurement, which the Greeks handed over to the Western world. The Asiatic world, including India, said, 'Measurement is an illusion and, to find the immeasurable, you cannot use measurement'. But they used thought, which is measurement, to find the immeasurable. Do you understand this? So they are both the same, though one says, 'Measurement is necessary', and the other says, 'Measurement is an illusion and, therefore, to find the immeasurable, measurement must come to an end. And, to bring about an end to measurement, one must control thought'. Do you understand this?

Now, what is the instrument of measure? It is obviously thought. Measurement implies comparison, distance and, also, conformity. I conform to the pattern that either I or society, through propaganda, have created. Measurement is the movement of thought. Thought is the response of memory, experience, knowledge. So thought always has its roots in the past. Thought can project a future, but that future will still be the past. The future, the present and

the past are the measurement of time, as a movement of thought. So can thought, which is measurement, end?

I do not know if you have ever tried to control thought. That you must control thought has been one of the edicts of meditation, and you have accepted it mechanically. Right from childhood, in every school, you have been told, 'Control your thought', but you have never asked yourself or another, 'Who is the controller?' Is not the controller part of the thought? Thought wants you to sit quietly and to observe, but thought wanders off in various directions. And as you have this pattern established through tradition that you must control thought, you spend the rest of your life controlling it, and when you have a tremendous control over thought, you think that at last you have got something. You are educated to control, but I question this whole process of control, not only of thought, but also of desire, pleasure, and so on. Now, who is the controller? Is it not one fragment of thought which says, 'If I control my thought, I will achieve peace or experience some extraordinary state'? Thought has created this division of the controller and the controlled and, so, the conflict between the controller and the controlled begins. So, you ask, if you are serious, 'Is it possible never to control, but to find a way of living in which there is not a shadow of control?'

Is it possible never to compare yourself with another, not only physiologically but also psychologically? I say that it is. Now, what happens when you don't compare? Do you become a vegetable? Do you stagnate, or does something totally different take place? As you listen now, try to find out what happens when you do not compare. Don't you then realize that you have carried a tremendous burden all along, and that when you do not compare you are free of that burden? Therefore, you see what you actually are and not what you 'should be', or what you 'have been', or what you 'will become'. Which means that when there is no comparison, you do not know what you are. Therefore, from there you can start. From not knowing what you are, but wanting to find out, arises the question of whether you can live—a daily life—without any control. Of course that does not mean that you can do what you like—you are doing that anyhow. This demands a skill in action which is an art to be learnt; and the very learning of it is its own discipline. You don't bring a discipline to it, but the very observation of how to live without control brings its own order. Do it; you will see how extraordinarily simple it is. Putting it into words makes it complicated, but it's really very, very simple.

The next question is: Is it possible for thought, which brings about fragmentation, to come to an end?—uncontrolled, and not driven to make itself come to an end. What you are all doing in meditation is trying to stop, to control, and to subjugate thought. Therefore, your minds are twisted, tortured, and you live in perpetual conflict. It is obvious— isn't it?—that a tortured, distorted, neurotic and imbalanced mind can never find truth. So, can thought end and, yet, function when necessary? Thought, as we said, is measurement, knowledge, memory. It is obvious that thought as knowledge is absolutely essential. Thought must function in the technological world. You must have knowledge to speak a language, and to find out where your house is. But you use that knowledge to try to bring about a psychological change in yourself. The question which arises

from that is: Can knowledge transform man and his society?—because that is our concern too. We see that knowledge has never transformed man, psychologically. Since history began there have been thousands of wars, but have you learnt anything from them? You have learnt how to kill more, but not how not to kill. You know, from various professors, from various books, and so on, the obvious fact that where people are divided, there must be conflict and, yet, you go on. You know the cause of your suffering, but you go on suffering. So basically, fundamentally, knowledge is not the factor of the transformation of man. There must be some other factor. And that, partly, is the process of meditation.

So, it is imperative for a man who is really serious, and who wants to go into this question of meditation, to find out whether thought can have its own place, but not move into other realms. It is possible for thought to have a place and, yet, not move into other areas only when the controller realizes that that which he is trying to control is not different from himself, namely, that the controller is the controlled. You will see, if you have gone into it with sufficient depth, that thought cannot possibly understand what truth is. Truth cannot be described. When truth is described, it is not the truth; it is merely a verbal description of something. The description is not the described but, unfortunately, you are caught in the description. You say, ‘Well, I heard you the other day. It was a very good talk. You were talking pure Vedanta’ or some other thing. Do you follow? That means that you have not listened, but are just continuing your old ways, because that is the easiest way to live.

To find out, without effort, whether thought can have its own place, and not move in any other direction, you have to go into the question of time. Time is movement—movement from here to there. Physically you need time to go from here, to your house there—it may be two minutes or an hour but, as a movement from here to there, it is a movement of physical time. ‘I will be’, ‘I will attain’, ‘I will succeed’, ‘I will become nobler’, are also movements from here to there; movements in psychological time. To achieve that end you must exercise will, and the exercise of the will to achieve something is the movement of thought or desire in time.

So, can the mind be free of this psychological, inward movement? It can, only when you see the fact that this movement from here to there, psychologically, is the illusion of thought. You need energy for that insight, but that energy is now dissipated in conflict, in imitation, in conformity, in the movement of trying to overcome and to escape from what you are. When there is no escape, no suppression, no rationalization of what actually is, and when you remain with it, there will, then, be the energy to go beyond it. Therefore, there will be a transformation of ‘what is’ without any effort. This is really very important to understand, because all your life, from childhood till you die, you make a tremendous effort. And where there is effort, there is violence. When you see the truth of it, you will have the energy to go beyond it, without a single control or conflict. This is not a trick. This is not a gimmick which you can learn and practise; it is a thing that moves and lives all the time. So, in meditation, there is no direction. Direction means a movement from here to there; ‘there’ being

enlightenment, truth, or whatever you like to call it. In meditation the mind has no direction. The moment you have a direction, space will be restricted.

I do not know if you have ever realized, when you look at your own mind, how little space there is in yourself. Your consciousness, your mind, is constantly being bombarded—not only by the propaganda of the gurus, the politicians, and the union leaders, but also by education. Therefore, you have very little space. Having little space, you set a direction to have space—which you call freedom, enlightenment. Where there is no direction and no exercise of the will to achieve the goal of that direction, then, out of that deep realization and insight, there will be space; and space is necessary. When you live in these high-rise buildings—in a flat—with two thousand people, and with all the noise all around, you inevitably, because there is no space, become violent. I do not know if you have noticed, of an evening, swallows sitting on a telephone wire. If you have watched them, you would have found that there is an exact space between them. Space is necessary, for otherwise you will not be able to see, you will not be able to feel and you will not be free. And freedom is absolutely necessary; otherwise you will be a prisoner of thought for ever.

On the other hand, when the mind has space—which means no direction, no operation of the will and, therefore, no fear—there will be silence. Then the mind will really be quiet, and not made quiet through tortuous means. Then there will be an actual silence of which you will not be aware, because the moment you are aware that you are silent, it is not silence. Therefore, meditation is part of this freedom from the experience of being silent. Meditation takes place when *you* are not there. When you understand this you, unfortunately, try through various means to wipe ‘yourself’ away, to destroy the ‘me’. You think that the identification of the self with the nation or with an ideal or with a cause is a form of destroying the self. Therefore, you play all these tricks in order to get rid of ‘yourself’. But there are no tricks. To just look at yourself without the observer who condemns, judges, evaluates is the ending of the self. You know, this is one of the most difficult things to do.

When you see the river of a morning or an evening, and the beauty of those extraordinary nuances of light and colour, it leaves a mark, an imprint on your brain. That becomes memory. That memory operates the next time you observe the river. To just look at the river, and not let it make an imprint—*that is beauty*. Beauty is not memory, like love is not memory. So, this space in which silence exists is necessary because it is only in silence, in which there is no self, no ‘me’ as the experiencer, that a totally different energy, activity or movement which is not time, takes place. Therefore, the mind can operate in the field of technology and yet, at the same time, be silent. It is like two streams running together harmoniously. If you go into it very, very deeply, you will find out that it does take place.

And the further question is: Is there a reality which the mind has not created? Is there something immeasurable, unnameable, which thought has never touched? Is there something which is totally out of time, which cannot possibly be experienced, and which thought cannot contaminate? Man has, from time immemorial, asked this question. Perhaps some have come upon *that*, but are

silent about it, for how can that question be answered? The description is not the described. And the one who describes cannot know; because he will be caught in the description, and not in reality. You see, out of that silence there is nothing to be told. Truth is not an experience. It is not something that one can remember or recognize. Therefore one can *never* say, 'I know', or 'I have reached', or 'I have found it'. Truth has no abiding place. It is not something static to which many paths are possible. To have many paths and to say, 'You take your path, I'll take my path, and we will eventually meet there', is one of your tricks. 'There' is a fixed point. But a living thing is not a fixed point; *you* are not a fixed point. Life is a movement not only in time, but also out of time. From this arises a great sense of responsibility. When you realize this, you will be answerable to nobody—to no government, to no guru, to no authority. However, as being responsible means being answerable, *you will be answerable*. And you can only answer when there is compassion. Responsibility implies freedom; it implies compassion. And the whole of that is meditation.

24 November 1974

You are the world

Wherever you go in the world, whether it be to the East or the West, human beings are going through the same phenomena: the pursuit of pleasure, great sorrow, lack of love and the fear of death. This is the problem common not only to an individual, but to all of humanity, which you are. If I may point out, most respectfully, you are not different from the Americans, the Russians, the Chinese, the Europeans, the Africans or anybody else. You are all going through the same things—confusion, conflict, misery, and anxiety. You all experience lack of affection. You are all caught in various sects, in various beliefs. So you are the world, and the world is you. This is not an idea, or a conclusion, but an actual psychological fact. We are dealing with facts, with what actually is, and not with theories, dogmas or beliefs. We are concerned with the transformation of the fact. Therefore, we are asking: Is it possible to transform, to radically change, the human psychological structure? The psychological structure is consciousness. This consciousness contains not only the many psychological hurts, wounds and shocks that one has received from childhood, but also the immense sorrow that man has carried for millennia, and which he has not been able to resolve. In that consciousness is the pursuit of pleasure, and the structure and the movement of fear. In that consciousness is the question of time, not only chronological time, but also psychological time, that is, the whole movement of becoming. In that consciousness there is the question of death and of immortality, for man, from the ancient days of his beginning, has enquired if there is anything beyond time.

To investigate all that, as human beings concerned with these problems, you have to look at yourself, because you are the whole history of mankind. I do not know if you accept this, if you see the truth that in you lies the whole history of all humanity, not of wars and kings and the dates of kings, but the psychological structure of man—his miseries, his confusions, his worries, his jealousies, his anxieties and his hates. To investigate into that, you have to look at yourself with a mirror in which you can see yourself actually as you are, and not as you would like to be. That mirror is relationship. In your relationship, in your reactions to another with whom you are in contact, both psychologically as well as physically, you see yourself actually as you are.

We are saying that in the world, freedom is gradually being denied to human beings. Human rights are being gradually chipped away. Human beings are being made into machines. Human beings are now becoming slaves, not only to their gurus with their concentration camps which are called ashramas, but also to politicians. You see, even politically there is the gradual process of squeezing man into what the 'others' or the powers dictate. This is happening throughout the world, not only in the tyrannical world of dictatorship, but also in the so-called democratic world. Facing all that, what is man to do? The whole environment is destroying man—the whole environment, whether it be the economic, the social, the religious, or the political environment. And until there is a radical, profound, psychological transformation in man, irrespective of his environment and his conditioning, there is very little hope for man. When you

see this happening all over the world, you either shed tears at what is happening or you demand of yourself the highest quality of a mind that has transformed itself and is capable of acting. Please, listen to what I am saying. Nobody will talk to you like this.

You are the repository of all humanity. You are the world, and the world is you. And, if there is a radical transformation in the very structure of an individual's psyche, it will affect the whole consciousness of man. Hitler affected the whole consciousness of man. Stalin, Lenin, Mao and the priests, in their own way, have affected the consciousness of man throughout the world. So, when there is a radical transformation in you, who are the whole of humanity, you will affect the whole consciousness of man. This is not an idea, so do not make it into an idea. Do not ask, 'How am I to get it? How am I to feel that I am the world?' If you do, you will be reducing it to an idea, to a conclusion, and you will, therefore, want to achieve that conclusion. But if you see the actual fact, then you will be that.

We said that relationship is the mirror in which you can see what you actually are. When you examine the relationship between two human beings, between husband and wife, or boyfriend and girlfriend, what do you see? Do you see the images which he has about her and she has about him, the image which thought has built? Please look at yourself. Haven't you an image put together by thought, through the years of living together, of your wife or your husband? The domination, the nagging, the comfort, the sexual demands, the appetites, and the escape from loneliness—all that is your life; all that is you. The relationship is between these two images. The images are unreal. They are a fiction put together by thought. If you do not create images of another and are free of the image-making machine, then you will be a human being, and not a machine that makes images and clings to the images.

First, see the fact that you have images. Ask yourself: Why does the mind, the brain, create these images? Is it for security? The function of the brain is to act skilfully in all ways of life so as not to have disturbances. In order to function effectively, the brain demands that there must be security. It makes images, because that is a safe way of living. We are asking whether that image-making machinery can stop in relationship, because it is the relationship between two people that brings about society. Society as it is now, throughout the world, is immoral and corrupt, because in your relationship with each other you are not honest, you are not clear. It is only when image-making stops that there can be a possibility of having love, for love is not an idea. If that machinery stops, you will have a human relationship, a human relationship that is direct and in which there is freedom, and no fear. So the question is: Can this machinery, that is, can thought, not interfere in relationship? Thought interferes when there is a remembrance, when there is a knowledge of the past. Thought stops only when you give complete attention to that relationship.

Just think about it. Do not accept anything that the speaker says. We must begin with a great deal of scepticism, doubt. But scepticism must be kept like a dog on a leash. You must know when to let go and when to hold on to it, for otherwise scepticism will merely become bitterness, stupidity. So, we are saying

that the image-making comes to an end when you have complete attention in your relationship.

Are you giving complete attention to what is being said now? Have you ever given complete attention to anything? And, if you ever did give complete attention to something, was there a centre as the 'me'? Obviously there would not have been. When there is a centre as the 'me', then that 'me' will collect the pictures, the images. When there is total, complete attention in relationship, there will be no picture-making at all. Say, for example, when your wife nags, if at that moment you are totally attentive, totally aware then, at that moment, there will be no centre which can be affected. Got it? *Do it*. Then you will see the beauty, the depth of this. Then you will live a totally different kind of life.

Now, most of you, right from childhood, have been hurt; you have been wounded—not only physically, but also psychologically. As you have been hurt from childhood, you have built a wall around yourselves, frightened to be hurt more. So, you have withdrawn or escaped from that hurt into something else. That hurt, unless it is totally, completely, wiped out, will be a factor of distortion in your lives. If you examine yourself very closely, you will find that you are, psychologically, deeply wounded, deeply hurt. Hurt comes when there is comparison, when there is conformity, imitation—which are facts. And you were made to conform, you were educated to compare. In school you were compared with another boy: you were not as clever as that boy. At home, you were not as clever as your elder brother or your father. Do, please, see this, because this is what you are doing now with your children, namely comparing them to others, and making them conform. As comparison is one of the factors of getting hurt, you are, basically, deeply hurt human beings. When there is hurt, human beings do the most extraordinary things. That is one of the reasons for the violence in the world. The question is: When the brain has been so hurt, can it be healed? The question also is: Can the brain never be hurt? You see, that is innocence.

When human beings are destroying each other as they are doing now, right throughout the world, you ask: What is right action? What is a human being to do? How can a human being who has no relationship at all with another—except through images—do the right thing? Because of his past experience, that is, his hurt, he will do all kinds of neurotic things. Also, when human beings are frightened, as you are, how can there be right action? So, to ask what right action is, you have to understand all this, not mentally, not verbally, but actually—in your hearts, in your guts, in your blood.

One of the contents of consciousness is fear: fear of losing a job, of not being a success, of what the neighbours might say, of things that you have done in the past which might be revealed in the present. Are you aware of your fears? Are you aware of the fears of mankind? When the world is getting more and more overpopulated, when there are fewer jobs, when there is unemployment, poverty, when there is the lack of physical security, there is tremendous fear. Then, there is the fear of loneliness. Because you want to be attached to somebody, you are never alone quietly by yourselves. You are frightened of loneliness, frightened of being attached, frightened of losing your position, both physically as well as psychologically. You are frightened of losing your identity, your character. You

are frightened of your gurus, your leaders. And you are frightened also—are you not?—of tomorrow, of what might happen. And you are ultimately frightened of death. So, how can there be right action when man is caught in fear?

What is the root of fear? Fear is like a tree with many branches, with lots of leaves, but what is its root? We are not asking how to trim the branches, because we have indulged in that by escaping, by justifying, by rationalizing, by going to temples and doing all kinds of things there. But the basic factor of fear remains. So, we are asking: What is the root of fear? Do not invent, but look at it. Observe your fear, go into it and see not how to get rid of fear, because that has been your desire, but see what fear is, the root of fear.

To find out the root of fear, you must enquire into the question of time, and into the question of the whole movement of thought, which is time. Unless you have deeply grasped the meaning of that, you will never solve the question of fear. This has been one of the major questions of humanity: Is there an end to time or is time a constant, endless movement? Now, there is chronological time, time by the watch: those trains go by the watch; we catch a bus by the watch. Keeping an appointment, coming to this meeting, is chronological time. That is a fact. Now, we are asking: Is there psychological time at all, or has thought invented it? Look, sir, learning takes time. Learning a language takes time. Learning a technique takes time. You all learn to meditate—practising, practising—thinking that that will get you somewhere. But that not only makes you more and more mechanical, that also takes time. So, your whole psychological education, which is to learn, is based on time. This is a fact. You are conditioned to the movement of time psychologically. Psychologically, inwardly, the movement of time is the knowledge which you have acquired in the past, modified in the present by events, and which proceeds further to be modified. This constant movement is a process of time. And that movement is not only time but thought.

So we have to examine what thought is, because all your activities are based on thought. Your temples, your gurus, your rituals, your politics, your economics, your relationships; everything is based on thought. You may not know the full significance of thought because you have not investigated it. All your life is based on thought. When you choose a guru it is based on thought. When you choose a profession it is based on thought. When you have an image about your wife or your husband, it is based on thought. The whole human materialistic world and the so-called spiritual world are based on thought.

You are conditioned as Hindus, as Muslims. That conditioning is the registration, from childhood, on the brain of custom, tradition, and all that. So the brain is carrying the past—the rituals, the tradition, ‘I am a Hindu’, ‘I am not a Hindu’, ‘I am a Buddhist’, ‘I am this or that’. Because it carries all that burden, the brain is never free. It is only when it is free that it can observe clearly. To observe clearly, there must be no distortion. Meditation is part of this unconditioning of the brain from all registration.

The next question is: Can the movement of thought come to a natural and not a cultivated end? Can thought see what it is doing, observe itself and, in the very observation of it, end it? Now, when you meet with danger, physical danger,

there is instant action, isn't there? When you see a precipice or a cobra or a bus hurtling towards you, you move, because intelligence says, 'Get out, jump, run away. That is dangerous'. But you do not see the danger of fear as you see the danger of a precipice. You do not see that fear is the most dangerous thing for man, because when there is fear, there is darkness. You go through agonies, you shrink physically and, psychologically, you enclose yourself. Fear is the most dangerous human quality, and its root is the movement of thought: memory, experience, response. When you see something physically dangerous, you act instantly. In the same way, you will act instantly if you see the danger of the movement of thought which creates fear. Then, naturally, there will be the ending of thought and, therefore, the ending of time.

Seeing all this, what are you, as a human being—a human being who is the world—to do? You are not an individual. That man who is not broken up, who is whole, complete, and who is a total human being is an individual. But you are not that; you are broken up. So, as human beings, what is right action? You cannot escape; you cannot go off into a monastery either in the Himalayas or in Rome because, wherever you go, you will carry the world with you. So, what is the right thing to do? When you do the right thing, everything comes to an end. There is no regret, there is no pain, there is no reward and no punishment. But, before you ask that question, you have to go into, you have to investigate, your consciousness. You have to look at it, observe it, and see what it is. And then, out of the understanding and breaking down of hurts, comes right action. Then you do not even have to ask what right action is; you do the right thing.

3 November 1976

The basic cause of human corruption

I wonder if any of us has wondered why the human being, throughout the world, is perhaps the only animal that is so corrupt—I am using that word ‘corrupt’ in its basic sense of being broken up—so contradictory, so self-deceptive, and so extraordinarily dishonest. I wonder if we have ever asked ourselves why human beings live that way, saying one thing and doing another, thinking one thing and acting in a totally different manner. All the indications throughout the world are that there is a great degeneration taking place. We are becoming more and more mechanical by following a routine, by following a certain tradition, and by following some leader, some guru—generally self-appointed. Why do we, human beings, follow anybody at all?—except that perhaps when we are physically ill we need a doctor, a surgeon or a dentist. But, psychologically, inwardly, do we need anybody at all to help us to step out of this corruption, this confusion, and this extraordinary sense of insecurity that exists throughout the world? I wonder if we are aware of all this? Or, are we all self-enclosed, with our own little families, our own little jobs, our own little gurus and, therefore, we just forget the rest of the world? So, I ask why a human being, man or woman, has become so utterly degenerate. I am using that word very carefully. To ‘degenerate’ is to not create oneself; it is to not flower in goodness and in beauty, but all the time to destroy oneself.

Human beings are supposed to be extraordinarily intelligent. They are supposed to have capacity, drive, energy, and a continued, sustained intelligence. But, apparently, none of these are evident in our daily lives. So, we are going to talk over, together, the art of living a daily life that is proper, correct, and true. We are concerned with daily life, and not a theoretical, idealistic life, that is, a life according to some principles. Most people have ideals, and the ideal is something very far away. What is actual is what is happening *now* in our consciousness, in our thoughts, in our feelings, and in the world around us. But if we have ideals, and translate what is happening now according to some preconceived concept, we will never be directly in contact with the actuality and, therefore, we will become hypocritical. That is, we will all the time be trying to be something other than what we are. And, also, when we have a series of nonsensical beliefs—and all beliefs are nonsensical and probably neurotic—they will colour and cloud our reactions to the actual happenings in our lives.

So, what is the basic cause of this corruption, this degeneration, this hypocrisy, this non-religious life? A religious life implies a life in which there is complete harmony in our daily actions, in our daily lives. All the temples, all the gurus, all the circus that goes on in the name of religion, really has no meaning whatsoever. To find the truth of the matter, we have to have a mirror that does not distort our reactions, a mirror that tells us the truth of what we are, and that does not allow us to escape, so that we can face what we actually are. From there we can move, change radically, and bring about a transformation in ourselves. But if we, all the time, avoid looking at the truth, we will never come face to face with what we are.

So I am asking: What is the root cause of this destructive way of living our daily lives? Have we asked ourselves this?—not theoretically, not when we have a moment or two, not when we have some kind of fanciful leisure, but when we are really concerned, and every human being must be concerned, for the world is in a terrible mess, and we are part of that world. We are the world. The world is what we have made of it. We have made not nature, not the stars, but the world of society, the society in which we live; we have made that, and it actually represents our condition—psychological as well as physiological. So we are the world, and the world is not different from me or from you. This is an actual fact. You may have light skin or dark hair, purple eyes, and so on, but psychologically, inwardly, we are similar. We both have our agonies, our despairs, our hopes, and our abiding sorrows.

What is the basic cause of this human corruption and degeneration? In exploring, we must both be free to look, free to observe. In observation, our prejudices, our inclinations and our beliefs have no place. When a scientist investigates something, he does not allow his personality, his wishes, and his hopes to influence his study. If he did, he would be a rotten scientist. A good scientist would put all that aside and investigate. That is what we are doing now: investigating, exploring. To investigate, we must have freedom, energy, and passion. But we waste our energy in our beliefs, in our prejudices and our stupidities.

One of the basic causes of this degeneration, of this frightening corruption of man is his intellect. The word ‘intellect’ implies the capacity to think, to reason, to choose, to have the urge to capture. The intellect is the instrument of thought. We are saying that one of the major reasons of this degeneration and corruption is the capacity man has of exercising his intellect. And the opposite of that, which is to be emotional, romantic and sentimental, has also not solved any of our human problems. We have given all our devotion, or whatever it is we give, to our guru or to our deities, but it has not solved our problems. We are saying that as long as the intellect, which is thought, dominates, there must be corruption, because the intellect is a part, and not the whole. When there is the activity of that which is limited, there must always be fragmentation, conflict, confusion and misery. The whole implies the intellect, affection, love, care, the awakening of all the senses, and of their flowering together. But that is not possible when one part assumes dominance. Please do understand this. That is what is happening in our lives. This is not my opinion that I am putting forth; it is a fact. We live in theories, in speculation. All our gods and gurus are created by thought. The churches, the temples, and all the images in them, are created by thought. All the scriptures are written down by thought. Everything we do is based on thought. Thought—which is the outcome of experience, memory and knowledge—has become predominant in all our lives, in all our relationships, in all our actions.

We ask: What is the place of thought in daily life? What is daily life?—Not what we think that daily life ought to be, which is just another escape, but actually, what is daily life? And what place has knowledge, experience, memory, thought, in our daily activities? Our daily lives are based on relationship. What is

our relationship with another?—intimate or not intimate. Have we any relationship, or do *we think* that we have a relationship? Do you see the difference? We are not talking about theories, philosophies or ideals. We are dealing with daily life, because if we do not have order in our daily lives, how can we possibly meditate, how can we possibly have any kind of real love for another? So we are asking: What place has thought in daily life? Daily life is relationship, whether in an office or at home. What place has thought in our relationship with our wives, with our husbands, with our gurus—if we have one?

What is relationship? What do those words ‘to be related’ to somebody mean?—not just in blood. What is it to be in an *actual* relationship with another? Have we ever enquired into this problem of what our relationship with another is? Is it based on thought, that is, is it based on memory, on remembrance, on association, which is the whole movement of thought? Our relationship, we can see, if we have gone into it very carefully, is essentially based on thought, which is a remembrance. The sexual remembrances and the attachment to the wife or to the husband or to the boyfriend or the girlfriend, is still the movement of thought. One is attached to and clings to another, because one is frightened to be alone, frightened to be lonely. Our relationship is based on thought and, therefore, it is limited. And, because it is limited, there is conflict between you and another. The wife works for herself, having her own battles, her own greed and all that, and the husband works for himself. So, they are always two separate entities. They may come together sexually, or live in the same house, but they are separate entities, battling with each other, and battling with the world. This happens because thought is essentially limited.

If we see this, not as an idea, not as a principle, but as the truth, as a fact (the fact is our relationship is based on thought and remembrances and, therefore, there is no relationship at all) then we ask: What is the place of thought, that is, what is the place of knowledge in our lives? After all, you cannot function without knowledge. If one is a technician, one must have knowledge. To drive a car, to ride a bicycle, to speak a language, to write a letter—to do anything—we must have knowledge. So, knowledge has its place. But when knowledge occupies the whole field of existence, the mischief begins. Can thought become aware of its own fragmentation? That is, can our consciousness become aware of its own activity?—not that *you* become aware of your consciousness, and watch it in operation. Do you see the difference? That is, can thought become aware of its own limitation, or does another thought have to say, ‘You are limited’? If it is the latter, then we will have a battle. One thought will say, ‘I am limited’, and another will say, ‘I must put you in the right place’. So, I am asking you: Can thought become aware of its own limitation and, when it does, have its own right place, for another thought would not have put it in its right place?

What is consciousness? Consciousness is all the content that it contains—jealousy, envy, anxiety, fear, pleasure, sorrow, uncertainty, all the speculative ideas, and the ideals. The super-consciousness, the higher consciousness, is still part of this consciousness, because thought has put it there. Just as the house is the walls, the roof, the windows, the furniture, the floor, the rooms, so too consciousness is *all* its content. Our nationality, our superstitions, our illusions,

our ambitions, our griefs—all that is our consciousness. If in that consciousness there is divinity—and most of us think that there is—that divinity is also the invention of thought. I know we may not like to think that it is, but it is the structure of thought. We are asking whether that consciousness can become aware of itself, with all its content. *This* is part of meditation, and not all the phony stuff that is going on. To find truth or for truth to exist, the content of consciousness must be totally emptied. Otherwise there can be no truth.

So, we are saying that our consciousness, which is our daily existence, is in confusion, and from that confusion we act. From that confusion we seek certainty, we invent all kinds of human relationships. Can this consciousness ever be in complete order? We have to also go into the question: What is order or, rather, what is disorder?—for in the understanding and the elimination of that disorder, there will be order. We come to the positive through negation, and not by starting with the positive, that is, knowing what order is; a blueprint laid down by somebody. So, we say that order can only come into being when we have understood the nature of the terrible disorder that exists—politically, religiously, economically, socially, in the family, and in ourselves.

What is the cause of this disorder, of this degeneration of human beings throughout the world? Why are human beings so corrupt? The human being is the only animal that is so corrupt—why? One sees that when the intellect, which is limited, has taken predominance over all the other faculties of man—an intellect which is the essence of thought, memory, experience and knowledge—it brings about fragmentation. And in that fragmentation there is conflict, as between the Arab and the Jew, the Hindu and the Muslim, and so on. And, in relationship, when thought becomes all-important, love goes out of the window. When we remember the insults, the encouragements, we live in memory, and there is no actual human contact between us. Can thought become aware of itself and know its own limitations, and realize that it cannot move in any other field but that of the known?—because there is a much greater field of existence, which thought cannot possibly touch.

QUESTION FROM THE AUDIENCE: Is investigation not a movement of the intellect?

K: The questioner asks: Is not the investigation into ourselves, into our problems, into our relationships, and into our very ideas, a movement of the intellect and, therefore, limited?—because whatever is from the intellect is limited. Therefore, is there a way, that is, another observation, another exploration, which is not born out of the intellect? That is what the question amounts to.

There is another way which is not the operation of the intellect. So far, this morning, we exercised our intellect, our thinking, and the very thinking pushed us step by step, deeper and wider; but it still was the movement of thought, the movement of time, of measure. The question is whether there is any enquiry which is not born out of remembrance and thought. I say that there is. Shall we go into it? There is an action which is not the action of memory, of thought, of the intellect, and that action is pure observation. You ask: What do we mean by

'pure observation'? I am going to explain. The explanation is not the fact. The description is not the described. The word is not the thing. The word 'microphone' is not the microphone. The word 'house' is not the actual fact of the house. So, I am asking: Can we observe without the word? Can we observe our wives, our husbands, our daughters, or the tree, or the river, without the word?—for the word is not the thing. Can you observe me without the word 'Krishnamurti', and all the reputation that exists around that word? 'To just observe' means to observe not through the word, not through the description, but to be free of the word. Can we do it? Can we look without the word? The words 'wife' and 'husband' have so many associations. Can we put away all those associations, those words, and look? Can we observe that river without the word 'Ganga'? Can we observe it without all the associations connected with that word 'Ganga'? You see, we are discovering something. We are discovering that words, that is, language, shapes our thinking.

11 November 1978

Motives distort

As we have said before, we are not giving a lecture; you are not being ‘talked at’, or being instructed. This is a conversation between two friends who have a certain affection for each other. This is a conversation between two friends who will not betray each other, and who have a certain deep, common interest. And, so, the conversation is amicable, and has a sense of deep communication. As most of us are accustomed to being ‘talked at’, or being told what to do, we listen casually, and not seriously. This will be just a passing incident in our lives; like two ships that pass each other at night. But if we are at all serious, and are talking about our lives seriously, and not superficially, our relationship will be as two friends who have known each other for some time, who have walked along the same road, and who have lived lives that are very complex, sad, miserable and unfortunate. And the speaker means what he says—it is not just rhetoric to create an impression—because we are dealing with serious problems of life. Having said that, having established a certain communication between ourselves, we may proceed—unfortunately it has to be verbal, but between the words, between the lines, between the content of the words, if one is at all aware, there will be a much deeper, more profound relationship.

We ought to consider what a problem is. We all have problems: sexual, intellectual, and so on. We all have problems with regard to relationship—problems which humanity has created through conflict, through wars, through nationalism, and through so-called religions. What is a problem? The dictionary says that a ‘problem’ means something that is thrown at you unexpectedly—either at the conscious or at the unconscious level. A problem is a challenge, minor or great, superficial or deep, that demands that you face it, understand it and act. That is what we mean by a problem.

Now, how do you approach a problem? Because how you approach a problem is more important than the problem itself. Suppose you have a problem. How will you approach it? Will you come near it, close to it, or will you run away from it, or will you have the desire to go beyond it? How will you approach a problem? Will you approach it traditionally, by fighting against it, or will you neglect it totally, or even, actually, put up with it? You see, as you generally have the desire either to resolve it, or to escape from it, and so on, you are never able to approach the problem freely. That is, as long as you have a motive, the motive will dictate your approach. Whereas, if you approach the problem without a motive, you will then come very close to it. Then the problem will be important. Then you will see that the answer is in the problem, and not away from it. You are burdened with problems; you have so many of them—even meditation is a problem for you. Why should you live with problems? You never look at a problem, and problems, as they are not understood and resolved, distort all your lives. So the thing is to observe the problem and not to merely find a resolution to the problem.

What is the perception, the seeing of a problem? How do you, for example, perceive that tree? Look at it for the moment. Are you aware of how you look at

it, how you observe it? Do you observe it partially, as is generally done, with only one sense, or do you hear it, smell it, feel it, see the shape, the form, the light on the leaf, that is, do you take the whole of it in? Do you look at it as though you were different from it? (Of course, when you look at it, you are—fortunately or unfortunately—not the tree.) It is very important to understand how you approach that tree. Is it merely verbal?—that is, on observing the tree, saying, ‘That is a tree’, and walking by. The word ‘tree’ is not the thing. Therefore, can you look at it without the word? Can you look at it with all your senses responding to the totality of that beauty?

We are going to discuss presently the approach to fear—how you approach this burden which man has carried for millennia, and how you perceive the whole content of it. First, I say that it is easy to perceive, to observe, something that’s outside you—like a tree, a river, or the blue sky—without naming. But, can you look at yourself, the whole content of your consciousness, the whole content of your mind, your being, your work, your thoughts, your feelings, your depressions—all that—so that there is no division between, say for example, fear and you? If there is no division, there will be no conflict. Wherever there is division, there must be conflict. That is a law. In us there is a division: the observer and the thing that is being observed. The observer approaches that which is fear, greed or sorrow as though it were something different from him, something which he has to resolve, something which he has to suppress, understand and go beyond. So, how do you look at fear, how do you perceive fear? The meaning of that word ‘perceive’ is to comprehend, to look without any distortion, without any reaction, without any motive of escape, suppression, and so on.

Most of us are afraid of something or the other. We are afraid of a wife or a husband, afraid of a guru, afraid of losing a job, of not having security in old age, of public opinion—which is the silliest form of fear—afraid of darkness, of death, and so on. Now, we are going to examine, together, not what we are afraid of, but what fear is in itself. That is, we are not going to talk about the objects of fear, but about the nature of fear, its origin, and how it is approached. I will explain: I am afraid. What is my approach to it? Is there a motive behind my approach to the problem of fear? That is, is there a desire to go beyond it, to suppress it, to avoid it, to neglect it, and so on? Or, as I have been used to fear for the last fifty years, do I put up with it? As has been pointed out earlier, if there is a motive of any kind, I will not be able to come near the problem; I will not be able to see it clearly.

Also, do I look at fear as something separate from me and, therefore, as an outsider looking inside or as an insider looking out? Is fear different from me? Obviously not. Anger is not different from me. But education, and religion, along with all the scriptures, make me separate from that, and I say, ‘I must fight it’, ‘I must get over it’. And I have never asked if that thing called fear is actually separate from me. It is not. I may *think* that it is different from me, but the actual fact is that I am part of it. I am part of anger, greed, envy, suffering, and pain. So, pain, suffering, greed, envy, anxiety, loneliness is me. I am all that. So, I observe it—anger—as something not different from me, but as a part of me. I am that;

there is no division between me and that. Therefore my perception, my observation, is: The observer is the observed. Logically it is so. And, seeing it logically, I may make an abstraction of what I see, which then becomes the idea. So, please, when we discuss fear, do not make an abstraction of it, but look at it; be very close to it. Do not make a semblance of it, which means, do not approach it with any motive; because motives distort.

If that is clear, then we can go into the question: What is fear? Is fear time—that is, time as a movement of the past, modified in the present, and continuing in the future? I am the past, the present and also the future. I am the result of the past—a thousand million years. I am the present impressions, the present social conditions, the present climate—I am all that—and I am also the future. That is, I am the past modified in the present, and continued in the future. That is time. And also, there is time by the watch, by the sun rising at a certain time, and setting at a certain time during a certain part of the year. There is time by the morning, by the afternoon, and by the evening. There is time to learn a language, time to learn to drive a car, become a carpenter or an engineer, or even some terrible politician! There is time outwardly, physically, to cover a distance from here to there. Now, physical time is actual; it is there. It is 11 o'clock or 12 o'clock. What we have done is to assume that there is time inwardly also. That is, 'I am not good, but I will be good'. We are questioning *that* time, and not the time by the sun, by the watch or by distance. Is there time inwardly? If there is time inwardly, there will be fear. That is, I have a job but I might lose that job, which is the future, which is time. I have been ill, and I hope not to be ill. I have had pain, and I hope that I will never have pain again. So there is an inward time—at least we think there is—and an outward time, which is necessary. We are questioning whether fear is not time. That is, I am afraid of losing my job in the future, which is time. I am afraid, having been ill and in pain, to have it again. So, there is constant hope, constant remembrance and avoidance, which is part of time. So we are asking: Is not time part of fear? *Time is fear*. Do not accept this, please, verbally. Look at it. Look into yourself; be aware of yourself. Be aware of your fear, and how that fear arises: some past event, some past incident, recorded in the brain as a remembrance, gives rise to the fear that it might happen again. So, we are saying that time is a factor of fear.

And, also, another factor of fear is thought. That is, I think about the pain which I had last week. It is recorded in the brain, and I think I might have that pain again tomorrow. So, there is the operation of thought, which says, 'I have had pain, and I hope not to have the pain again'. I am secure now, but as I may be insecure tomorrow, fear arises. I believe in Communism, and when you come along and show me that it is nonsense, I am afraid. So, time plus thought equals fear. Just see the truth of it—in yourself. Do not just listen to the speaker, and verbalize in memory, but actually see the fact. Face what you have heard as a fact, and not as an abstraction, as an idea. What is important is how you perceive the whole movement of fear. You are fear, so remain with that fear.

All of you want to negate fear, don't you? For you, there are two ways of negating fear. You negate it by either totally denying it, by saying, 'I have no fear', which is absurd, or you negate it by running away from it, by destroying it,

by finding some way of comforting yourselves against it. Therefore, your negation of fear is 'to act upon' it. But there is a totally different form of negation which is the beginning of a new movement. It is to see that the observer is the observed. That is, it is to see that fear is you. As the observer is fear, the observer can do nothing about it. This is a totally different kind of negation. This kind of negation means a totally different beginning. It is only with this negation that there will be no action. Have you comprehended what is being said? Have you done it as we were talking?—as two friends walking along that lovely path, with a lot of trees, flowers, birds and bushes. Have you realized this fact that when you 'act upon' something, you strengthen it? 'Acting upon' something is to run away, suppress, analyse, and find its cause. When you do all that, you are trying to negate something which is not you. But when you realize that you are that, you cannot act. You are white or brown or pink; you cannot do anything about it. Therefore, there is non-action, and a totally different movement takes place.

Then there is the question of pleasure. You always pursue pleasure. Is that different from fear, or is fear pleasure? When you understand the nature of pleasure, which is also time and thought, you will realize that they are like the two sides of the same coin. You have had the experience of something very beautiful, and you record it, remember it, and want that pleasure repeated. You experience an incident that is frightening. You record it, remember it, and want to avoid it. So, both are movements of the same kind; the only thing is that you call that pleasure and this fear.

We must also go into the question of suffering. Can suffering end? Is there an end to sorrow? Mankind has done everything possible to transcend sorrow. It has worshipped sorrow, run away from sorrow, and it has even held sorrow to its heart. It has tried to seek comfort away from sorrow. It has pursued the path of happiness, holding on to it, clinging to it in order to avoid suffering. Man has suffered. Human beings have suffered, right throughout the world. We have had ten thousand wars. Think of the men and women who have been maimed, killed, and the tears that have been shed. Think of the agony of the mothers, the wives, and of all those people who have lost their sons, their husbands, and their friends through wars, for millennia upon millennia. And we are still continuing, multiplying armaments for the protection of our nations. There is that sorrow. Then there is the sorrow of the poor man along that road who will never know a good clean bath, who will never have clean clothes, or ride in an aeroplane; all the pleasures that one has, he will never have. Then, there is the sorrow of ignorance. There is the sorrow of the man who is very learned, and those who are not very learned. There is the sorrow of loneliness, and most people are lonely. They may have a lot of friends, a lot of ideas, a lot of scholarship, but they are all so terribly lonely. If you are at all aware of yourself, you will know what loneliness is. Loneliness is a sense of total isolation. You may have a wife and children, a great many friends, but there comes a day or an event that makes you feel utterly isolated and lonely. That is a tremendous sorrow. Then there is the sorrow of death, the sorrow of having lost someone you loved. There is the sorrow of one's own personal degeneration, personal loss, personal lack of

capacity, intelligence, and action. And there is the immense sorrow of mankind, which has been gathering, collecting, through millennia.

We are asking, as two friends walking along a lovely path, whether that sorrow can ever end, or whether we come to sorrow with sorrow, and die with sorrow. Logically, rationally and intellectually we can find many reasons for sorrow. We can find many explanations—according to Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam—for sorrow. But in spite of the explanations of the causes, and the commentaries that explain sorrow away, sorrow still remains with us. So, is it possible to end that sorrow?—because if we do not end sorrow, there will be no love, there will be no compassion. So, one has to go into it deeply, and see if it can ever end.

The speaker says that there can be an end to sorrow—a total end, which does not mean that one becomes independent, indifferent, callous, and does not care. With the ending of sorrow, there is the beginning of love. You naturally ask the speaker, ‘How is sorrow to end?’ When you ask *how*, it means that you want a system, a method, a process. That is why you say, ‘Tell me how to get there. I will follow the path, the road’. You want direction, you want to be told. When you ask, ‘How am I to end sorrow?’ that demand, that enquiry says, ‘Show me’. When you ask *how*, you are putting the wrong question, if I may point out, because you are only concerned with getting over the problem. So, you never come near it. If you want to look at that tree, you must come near it. To see the beauty, the design, the shade, the colour, the shape of the leaves, whether the tree has flowers or not, you must come near it. You cry, ‘My son is dead’, or ‘My brother is dead’, but you never come near your sorrow. You always avoid it; you run away from it. So, how you approach sorrow, how you perceive sorrow, matters enormously. Do you approach it with a motive of escape, seeking comfort, avoiding it, or do you approach it in order to come very, very close to it? Find out what you do. You cannot come close to it if there is self-pity, if there is the desire to somehow find the cause, the explanation for it. If you approach it with a motive, you will never understand it.

Is it the word ‘sorrow’ that makes you feel sorrow, or is sorrow a fact, independent of the word? And if it is a fact, do you want to come close to it? Sir, when you want to look at that tree, you will come to it; you will look at every leaf, every single contour of that tree; you will take time. You will be looking, looking, looking and, therefore, it will tell you all about its beauty. You will not tell the tree your story; it will tell you—if you watch it. In the same way, if you come near your sorrow, if you hold it, look at it, and do not run away from it, you will see what it is trying to tell you. You will see its depth, its beauty, its immensity. To remain with sorrow requires a great deal of attention, a great deal of intensity, and clarity—not only verbal clarity, but the clarity of a mind that sees, instantly, the truth of things. If you remain with sorrow entirely, without a single movement of thought, then sorrow will end, and that is not a reward.

Then, out of that ending of sorrow comes love. I wonder if you love anything. Do you love anything or anybody—your wife, your children, your so-called country? Do you love the earth, the beauty of a tree, the beauty of a person, or are you so terribly self-centred that you never have any perception of anything at

all? Where there is no love, there will be destruction, degeneration. Love brings compassion. Compassion is not doing some social work. Compassion has its own intelligence; but you do not know anything of all that. All that you know is your desires, your ambitions, your deceptions, your dishonesty. When you are asked the most profound questions which should really stir you up, you remain negligent. Look at you, look at you, sir. When I ask you a question of that kind—do you love somebody?—your faces are blank. And this is the result of your religion, of your devotion to your nonsensical guru and to your leaders. (No, not devotion, you are frightened and, therefore, you follow.) And at the end of all this, millennia upon millennia, you are what you are now. Just think of the tragedy of all this. That is the tragedy of yourself. Do you understand, sir? So, I ask, as a friend asks, walking along that path, ‘Do you know what love means?’—the love that does not demand a thing from another. Find out, ask yourselves, sirs. Love does not demand a thing from a wife, a husband. Love demands nothing: physically, emotionally, intellectually. Love is not to follow another. Love is not to have a concept and to pursue that concept. Love is not jealousy. Love has no power—in the ordinary sense of that word. Love does not seek position, status, power. It has its own capacity, its own skill, its own intelligence.

6 November 1981

Understanding disorder

I am sorry to sit on a platform. Sitting on a platform does not give authority; it's just for convenience.

First of all, if I may point out, the speaker is in no way instructing you, nor is he trying to convince you of anything: of any belief, of any ideal or any conclusion. We are talking over together the many human problems. Human problems are common throughout the world, they are not restricted to this country. Human problems are very complex, and need a great deal of study, understanding and enquiry. And, together, you and the speaker are going to examine freely, objectively, without any personal bias, what is happening in the world. We are going to look, very carefully, into the society in which we live. We are going to look at all the religious superstitions, and at the politics, and the corruption that exists throughout the world.

The speaker is talking about you not as an Indian, but as a human being who is going through a great deal of trouble. He is talking about you as a human being who is unhappy, miserable, ridden with sorrow, anxiety, and loneliness. He is talking about you as a human being who has a sense of utter despair, for that is the condition of the human being right throughout the world—whether you go to America, Europe, Russia or China. And we are, together, looking at it, examining it, not from any particular point of view or from any conclusion or ideal, but we are looking at things as they are, at what is going on, and not at what should happen—which is nonsense. 'What should happen' is just a supposition; it is just an ideal which has no meaning. 'What is' must be transformed, must be changed. That is what we are concerned with, and not with ideals, with beliefs or with religious conclusions.

Let us find out, together, what we mean by intelligence. 'Intelligence' means the ability to collect, to gather a great deal of information about any subject or about one's own life. Intelligence is to act skillfully, after the gathering of all possible—objective as well as subjective—information. Intelligence is to look at the world as it is. Wars and the gathering of the instruments of war, political corruption and the constant economic, social, and religious division—this is the state of the world. Neither the politicians nor the scientists nor the philosophers nor the economic experts have been able to solve our human condition.

We have always looked for leaders—a great statesman or a great religious leader or an expert in economics—who will save us all from our misery. And all the leaders throughout the world have led us where we are. (I don't see why we depend on leaders at all.) Not knowing what to do, we depend on others: on the Upanishads, the Gita, the Bible or on some preacher, some guru. So, we have become incapable of being totally responsible for ourselves. That has been one of the miseries of this country. We have had guru after guru, saint after saint. We have had every kind of political and religious leader, and we have blindly or reasonably followed them. When we observe all this, we see what we have become: unfortunate, unintelligent, corrupt, in conflict with each other, and preparing for war. We are all responsible for war, because when we buy a stamp,

when we telephone or when we pay a tax, we are supporting war. Apparently this country, which has talked a great deal about non-violence, has bought millions and millions worth of armaments from abroad; and the other parts of the world are also preparing for the same thing—war.

Having described the state of the world which has been produced by man—by you, by the speaker, by each one of us—what is one to do? What are we to do, not in ten years' time, but *now*? As human beings, what is our responsibility? We can be responsible not merely when we stop depending on politicians, leaders, and gurus, but when we *feel* totally responsible for our actions—which we don't. We never, under any circumstances, take responsibility. Can we face our responsibility?—not theoretically, not in any sense of abstract thinking, but actually. Will each one of us undertake to be absolutely, deeply, profoundly responsible for all our actions? That is the first thing.

Will each one of us undertake to be totally honest, and totally integrated? Because if we do not, we are going to bring about great disaster. When we listen to each other, as we are doing now, can we undertake for ourselves to live with such integrity that we become incorruptible? Because if we could—a group in this part of the country, and another group in another part—that, and not our present religion (which is nonsense, just massive superstition), would be the only salvation. To have a religious mind is totally different from belonging to some religion, to some sect. We should examine, together, what that religious mind is, because it is only religion, in the right sense of the word, that has brought about, at any historical time, a new culture, totally independent of the old superstitious, ritualistic, repetitive nonsense. Religion is not the religion of the Hindus, of the Christians, of the Buddhists, but the real discovery or the understanding of what truth—which depends on each one of us, and not on some so-called enlightened people—is. The word 'religion' comes from the root 'to bind', to bind oneself to something greater. The greater can be invented by thought, but that would not be great. To have a sense of total dedication, commitment, to uncover that which is eternally true, and which is beyond time, beyond thought and experience, is religion. So we are going to enquire, together, whether human beings—you or another—will be able to come upon that truth. I do not know whether our brains—as they are now—are capable of discovering or coming upon something that is timeless. Are you, if I may ask respectfully, depending on the speaker to tell you what to do? Are we capable of thinking out, together, what we should do? Are we capable of the kind of freedom that is absolutely necessary to find that which is beyond time?

We have to enquire not only into what religion is, but also into what thought, thinking, is. All our activities, all the products of our imagination, all the things written down in the Upanishads—or whatever the religious book—are put together by thought. Architecture, the technology in the world, all the places of worship, whether they be the temple, the mosque or the church, and the things that are contained therein, are the result of thought. All the rituals are invented by thought; the puja, the worship—everything is based on thought. All our relationships, all our political and economic structures are based on thought. Our national divisions are the result of thought.

You see, we have always enquired about external things, but have never asked ourselves: What is thinking? What is the root and consequence of thinking? Thinking about something is different from enquiring into the movement of thought, into what thinking is itself. Are we together in this? I wonder if we have ever asked ourselves what thinking is. When we are asked a question on a subject which is very familiar, our response is immediate. For example, when we are asked what our name is, we answer immediately, because we have repeated it so often. But when we are asked a more complex question, we take time. During that time we investigate, we think, we enquire—we either look up a book or ask somebody and, then, answer. And also, when we are asked some question, we are never honest enough to say, ‘I do not know’. These are the three conditions of thought. That is, the familiar; the time interval between the question and the answer; and saying, ‘I do not know’. We do not know about God, do we? We believe in God—I do not know why, but we believe in God. We have never enquired whether or not we have made God, whether our thinking has not made God. When we are asked something about God, we never say, ‘I do not know’. That would be much more honest; it would make the mind clear.

Thinking is common to all mankind; it is the central factor of our lives. Thought is not individual—it is not *my* thought. Thought is neither oriental nor occidental; there is only thought—thinking. Now, we will explain what thinking is, but the explanation is not the actual awareness of how thought arises in you; it is not your own understanding of the origin of thinking. We must be very clear on the point that the description is never the fact. The description is *not* your actual discovery, and discovery is far more important than the speaker describing, explaining. But most of us get stuck in descriptions, in explanations or in commentaries, and never deal with what actually is. Sir, the speaker has written a great many books, unfortunately. He has talked a great deal throughout the world for the last sixty years. So they have invented a word called his ‘teachings’. The ‘teachings’ are not something out there, in a book. What the teaching is or says is, ‘Look at yourself, go into yourself, enquire into what there is, understand it, go beyond it’, and so on. You are not to understand the teachings; you are to understand yourself. The teachings are only a means of pointing, of explaining, not the teachings but the necessity of understanding yourselves. Do not try to understand what the speaker says, but understand that what he says acts as a mirror in which you look at yourself. When you look at yourself very carefully, then the mirror will not be important; you will be able to throw it away. Right? So that is what we are doing.

What is thinking, upon which we all depend? We depend on thinking not only for our livelihood and our relationships, but also for our search for something beyond thought itself. A great many of the scientists in the West have gone into the question of the brain. They say that we are using only a very small part of the whole brain. We can observe whether this is so in ourselves, for it is part of meditation to find out—for ourselves—whether the whole brain or only a very small part is operating. Now, thought is the response of memory which has been stored through knowledge; knowledge is gathered through experience. That is, experience, knowledge, memory stored in the brain, then thought, then action.

This is our pattern of living, and the whole process is based on this movement. Man has done this for the last million years. He has been caught in the cycle which is the movement of thought. And within this area, he has choice. He can go from one corner to the other, and say, 'This is my choice, this is my movement of freedom'—but it is always within the limited field of the known. And knowledge is always accompanied by ignorance, because there is no complete knowledge about anything. So, we are always in this contradictory state—knowledge and ignorance. Knowledge is incomplete, limited, broken-up, conditioned, for the very reason that *knowledge can never be complete*.

Knowledge is necessary to do so many things. For any kind of skill, thought is necessary. But psychologically, inwardly, is thought necessary? One must understand this question very deeply. Man, through millennia upon millennia, has been caught in this pattern. And, in this pattern, there is never freedom, because knowledge, being limited, can never bring freedom. We need absolute freedom to find that which is eternal—obviously—freedom from all attachment, which means from all knowledge. So knowledge, though necessary in a certain direction, is the most dangerous thing we have inwardly. We are now accumulating a great deal of knowledge, about the universe, about the nature of everything—scientifically, analytically, archaeologically, and so on. And that knowledge may be preventing us from acting as total, complete human beings.

One of our problems is the computer—I am sure all of you have heard about it. The computer can outstrip man in thinking. It can outlearn man. It can correct itself. It can learn to play with master chess players, and beat them after the fourth or fifth game. It can write music, but not like the great musicians. It can invent gods. It can invent philosophy. Scientists are now inventing the 'ultimate intelligent machine', a computer which will beat man in every way. If the machine can outstrip man, then what is man? What are you? What is the future of man? If the machine can take over all the operations that thought does now, and do it far swifter, if it can learn much more quickly, if it can compete and, in fact, do everything that man can—except, of course, look at the beautiful evening star alone in the sky, and see and feel the extraordinary quietness, steadiness, immensity and beauty of it—then what is going to happen to the mind, to the brain of man? Our brains have lived so far by struggling to survive through knowledge, and when the machine takes all that over, what is going to happen? There are only two possibilities: either man will commit himself totally to entertainment—football, sports, every form of demonstration, going to the temple, and playing with all that stuff—or he will turn inward.

The brain has infinite capacity; it is really infinite. That capacity is now used technologically. That capacity has been used for the gathering of information. That capacity has been used to store knowledge—scientific, political, social and religious. The brain has been occupied with this. And it is precisely this function (this 'technological' capacity) that the machine is going to take over. When this 'takeover' by the machine happens, the brain—its capacity—is going to wither, just as my arms will if I do not use them all the time. The question is: If the brain is not active, if it is not working, if it is not thinking, what is going to happen to it? Either it will (as has been pointed out earlier) plunge into entertainment—and

the religions, the rituals, and the pujas, are entertainment—or it will turn to the enquiry within. This enquiry is an infinite movement. This enquiry is religion. So, we have to enquire into what religion is. We have to enquire whether we can put our house in order, the house inside us, the structure, the struggles, the pain, the anxiety, the loneliness, the desperation, the aggression.

There is a tremendous disorder within us, and from that disorder we try to bring about order. We try to bring about political, economic and social order. We try to bring about order *out there* without having order inside. To expect order 'out there' without order here, inside, is impossible. Please see the simple, sane, intelligent logic of this. You see, we never want order here, inside us; we want order there. And we have lived that way—generation upon generation. We are the result of all the disorder of thousands and thousands of years.

Can there be order in us? And, is it possible to understand what disorder is? If one understands, in the sense realizes, what disorder is, if one sees what its nature is, and how it comes about, and so on, then, in the very awareness, in the very comprehension, in the very insight of it, there comes order. We cannot create order when our minds are in disorder. We now think that order is the opposite of disorder. But if we understand disorder (which is a fact in our lives, unlike order) then out of the very unravelling of it, out of the very investigation of it, comes order. Order is not a blueprint. It is a living thing, just as disorder is; but they are totally separate.

Now, what is disorder? How does it come about? Why do human beings who are highly educated, who are technologically capable, and who have conquered both the earth and the skies, live in a total, complete mess? Why are our lives in disorder? Any state of contradiction indicates disorder. Imitation, conformity, indicate disorder. Where there is a division between 'what is' and 'what should be', there will be conflict. And where there is conflict, there will be disorder. In this country we have talked a great deal about non-violence; we have spread that philosophy all over the world. But non-violence is an absurd idea, an invention, an escape. It does not exist. What actually exists is violence. Non-violence is an ideal, and ideals are not facts. When I pursue non-violence, while I am actually violent, there is hypocrisy, dishonesty, and lack of integrity. Integrity is to face facts. Integrity is to say, 'Yes, I am violent', and not pretend to eventually become non-violent; that eventuality is the extension of violence. If I only deal with facts, with what actually is, then there will be no duality.

What is violence? Violence is in the nature of man; he is part of it; he has inherited violence from the animal, and so on. Can there be an end to violence in us, that is, the end to disorder in us—so that we can live in complete, total order? Then our society will be in order. It is not the other way round. The Communists have tried, saying, 'Create the right environment and, then, man will be right'. But they have not succeeded. No revolution has succeeded. Revolutions say, 'Change the exterior, the laws, the structure of society'—all that. But they have never asked, 'Is it possible to bring about order in oneself?'—which means: Do not follow anybody. Yes, we are all followers—second-hand people—always seeking leaders. And we have had a thousand leaders, religious and otherwise, and at the end of it all, where are we? We are in the same mess as when we

began. So, can we totally disregard leaders, and become the leaders ourselves, in ourselves?

We are both the teacher and the taught, which means we are learning, not from somebody or from books, but from listening to the birds, and from observing, from seeing, the beauty of the earth, the trees, the clouds, and the single star of the evening. We are observing, and listening, so that we will become extraordinarily sensitive.

To bring about order naturally, without the effort or search for order, we must understand what disorder is, which is, we must understand our relationship, not only to nature—the trees, the rivers, the birds, and to the whole beautiful, extraordinary world in which we live—but also to each other; we must understand the relationship between man and man.

Have we ever looked at our relationship to our children, to our wives, to our husbands, to our politicians? If we do not understand relationship, there will be disorder, which is conflict between man and woman—between ourselves. If there is no order in our houses, we will never have order with the universe, because the universe is living in total order. The sun rises, the sun sets; there are the seasons; there are the extraordinary things that are happening in the universe—all without a cause and, therefore, with order. We live in disorder because we have causes. The cause is either reward or punishment. That is the basic cause in our life.

Sir, has love a cause? If love has a cause, then it is not love. We agree, we say, 'Quite right'. We see the logic of it; we verbally accept it, but we do not say, 'Let us find out if we can live without a single conflict'. This can come about only when we do not depend on punishment or reward. This can come about only when we have absolute integrity, that is, when we are completely honest with ourselves.

Sir, whether we live in India or in Europe or in America, suffering, pain, sorrow, fear, and anxiety is our condition. And, especially here, in this country, where there is such disaster (anarchy almost going on), it is our responsibility to see that all this ends in ourselves first, not out there. It is our responsibility to say what we mean, and to have profound and immovable integrity.

25 November 1981

Death, meditation, and silence

I think we ought to talk over, together, the problem of death. Man has always been afraid of this unknown and very complex problem. We ought to consider why human beings, for millennia upon millennia, have considered death something terrifying. Volumes have been written about it. Religions have said, 'Prepare for death', but we human beings of the modern age would rather not talk about it; we would rather avoid the question altogether. But if we are serious, and concerned with the whole problem of living, of existence, and all the travails that are involved in daily life, we ought to consider, seriously, this question of death.

Most of us are concerned with what takes place when we die. But we never consider what happens before we die. Is that not far more important than what happens after death? Is not the life that we lead—confused, uncertain, insecure, full of aches and pains and travail—far more essential and necessary to comprehend than what happens after death? And perhaps then, when living becomes more important than dying, death and life will go together. We shall enquire into death, and find out what happens after death. But should we not also consider the way of our lives, and how vulgar it has become? Should we not consider what our relationship is, not only with society but also with each other? Should we not consider why we live the way we do—with deceit, with dishonesty, with lack of integrity, and so on? We should consider and transform that basically.

We ought to go into the question: What is an ending?—to end. We never end anything. We always want a continuation. Please, we are not talking theoretically or in abstraction, but actually. What does it mean *actually* to end? Say for instance, our attachment to a guru, or to some kind of belief—when we end it, what takes place? Have we ever ended anything without having a motive, without having some conflict? Because without an ending, there can be no beginning. That is so obvious. For example, if I do not end my attachment to a particular piece of property, or to a person, or to some belief, or concept, or ideal, there will be a constant continuity of what has been. Therefore, 'what has been' will become mechanical. It is only when I end my attachment completely, inwardly, that there will be a 'new' beginning. There will be a 'new' beginning only in an ending, and not in a continuity. In continuity, time is involved. 'I have been', 'I will be', 'I am'—that is the process of time. In that process there is nothing new. I am merely continuing what I have been, which is modified in the present and which continues in the future. It is a cycle. In that cycle, there is nothing new that is taking place. There are variations; but it is not something totally new. Whereas, if we end something—our beliefs, our conclusions, our theories—if we end everything that we have known, then there will be a 'new' beginning.

Is death a 'new' beginning, or is it the continuation of the old? Do you understand my question? Please, do pay a little attention. Do consider what the speaker is saying, because we are facing a great crisis in the world of which practically most of us are unaware. We are facing destruction from the atomic

bomb, the nuclear bomb; we are facing all kinds of horrors. And we have continued for all the known days in a certain pattern of existence. We have our peculiar culture, and we want to perpetuate that culture—which I question if we've ever had. We never want to end anything. We want a series of movements which is recognizable, which has a sense of continuity and, therefore, of security. Hence, we are afraid to end anything; we are afraid even to end a habit. Which means, we are afraid of something that we have not already recognized, calculated, known.

If this is clear, then what is death?—the dying. The organism, through misuse, through conflict, through disease, malnutrition, and so on, will naturally come to an end. Whether it does so very early or after a fifty or a hundred-and-fifty years, it must inevitably come to an end. We cannot help it. However much our little brains may want to continue our absurdities, we cannot say, 'Well, I will postpone it'. And death means that, organically, the brain cells themselves, because of lack of oxygen, and so on, end. That is a fact. Now, 'who' is it that dies? Is it the organism, the physical body, or is it the psychological, inward structure that we have built through forty or fifty or a hundred years that dies? Is it the physical body, the form, or the name and all the attachments to which we are accustomed that dies? We are attached to our families, to our beliefs, to our conclusions, to our gods, to our gurus, to our rituals. We are attached to all that. And death means the ending of all that. You see, thought has built the whole structure of the 'me', and consciously or unconsciously, we are afraid of that structure of the psyche coming to an end.

The ancient Greeks said, 'Know thyself'. What is 'yourself'? What is the self? Don't invent. Don't repeat what some psychologist or what even the so-called religious literature has said, but find out. What is the self, the 'you'? Is it that that is responsible for your clinging to the present and saying, 'I don't want to die'? It is important to investigate, and to understand, the nature of the self. It is as important to examine the self as it is to critically examine something else under a microscope. Can we look at the self just as we look at that tree with its obvious design—its outline, its colour, its beauty, and its shadow? Find out whether the self, the 'you'—that is, one's form, one's name, the things that one has learnt, the languages that one knows, the accumulated experience of a thirty, forty, or fifty years—is not merely a structure, a series of words, of memories, a conditioning according to the various cultures and social and economic conditions. Find out whether the self, the 'you', is just that, or whether it is something more than that. When we say, 'We are more than that', we should realize that the 'more' is also a product of thought. So the self, the 'me', the ego, the psyche, is essentially the product of experience and thought. However much we may dislike the idea that we are merely a process of thought, the actuality is that we are. We may invent the super, super consciousness, but it will still remain a process of thought. So we are, as human beings—apart from our outer form—merely structures put together by thought.

Now, we have to go into something much deeper, namely, consciousness. *You are your consciousness*. Is your consciousness different from another's? You may say, 'It is my consciousness; it is the result of my thinking, my pain, my

loneliness, and my particular existence', but is that consciousness different from another's? Please, go into this very carefully. As we said the other day, we are walking on a path together, in beauty, in friendship, with a sense of great affection, and discussing this problem as two friends. This is not a lecture. It is neither my problem nor your problem, but the problem of mankind. We are asking: Is our consciousness—which is what we think, what we feel, our desires, ambitions, greed, all that—different from another? It is not. Because every human being throughout the world, under whatever skies, and whatever the beauty of the land, goes through what we go through—sorrow, pain, anxiety, loneliness, depression, arrogance, vanity and an utter sense of hopelessness. So, consciousness is not yours; it is the consciousness of all mankind. Please realize that this means that we are not individuals. Though we are trained and conditioned by our education and by our religions to think that we are separate entities, separate individuals trying to reach some other form of thought, some other form of existence, we are not individuals. Therefore, there is no personal salvation; there is no personal enlightenment. This is a very difficult thing to swallow. It is very difficult to really understand the full significance of this.

So, when you die, does the consciousness of all human beings continue? Have you understood this? Look, sir, I die. I am going to die in another five years or whatever. My consciousness is the result of what I think, of what I feel. It is the result of what I have learnt and unlearnt; it is the result of all the things that human beings have collected through millennia upon millennia. And my consciousness is similar to the consciousness of the American living far away. He goes through, more or less, what I have been through—pain, uncertainty, lack of security, and the threat of war. He sheds tears like me, like you. And when I die, the consciousness of all humanity continues. Please listen carefully. But if there is a transformation in that consciousness, then there will be a totally different relationship between that consciousness which has transformed radically, and the consciousness of the rest of mankind. That is, there will be a totally different relationship between that person who is out of that consciousness, and the consciousness of all mankind. Have you understood this? That is, when we die, unless there is a mutation in our consciousness, the consciousness of humanity continues. If we, who are part of that consciousness, are fearful, uncertain, seeking and not finding security—if our brains are not finished with all that—then we are merely contributing to the furtherance of that consciousness. This is not just romantic nonsense, something we would like to have, something that will give us hope. When we examine it logically—and most of us avoid, put aside our reason when we begin to think 'religiously'—we will discover that this is the common ground on which all humanity stands, because all humanity suffers. And unless there is a movement away from that consciousness, we will be merely contributing further to that consciousness. So, what does death mean? It means the ending of a physical substance. But there will be thought as a material process, which will continue in consciousness.

We have been saying that the universe has no cause. If it had a cause, it would end. Anything that has a cause must either continue or end—'continue' in the sense of 'repetition', cause-effect. That is, the effect becomes the cause and the

cause becomes the effect. It is like a chain. But the universe has not a cause and, therefore, it is infinite. Human beings, however, have causes. We see that their actions are based on reward or punishment. That is a cause. 'I do this because I am rewarded, and I don't do that because I am punished.'

This is the common factor in all of us. Our existence has a cause and, because it has a cause, it can come to an end, which is death.

Now, what all of us do is to constantly seek security—both outwardly and inwardly. We, however, sacrifice inward security to outward security, because we are, by and large, more concerned with outward security. And, being so concerned, we want somebody—the government, the business world—to guarantee it. We want outward security, outward order, and feel that inner order will, naturally, come when the former is secured. In fact the Communists guarantee it. They say, 'First, we should have outer security, outer order. It is only then that the human character, the human mind, will change'. This means: Change the outer—the circumstances, the state, the society, the government—and man will, naturally, change and be good. And we have seen that this experiment in Russia, and in all the other parts of Eastern Europe, does not work. This 'experiment' does not work because man wants freedom. It can't be suppressed. There must be freedom—the freedom of order, the freedom of intelligence. However, in the Western World, in India and in some parts of Asia, 'freedom' is considered the ability to choose, which is, more correctly, to be *allowed* to choose. In these parts a man says, 'I am free, because I can choose'. He *thinks* that he is free, but he does not realize that his freedom is within the field of knowledge and that, in choosing, he is merely going from one corner to another.

In our search for security, for order, we do not see that we can never have order outside—in society, and so on—if we do not have order inside. If we do not have order in our daily lives, that is inwardly, we cannot have order outwardly. That is very clear. Society is nothing but our relationship with others. So, if I am greedy, ambitious and corrupt, and you too are greedy, ambitious and corrupt, we will produce a society exactly like the society that we now have in this country.

Sir, most of us are interested in meditation. We practise some form of meditation. Meditation, for us, is to sit in a particular posture, to hold our breath, to repeat—endlessly—some word, and so on. But all this is nothing more than a state of constant repetition that, invariably, makes the mind, the brain, dull. Sir, to repeat some word over and over again is to mesmerize oneself; repetition is not meditation. Sir, is it meditation when you sit quietly for twenty minutes in the morning and again in the evening, and in between these two short periods to go out and be corrupt, dishonest and do all the mischief that you can? Or, is meditation nothing apart from daily life, daily living? Sir, *meditation is nothing other than the understanding and the transformation of the daily life of a human being*. Meditation is to put my house in order, *my house*, not the room, but the house in which the mind lives. If the mind is not clear, and does not have integrity, consideration and love, how can one possibly meditate? It would have no meaning. So, our first concern in meditation is whether we can put our houses

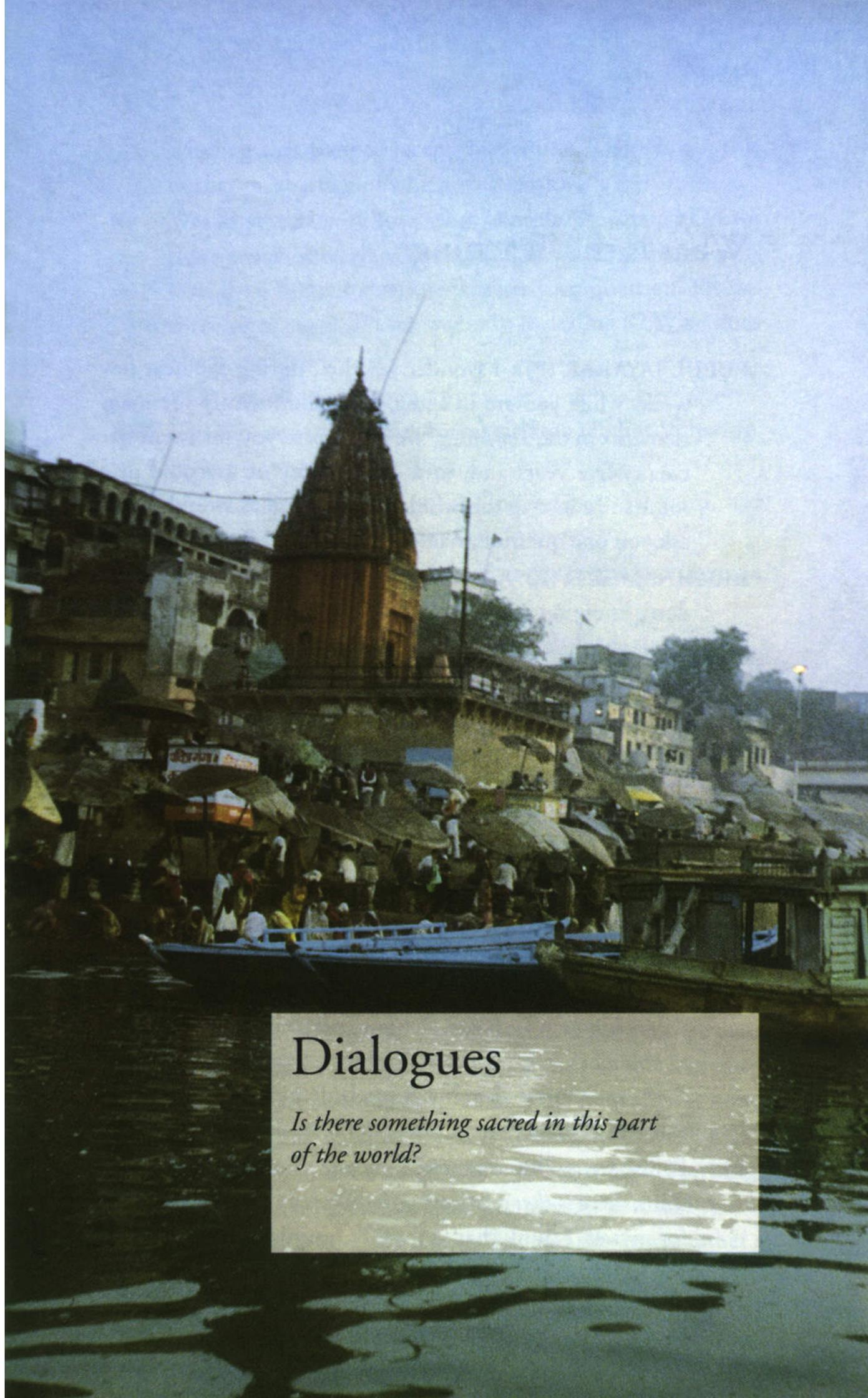
in order. The question is whether meditation puts the house in order or whether, if the house is put in order, that very order is meditation. Sir, are we aware, in the first place, that we live in disorder?—‘aware’ in the sense that we *know* that we live in disorder. Are we aware that our rooms are in disorder? Are we aware that our relationships are in disorder, and that our very conflicts and struggles indicate disorder? Are you *aware* of all that, or are you merely listening to the speaker telling you all about this? When you are aware of the fact that you yourself are in disorder, you will be able to see the causes of disorder. And out of that ‘seeing’, out of that awareness, the disorder will cease. If you see the ‘cause’ of something, it can end.

You see, sir, the inward house can be put in order only when there is no conflict and no determination, that is, no effort. The inward house can be put in order only by perception—the perception of ‘what is’ and not of ‘what should be’. And one should not only perceive ‘what is’, but one should also remain with it.

Look, sir, sorrow, which has come for various reasons, is part of your house. When you rationalize, or try to analyse it, then you are moving away from the fact of sorrow; you are moving away from ‘what is’. If thought does not move away from ‘what is’, then you will hold it, just like a vessel holds water. That sorrow is the water, and your mind is the vessel that holds it. When you so hold something, you will have given complete attention to that which you are holding. Are you following this, sir? When you give total attention, which is total perception, then that which you are holding has no meaning any more. Attention has no borders, because it has no centre. That which has a centre, has a diameter. But when there is no centre, there is no periphery. When you begin to realize the depth and the beauty of such a thing, the mind will be putting order in itself. You are not separate from the mind; you are that. So, when you hold sorrow—‘what is’—without any movement, the mind itself will be in order.

The mind that has put its house in order, has understood the nature of knowledge. Such a mind is completely silent. And that silence has no cause. You see, ‘silence’ can be illusory; it can be put together by a thought that is determined to be silent. You have the silence between the two whistles of a train, the silence between two notes, between two noises, between two sounds, between two thoughts—but that kind of silence is still within the realm of cognition. But when the mind is completely silent, it is not even aware that it is silent. If it were, it would merely be playing tricks. The mind that has put its house in order is silent. That silence has no cause and, therefore, has no end. Only that which has a cause can end. That silence—which has no ending—is absolutely necessary, because it is only in that silence that there is no movement of thought. It is only in that silence that that which is sacred, that which is nameless, and that which is not measurable by thought, is. *And that which is, is the most sacred.* That is meditation.

29 November 1981



Dialogues

*Is there something sacred in this part
of the world?*

What is the Teaching?

PUPUL JAYAKAR (PJ): I wonder whether, during the next few weeks while you are in India, we could identify the main elements in the Teaching. We have heard you for twenty or twenty-five years and, in a sense, many of us could give some substance to this whole field but, still, I would like to ask you one question, namely: What is the Teaching?

KRISHNAMURTI (K): Are you asking me what the Teaching is? I don't know myself. I can't put it in a few words, can I? I think that the idea of someone *teaching* and of someone being taught is basically wrong—at least for me. I think that it is a matter of 'sharing' rather than of being taught, a matter of 'partaking' rather than of giving or receiving. So, can we share something which is not in the field of time, thought, and direction? Can we share it, or are we all so conditioned that we do not know what it means to share?

ACHYUT PATWARDHAN (AP): Listening to you, sir, one realizes that communication at the level of thought is very inadequate, and that we ourselves make the thought—that we are the thought. This comes out very clearly whenever we are in touch with you. We have been used to functioning in thought—with concepts and with words. It is relatively easy for us to see this, but it is a little more difficult to see this with regard to time. I wonder if we could explore that.

PJ: Before we go into that, can I say one thing? That is, I don't think there is *that* relationship between us. At least, speaking for myself, I think that as there is a turning to you, there is a feeling that I am to receive something. There is not this quality of 'sharing' of which you speak.

K: Would you enquire into what it means 'to share'? Do we share anything at all with another? If we do share, at what level is it? Perhaps that may answer your question. Do we share anything at all with anybody, including K? What does 'sharing' mean?

PJ: To take something from...

K: No, I am not talking of *taking* at all. I am talking of sharing.

PJ: Please, just see how we see it.

K: No, I am trying to find out the meaning of that word, and not how you feel or I feel.

PJ: Sir, obviously, in sharing, there are two. You are giving a special meaning to that word.

K: No... *sharing*. What does 'sharing' imply?

PJ: Give and take.

K: Etymologically it means 'to partake together'.

AP: Examples do not take us very far, but I would say that when you witness the sun rise, and you say to your friend, 'Look', there is a sharing. In that sharing there is no giver and no receiver.

K: Instead of the word 'sharing', let us use the word 'participating'. We are participating in the investigation of something. In that investigation, you may be more subtle, more quick than I, but if you are willing to share your perception, your 'seeing' with me, then, in that 'seeing', there will be no division as the 'you' and the 'me'. All that is implied in participating, in sharing. What is the state of your mind and my mind when we are participating in something?

PJ: I started from another question: What is your Teaching? You said that that was a wrong approach. You said that it was not a question of *teaching*. You said that it was rather a question of participating, of sharing, in that there was neither a teacher nor someone who was taught. Now, are we investigating the nature of the Teaching, or are we investigating the state with which we approach this problem?

K: Leave the Teaching for the moment. We were asking: What is the state of two people who are serious, whose intention is to investigate and to share?

T. K. PARCHURE (TKP): Their feelings are identical.

K: Go slowly, sir; they can't be identical; they can't be similar. Let us begin again. Would you say that the teacher and the taught is a wrong proposition, a wrong structure, altogether?

PJ: And yet there is the Teaching.

K: We will come to the Teaching a little later. Would you say that the whole structure and the nature of the teacher and the taught is conventional, traditional and not real?—real in the sense that it should not be.

PJ: What is unreal is the state where the mind, based as it is on its structure of consciousness, questions in order to get an answer. Because it questions another in order to get an answer, it creates the teacher.

K: And the teacher says: There is no answer; there is only a sharing. Therefore you are stuck, aren't you?

PJ: When I question, and merely come upon a blank wall, the only thing left for me to do is to throw that question back.

K: No, not necessarily. If I may point out, you are asking what the Teaching is. The reply is: *The Teaching is that there is no teacher and no taught.* That is part of the Teaching. Now, how do you receive that statement which, to the man who made it, is absolutely and not conditionally or relatively real? How do you listen to it? What operations or processes go on in your mind?

AP: The receiving is done by the brain, by an accumulative centre. And you have indicated that that is not the direction.

RADHA BURNIER (RB): Sir, traditionally there is the teacher and the taught. If you look at it non-traditionally, it is true that an investigation can be shared but, unfortunately, that kind of investigation ends, or does not seem to proceed as the teacher is not there.

K: I am asking you a very simple question: What is the process of your mind when you hear that statement?

RB: Just to see how far it is a fact for me.

K: No, I make a statement: There is no teacher and no taught. You hear that. The old traditional mind in operation says, 'I don't know what you mean'. Now, I ask: How do you receive this statement? What do you do with that statement?

RB: I have to look at it.

K: No, I am making it. You do not have to look at it.

PJ: We do not accept it.

JANARDHAN PATWARDHAN (JP): It is received with a certain amount of surprise as well as shock which is, then, followed by an understanding.

K: Which means that you project your reactions to it. You have not listened to the statement that I made, namely, that there is neither a teacher nor someone who is taught.

RAMDHAR MISRA (RM): Agreed.

K: No, do not agree. What happens to the mind that listens to that statement? You make that statement, sir. I listen to it, and I see the tremendous meaning it has; I see the fullness of it. I see it instantly. I see without drawing an abstraction, which is an ideation. I just see that fact, and not my reaction to the fact.

JP: The mind passes through a surprise, a shock, and an understanding.

K: That means you are listening to the statement through a process of time.

JP: All that happens in a split second, sir.

K: That took time, even if it were two seconds.

JP: Does that happen on account of the fact that we are not listening as adequately as we should?

K: That is the whole point. Sir, you know, the word 'idea', according to the dictionary, means 'to see'. The root meaning of the word 'idea' is 'to see'. I see something, draw an abstraction from it, and that becomes the idea. Now, can you see, can you hear without an abstraction, without an ideation?

JP: We seem to feel that we can.

K: I believe that they are teaching higher mathematics to children of six and seven years. They—the children—receive it because they know nothing about anything. They immediately receive it, but we have such mechanisms, such obstructive ideas which prevent direct reception. Now, I make a statement: Do not invest the man with authority. There is no higher or lower; there is only sharing. This means that there is neither the teacher nor the taught. If there is a teacher and the taught you will be back in the old tradition, which prevents direct reception. Now, I make a statement that there is neither the teacher nor the taught. Can you receive it completely, without going through all that? That is part of the Teaching.

PJ: The process of discrimination is in a listening that is wise. But why is it that when you make a statement like that, I immediately give great importance to what you are saying? That, naturally, establishes the teacher. There is an inbuilt mechanism within us which discriminates between various people.

K: I understand, but that is a different matter. I naturally discriminate between the sound made by a wheel on the road and that of a bird.

PJ: If we take what you say to its logical end, then there will be no questions to ask.

K: No, there will be lots of questions to ask.

PJ: Why?

AP: Because I think it is primarily an exploration in which you do not say that he knows and that you don't know. Both of you are exploring.

PJ: The fact is that in my consciousness, in my skin, there is a teacher. How can you negate that fact?

K: I said that there is neither the teacher nor the taught. Is that a wrong statement?

PJ: It may be a right statement.

K: No, wait. If it is a wrong statement, it is a wrong statement *whoever* made it.

Is it a matter of compassion? Do you understand what I mean? A compassionate person does not feel that he is sharing. He does not even know what the word means. Take a virtuous person: if he is conscious of his virtue, he will no longer be virtuous. You see, it may be the compassion in one that says that there is no teacher and no taught. Do you follow what I am saying? The state of compassion is like sunshine; there is only sunshine—not you sharing it, or I sharing it. We are both in the sun. All right, let us move from here.

You asked: What is the Teaching? Right? I'll say it in a few words, and that is: *Where you are, the other is not*. How do you receive that statement? You see, when you drop a stone from very close above the water, there will be no ripple. It will go gently down to the bottom. Now, does that take place, or are there a lot of ripples which are agitations? And, do you say, 'My God, what does that mean? How am I to get rid of it?' Now, how do you receive the statement?

RM: We are reminded of similar statements made earlier.

K: Therefore, you are creating ripples. You are soaked in tradition and, when this statement is made, you say, 'The Upanishads say that' or 'The Bible says that'. That has no meaning; it only shows that you have not listened.

RM: It is not necessary to understand every statement.

K: Pupul asked me a question. She asked: What is your Teaching? I said, to put a very complex issue very simply, 'Where you are, the other is not'. How do you receive that? When you listen to that, what has taken place in you? Are there ripples, or does the statement sink in?

JP: It appears that suddenly there is a solution to this question which seemed to be very difficult, in that one sees the meaning of it immediately. One sees the fact that it is so.

K: No, it is much more complex. Oh, now I am beginning to understand why you say that this is so. Why don't you just swallow it and see what happens? You will swallow something if it is pleasant and tastes nice. You will not swallow something if it does not taste nice. That is exactly what you are doing now. Why do you not first let it drop into you (just as the stone drops into the water) and see what happens afterwards?

RM: You say that if it is pleasant, one swallows, and that if it is unpleasant, one does not swallow. But there is a third alternative, namely: It is difficult to swallow. I feel that what you have said is correct, but I have not been able to swallow it.

K: I am trying to get at something which is very simple. Can you listen without all the ripples? I think this is the clue, namely, that you don't really know the art of listening. Because you know nothing about some extraordinary, complicated electronic affair, your mind is ready to absorb it. But here you know a great deal—you have heard me ten thousand times, you have read the Gita a hundred million times. You know a lot and, so, your mind is crowded. Therefore, you are not capable of listening directly. Isn't that so? A boy who is learning mathematics has no ripples; he doesn't know. You pour mathematics into him, and he absorbs it. But you don't do this here.

JP: Some of us are quite blank about tradition and, so, are able to see.

K: I am not blank, sir. Here is a very good example of not listening. K made a statement. Why can't you just let it drop? If it has value, it will operate; if it has no value, it will just die. Why can't you listen so that you just let it drop into you? After all, you plant the seed in the earth after preparing the earth, and the seed does all the work. It has to be watered, and all that, but the vitality, the energy, is there in the seed.

PJ: What gives vitality to the seed?

K: I thought you would ask that. Does the teacher give vitality to the seed, or does the seed itself have vitality?

PJ: It is a difficult thing to say, sir. The teacher and the seed are not two separate things. A question is asked, and a statement is made. That statement carries in itself the factor of illumination. Now, what has given it that factor?

K: What has given to that statement the light that goes with the statement? Is it that you have an image of K and that that image gives it the factor of importance? If Radhaji made that statement—forgive me—would you accept it with the same feeling, with the same attention, with the same quality of reception?

PJ: No, sir, take one of the sacred books. You read a statement; but is not the quality of that statement different from the quality of a statement made by a person who is illumined?

K: I know what you are saying, Pupul. If I admit that, we will be back in the old trap.

PJ: I want to say one thing; please, don't deny that also.

K: Of course, I am not so silly. You are saying that the statement coming from an illumined mind has a vitality of its own. You are also saying that if another made the same statement—rationalized, carefully thought out—it would not have the same energy, vitality, and power to flower.

You see that implies that K has an illumined mind. I am not saying that he has or has not. The illumined mind makes a statement and, because that statement is born out of illumination, it has a tremendous weight. If another made that statement, it would not have the same weight. Now, what Pupul is saying is that what the illumined mind says carries authority. The word 'authority' means to 'originate something new'. I am using the word 'authority' in that sense, namely, as the originator of something new. And you are saying that that mind is the teacher, because it is the originator. The words that the illumined mind uses may be the same as those of the Gita, but it is not the same thing. Though others have said it before, this is original and, therefore, that originality gives a certain weight as authority.

PJ: I will not accept that. It has the capacity of penetrating; the other has not the capacity of penetrating. This has the capacity of penetrating; it is a process which creates its own movement.

K: Therefore, you cannot have anything to *do* with it. What you do now creates the ripples. Absorb it, and see what happens. You don't do that. That is what I am trying to get at. I am also getting at your question—which I am not trying to avoid—which is: As the illumined mind has got weight, a penetrating quality, when it makes a statement, can I share not just the statement made by the illumined mind but the illumined mind itself? I cannot share, partake, in an illumined mind.

PJ: No, sir, the illumined mind, and what is being said, are the same. So, in what you say, there is a paradox, namely, that I can share the illumined statement, but I cannot share the illumined mind.

K: Yes, that is it. You *think* that you can share the illumined mind. Therefore, you make the illumined mind into a teacher, and put yourself at a distance, and *hope* that you will, some day, reach it.

PJ: No, therefore, we gather around to listen to that illumined statement.

K: Now, you have listened to that illumined statement: *Where you are, the other is not*. What has happened? You see, I cannot do a thing about that statement. Whatever I do, it will still be the 'me' doing something about that. So, is it possible for me to listen to that and let that operate?

ASHA LEE (AL): You see, the seed falls, and the soil receives it. If the soil is receptive, it will.

K: Not 'if the soil is receptive'. That is a conditional statement. Is your mind receptive? All that you can say is, 'I am listening. I do not know what is happening, but I am listening; I have no ripples. I am just concerned with listening to you'. Do you see how extraordinarily difficult the art of listening is? That brings to mind the fact that knowledge prevents learning. Knowledge prevents sharing. When the little boy knows no mathematics, he is willing to listen. After acquiring a lot of knowledge, information, about it, he stops listening. That is exactly what is happening to you.

PJ: That is too facile.

K: Do you see my point? Knowledge prevents sharing. Knowledge has not changed man psychologically.

PJ: Knowledge is an obstacle to listening.

K: Proceed to the next step. Would you admit that?

PJ: I would admit that.

K: Knowledge prevents listening. Remain with that statement for two minutes. Will knowledge bring about the change? Will knowledge bring about the transformation of man?

PJ: I cannot so easily answer the second question. I won't make a statement. I say that having listened for twenty-five years, when you make a statement like that, there is, for me, a total freedom from knowledge.

K: It is knowledge.

PJ: For twenty-five years, I have been soaked in it.

K: You have listened for twenty-five years, and gathered lots of things. Now K made that statement. Is that statement related to what you have heard before?

PJ: It is not related to what I have heard before but, I wonder, if I hadn't heard it for twenty-five years, whether this act of listening would be possible.

K: Forgive me, you may be making a mistake. That is, as you have had twenty-five years of listening, this (namely, the transformation) would not have happened. I am asking, this listening this morning, is it related to the...

PJ: It is not related.

K: All right. If it is not related, what has taken place? If you admit, even once, that twenty-five years of preparation is necessary to the act of listening to the statement and to the immediate understanding of it, that means that you admit this whole process of time, and time is not valid here. Time is thought, time is direction, and so on.

PJ: It may have been twenty-five years or five years or even just one day, but if you absorb, like osmosis, that very absorption will mature you. It is not related. It does not draw sustenance from that.

K: Therefore, don't say, 'For twenty-five years I have listened, and that has made me listen now'. I am trying to get at this: *Truth is something not of time*. Seeing the quality, the nature of truth and also having a feeling of it is instantaneous; it is unrelated to the past. Now, when you hear that loaded statement, do you still think in terms of twenty-five years?

PJ: There is no part of twenty-five years or even of five years.

K: That is just it. Therefore, would you say, from *that*, that the mind must be free—all the time—of every sort of accumulation? The mind must be free from any movement as accumulation, as knowledge, as direction, as will.

PJ: I see that the mind must be free from any movement.

K: Movement implies time. Time is movement. I am asking: Is time necessary to see the truth? And, if it is not necessary, how does a mind, the whole structure of the mind which has evolved through time, see that which is not of time? Do you see that paradox?

PJ: There are two ways. Either the totality of time sees...

K: That is right, of course. Can you die to all the things that you have acquired?—pleasure, pain, hurt, this, and that.

PJ: You do not go through all that exercise, do you?

K: Of course not, none of those exercises, practices; all those are trivial. You see, that is the whole problem. The mind, the brain, has evolved through time. It has recorded in time. Can that mind see that which is not of time? Obviously not. Then what is it that perceives something which is not of time? You see, Achyutji made a statement the other morning. He said, 'Politics won't solve any of the problems of this country'. But he took twenty-five years to see that. I am not criticizing; forgive me.

PJ: No, sir. When I saw it, it had nothing to do with the twenty-five years of being involved with it.

K: Why didn't you see it at first? This is what you all do. That is, you are saying that experience is necessary. But this is to enter into a very dangerous field. This is what every schoolboy says. 'I must have sexual experience. I must get drunk. I must smoke. I must go through all that and, then, I will learn.' That is, through experience you hope to learn. I question that.

RB: But you haven't answered your own question: Why did he not see it at first?

K: All of you, why don't you see instantaneously, instead of going through all this mess?

PJ: We should explore time. This problem—whether experience is necessary at all—is very interesting.

K: I question, altogether, the value and the necessity of experience.

AP: I hope you will understand my difficulty. You see the sunset, and I see the sunset. With you, it is not an experience. With me, it becomes an experience. I am saying that the conversion of what is perceived into an experience is the time-making process.

K: Historically we have had five thousand years of war, and we have not learnt a thing from it. So, I ask myself whether experience is necessary at all.

*19 November 1974**

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Can the observer free himself from that of which he is a part?

RINPOCHE SAMDHONG (RS): Sir, when the observer observes, the observer is the matrix of thought, of memories. So long as the observer observes from this matrix, it is not possible for him to see without naming, because that naming arises out of the matrix. How then can the observer free himself from this matrix of which he is a part?

KRISHNAMURTI (K): I would like to know whether we are discussing this as a theoretical problem, as an abstraction, or as something that has to be faced directly without theories.

JAGANNATH UPADHYAYA (JU): This question is directly linked with what happens in daily life.

K: Sir, who is the observer? We take it for granted that the observer is either born of the matrix or is the matrix itself—that is, the whole movement of the past. Is the latter a fact or is it an idea? Do you understand my question, sir? That is, does the observer himself realize that he is the whole movement of the past, and that as long as he is active in observation, that which is being observed can never be accurate? I think this is an important question: Can the observer, who is the whole movement of the past, with all his conditioning, ancient and modern, be aware of himself as being conditioned?

JU: Can we accept this?

K: If he is not aware of himself as the observer who is conditioned, then there will be a division between himself and the thing which is being observed. The question that arises is whether it is possible for the observer to understand himself, discover his limitation, his conditioning and, so, not interfere with the observation.

RS: Your question is not very clear yet, sir.

K: Both of us see that the observer is not only the past but that he also always interferes with observation. The question is whether it is possible for the observer, realizing that he interferes with observation, to withdraw, to not interfere, not colour, and not overshadow the observation.

RS: The basic problem is that whenever I try to observe anything, the 'I'—the observer—always interferes in the observation. I would like to know whether there is a method to cut off the 'I' which interferes.

K: His question is whether there is any method, any system, any practice that will cut off, as he puts it, the observer. But the observer *is* the practice, the system, the method, because he is the result of knowledge—all the past practices, methods, experiences, the routine, the mechanical processes of repetition. He is the past. Therefore, if you introduce another system, another method, another practice, it will still be within the same field.

RS: Then how can it be done?

K: We are coming to that. Let us first see what we are doing. If we accept a method, a system, its practice will make the observer more mechanical. So, we will never escape. The observer can never be absent as long as we practise, as long as we follow a system—whether it be the Buddhist, the Hindu, the Zen or the Christian. Any system will only strengthen the observer. That is logical, isn't it?

JU: Then this leads to a deadlock.

K: No, on the contrary, it does not lead to a deadlock. That is why I asked, sir: Does the observer realize that he is the result of all experience—the past as well as the present? In that experience is included methods, systems, practices, the various forms of *sadhana*. He—the observer—is the result of all that. And when you ask whether there is a series of practices, methods, and systems, it means that you are only continuing in the same direction.

JU: Is it possible for one to reject not only the past but also the present? As the present contains the past, I feel that it is better to, therefore, break the present rather than the past.

ACHYUT PATWARDHAN (AP): The present and the past are actually one. They are not separate.

JU: Therefore, I say that we should negate the present. The roots of the past will be negated automatically when the present is broken.

AP: I take it that when you speak of 'the present', you mean this moment, *this present moment of observation*.

PUPUL JAYAKAR (PJ): Upadhyayaji says that we should be concerned only with the negation of *this* present moment of observation, the 'now'.

K: We must be very clear about what we mean by the words the 'present' and the 'now'.

PJ: What he is saying is that the present instant of perception is nothing but the past projecting itself. He, therefore, states that what is necessary is the total

quenching of that, namely, the present instant. He says that we should break that, instead of concerning ourselves with the observer who is, after all, the whole manifestation of just that. His question is: What is the action which will totally end the present instant?

K: This present moment in observation is the observation of the whole movement of the past. What is the action necessary to put an end to that movement? Is that the question?

JU: What I am saying is: It is on this moment of time that the past rests, and it is on this moment that we build the edifice of the future. To be completely free of either the past or the future, it is necessary to break the moment in the present, so that the past has no place on which to rest and the future no point from which it can be projected. Is this possible?

K: How is this movement of the past which is creating the present, modifying itself as it moves and becomes the future, to end?

JU: Awareness can end, for the time being, the past. It can also see that the future is not projected. There is an observing, but in the very observing there is a matrix in which the root is still intact and, so, the past and the future will again arise. The question, therefore, is whether this state of observing can be shattered.

K: What are you talking about?

JU: In attention, the past ends for the time being; the future projection ends for the time being; there is an observing of this instant. But even in the very observing of the instant, the root of future projections remains intact. Therefore, this very observing, that is, the present moment itself, has to be negated.

K: Are you saying, sir, that in the state of attention, here and now, the past ends, but that the very observation which ends the past has its roots in the past?

JU: That is not what I am saying. I do not accept the position that the past is the creator of the present; nor do I accept that the present creates the future. We see that in the process of observation, the past and the future are both dissolved. But the point is that again the history of the past and the future touch on this moment, this *existent moment*. Therefore, unless this moment is itself negated, the past and the future will again be restored to activity.

To make it clearer, I would like to call the present the moment of 'is-ness'. One has to break this moment of 'is-ness', for only then can both these tendencies—the tendency to reflect the past and the tendency to project the future—be broken. My question, therefore, is whether it is possible to do so.

K: I want to understand the question before I answer. I am just asking; I am not answering. The past is a movement. It has stopped with attention. The question is

whether—with the ending of the past—that second, that moment, that event, can itself disappear.

JU: This moment is an *existent moment*.

K: Wait a minute, sir. The word ‘existence’ has a connotation. We must look at it very carefully.

PJ: The phrase ‘the existent moment’ denotes, according to him, a moment that is not stable.

JU: I would like to call this moment *kṣaṇa bindu*; it is the moment of truth. The ‘is-ness’ of the moment has to be broken. Is this possible? In the moment of observation, there is neither the past nor the possibility of the future. I do not even call it a moment of observation, because it does not have any power of existence. Where there is no past or future there cannot also be any present.

AP: He says that in the moment where there is neither the past nor the future, there can be no present either. There will be nothing left.

K: I understand that. Is that an idea, a theory?

JU: I wish to know if this is possible.

K: I have got the meaning of it, sir. May I put this question differently? I am the result of the past. The ‘me’ is the accumulation of memories, experience, and knowledge—all of which is the past. The ‘me’ is always active, always in momentum. And the momentum is time. So, that momentum as the ‘me’ faces the present, modifies itself, but is still the ‘me’; and that ‘me’ continues into the future. This is the whole movement of our daily existence. You are asking: Can that movement as the ‘me’, the centre, cease and not have a future? Is that right, sir?

JU: Yes. That is right.

K: My question is: Does the ‘me’, which is consciousness, itself recognize that it is the movement of the past, or is it an imposition of thought? That is, is it merely an idea?

JU: Could you, please, repeat the question?

K: I, my ego, the self-centred centre from which I operate, is millions of years old. It is the constant pressure of the past—the past being experience, knowledge, and all that. The greed, the envy, the sorrow, the pain, the anxiety, the fears—all that is the ‘me’. Right? Is that ‘me’ a verbal state, a conclusion of words, or is it a fact, as this microphone (pointing to the microphone in front) is a fact?

JU: Yes, it is so; yet it is not absolutely so. It is not self-evident. I do not accept it as the transcendental truth. I may accept it at the level of a day-to-day order of reality.

AP: But you maintain that it is the creator of the context.

JU: ‘This’ is a creation of the past. What is the meaning of ‘this’? The ‘me’ is the history of the past.

K: It is the story of man who has been in travail, who has struggled, who has suffered, who is frightened, who is in sorrow, and so on.

P. Y. DESHPANDE (PYD): It is the story of the universe, and not of ‘me’.

K: It is *my* story; let us not pretend that it is the story of the universe.

JU: The ‘me’ is history, which can be broken by observation.

AP: He holds that these facts are unrelated to the centre as the observer.

JU: In that there is no centre. Existence does not have self-existence.

K: Just a minute, sir. Hold that statement for a minute. ‘Existence has no self-existence’—is that actual? The ‘me’ is the movement of the past; it is the story of humanity, the history of man. That story began and, now, we are. That story expresses itself all the time. It expresses itself in my relationship with another. In my relationship with my wife, husband, child or friend, is the operation of the past with its images, with its pictures; and it divides my relationship with another.

JU: This exists prior to awareness. With awareness, the ‘moment’ will be broken and, with it, all relationships will be broken.

PYD: At the point of attention, everything dissolves.

K: That is why, sir, I began by asking, right at the very beginning, whether we were discussing theories or facts of daily life. I think that your first question was: Can this past history, this past movement which always exerts its pressure on our minds, our brains, our reactions, end, so that it will not prevent pure observation? Can the sorrow, the fear, the pleasure, the pain, the anxiety, that is, the whole story of man, end now?

RS: Yes, that was the original question.

K: And you asked, if I understood rightly: Is there a practice, a method, a system, a form of meditation, which will end the past?

RS: We make an effort. Whenever we try to observe anything, the past intervenes. At that moment, observation becomes useless. That has been my experience.

K: Yes, of course. Now, what is the quality, the nature, of the observer? You say that the 'I', the observer, is nothing but the entire past. My question is: Is the observer aware of himself as the past?

RS: I don't think so. I think that he is not aware.

RADHA BURNIER (RB): Is he partially aware that he is the past?

RS: No. At the moment of observation, he is not aware of the past. As soon as awareness comes, then...

K: For the moment we are not observing. We are examining the observer. We are asking if the observer can be aware of himself.

RS: You mean at the moment of observation?

K: No. Forget the moment of observation. I am asking if the observer can know himself.

RS: Yes. He can understand the past; he can understand his conditioning.

K: Does he understand his conditioning as an outsider observing his conditioning, or is he aware of himself as being conditioned? Do you see the difference, sir?

PYD: Are the two different?

RS: Does the awareness of the self involve duality?

K: I do not know about duality. I do not want to use words which we, neither of us, understand. I am asking, sir—to make it much simpler—whether thought can be aware of itself.

RS: No.

K: That is the point.

RB: Is it the same as saying: Is one aware of envy, anger, etc., as *other than* oneself, or is one aware of all these *as* oneself?

K: Am I aware that I am angry? Is there an awareness of anger, of envy, as it arises? Of course, there is. I can see the awakening of envy. I see a beautiful

carpet, and there is the perception, sensation, contact-sensation, and thought has the image of my owning the carpet. So, desire and, with it, greed and envy arise. Now, in that knowing, is thought aware that it is envy, or is envy itself aware of itself? Do you understand this question? Let us move slowly. You have a perfect right to question what I say. You can tear it to pieces. I am envious, and I know what the meaning of that word 'envy' is. I know the reaction; I know the feeling. Is that feeling the word? Does the word create that feeling? If the word 'envy' did not exist, would it then be envy? That is, can there be an observation of envy, of that feeling, without the word?

R. TIWARI (RT): There is an amorphous feeling, something to which we later give a name.

PJ: A 'naming' which creates the feeling?

K: That is what I am saying. The word has become more important. Can you free the word from the feeling? Or, does the word make the feeling? Is there an observation without the word, which means, without the interference of thought?

RS: The carpet, an object outside, can be seen without interference. But can envy, the 'inside', be seen in the same way? Can envy be observed without thought? That is the problem.

K: Is it possible to observe envy without the word, without the remembrance of previous envies?

RS: That becomes difficult.

K: If I may point out, sir, it is not difficult. First, let us be clear. The word is not the thing; the description is not the described. But for most of us the word has become tremendously important—the word 'Prime Minister', or the word 'monk', for example. To us the word is thought. Without the word, is there thinking in the usual usage of that word?

RS: No, it is not thinking in the usual sense of the term.

K: So, language moulds our thinking. Thinking is always with the word, with the symbol, with the picture, and so on. Now, we are asking: Can we observe that feeling that we have verbalized as envy, without the word—which means without the remembrance of past envies?

RS: That is the point we do not see. As soon as observation starts, the past as thought always interferes. Can we observe anything without the interference of thought?

K: I say, 'Yes, absolutely'.

JU: In all these matters, the clue lies in seeing that the walker is not different from walking. Walking itself is the walker.

K: Agreed. Wait a minute. The actor is not different from the action—is that a theory?

JU: It is not a theory. If it were, it would not be possible to have a dialogue.

K: May I ask a question? Is this so in daily life?

JU: Yes. When we sit here, with K, we deal only with the facts of daily life. We see, here, the fact of ‘what is’. However, we usually separate the actor from the action, and this becomes history. When we understand, through observation, that the actor and the action are one, then we break history as the past.

AP: Are we definitely clear that there is no distinction between relationship and the fact of relationship?

JU: I must make myself clear. There is a bullock cart, and it is loaded. Where does the bullock cart, and all that is loaded on it, rest? What does it stand on? It rests on that point of the earth where the point of the wheel is in contact with the point of the earth. It is on that point that the whole load rests. Life is a point on which history rests—both past and future. When I hold that ‘present existent moment’ in the field of observation, that moment is also broken. Therefore, the load and the bullock cart are broken.

AP: You say that it is broken—is that attention? Has that been your experience? If what you say is a fact, then Rinpocheji’s question should have been answered. If his question has not been answered, then what has been said is theoretical.

K: Sir, your question in the beginning was: Can the past end? All our life is the past; it is the story of all humanity. It is the enormous length, depth, volume of the past. And we are asking a very simple, yet very complex, question, which is: Can that very vast story, that river with all its tremendous volume, come to an end? First of all, do we recognize its immense volume—not the words, but the actual volume of water behind it? Do we actually recognize the great weight of the past, or is it just a theory? Then, the next question that arises is: What is the value of the past? That is, what is the value of knowledge? What place has knowledge in our lives?

RS: It may have its own utility.

K: Yes. You see, knowledge has its own limited place. That is, technologically it has a place, but *psychologically*, it has no place. The question is: Why has knowledge, the past, taken over the psychological field?

RS: It is a survival reflex.

K: Is it survival?

AP: Actually, knowledge or thought is the enemy...

PJ: At one level we can understand it. But, unfortunately, it does not end that process.

K: Because we do not use our brains to find out, to see, the place of thought; we want the 'I' to survive.

PJ: You say that the brain is like a tape recorder—recording. Is there another function of the brain?

K: There is, if recording is not taking place all the time.

PJ: What is that function?

K: The other function? That, for you, will be theory. I will not say anything about that.

PJ: You said that the brain is like a tape recorder. It records *everything*.

K: I said that it records everything unnecessarily. 'She insults me', 'She hurts me', and I register all that. Registering has become a habit.

PJ: Yes, this is how the brain operates and, within this manner of operation, it cannot choose.

AP: This is why Rinpocheji said that the recording is involuntary.

PJ: I am asking: Is there another quality in the brain?

K: Yes, intelligence.

PJ: How is it awakened?

K: I am awakening it. Look. I see that there is no security in nationalism and, therefore, I no longer am an Indian. And as I see that there is no security in believing in any religion, I don't belong to any religious group. Now, what does that mean? I have observed how communities, nations, and religious groups fight each other. The very observation of the stupidity of it awakens intelligence. Seeing that which is false is the awakening of intelligence.

PJ: What is this seeing?

K: To observe England, France, Germany, Russia, and America at each other's throats, and to see how stupid that is, is intelligence. Seeing the stupidity is intelligence.

RB: Are you saying that as one sees this, the unnecessary recording comes to an end?

K: Yes, I am no longer a nationalist. That is a tremendous thing.

RB: Does the brain begin to function in a different way?

SUNANDA PATWARDHAN (SP): If one ceases to be a nationalist, does all unnecessary recording stop?

K: Yes, with regard to nationalism.

RB: Do you mean to say that if one sees, in the same manner, that recording or registering is necessary only for physical security and for physical survival and that if one also sees that recording in all other areas is to be eliminated then, automatically, the recording stops?

K: Of course, naturally.

JU: One song has ended and another song has begun. A new song has been recorded on the old recording. It will go on. The old, destructive music will keep breaking, and the new music which is good, which is right, will take over. Is this the future of humanity?

K: I don't understand.

JU: If one sees the false, it ends.

K: No, that is a theory. Have you ended being a Hindu, sir?

JU: Yes.

K: Have you ended being a Buddhist?

JU: I do not know. The past as history has shaped the image in my brain. My being a Buddhist is the past—the historical past.

K: Then drop it. When you drop it, you will see the illusions involved in being a Buddhist.

JU: Yes. That is correct. But so long as that image is not broken...

K: Seeing the illusion is the beginning of intelligence.

JU: But we would like to ensure that when one thing breaks, another does not arise.

K: Could we tackle this differently? We are surrounded by false, illusory things. Is there a way of looking at this whole movement of illusion and ending it? Is that possible?

JU: Yes, it is possible.

K: Is that a theory?

JU: If we can break the self-protective process, then this will be possible but, unfortunately, that process itself does not end. When we think that something has existence, even that is an illusion. Thousands of such illusions break, and thousands of new ones come into being. This happens all the time, and this is not *sadhana*. So far we have been talking only of the gross illusions; these certainly break. But a new image is continually shaping itself. It is making its own thought structures.

AP: What he is saying is that this process of negation gives place to the arising of new, subtler illusions.

K: No.

AP: It is possible to wipe out religion, nationalism, and so on; these are crude things. But when it comes to subtler facts...

K: Kindly listen. Thought being limited, whatever it creates is limited—the gods, knowledge, experience; everything is limited. Do you see that thought is limited and that, therefore, its activity is also limited? If you saw that, it would be finished. There would be no further illusion. Thought itself would be finished. You have not looked at it, sir.

RS: The point is that thought arises again.

K: That is why I said, sir, that thought must find its own proper place—the place of utility. It has no other place. To think that it has some other place is nothing but an illusion. Thought is limited. Thought is not love. Don't just agree with this. Sir, do you love people? Does love exist? I do not want theories. What is the point of all this? What is the point of all your knowledge—your Gita, your Upanishads, and all the rest of it? Have we made ourselves clear, sir, or are we still at the verbal level?

RS: No, not merely at the verbal level.

K: Sir, when we have really discovered the limitations of thought, there is a flowering of something else. Has that taken place? Is that really happening? If not, what is the point of all this discussion?

RS: I can now recognize the limitations of thought.

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Is there something sacred in this part of the world?

KRISHNAMURTI (K): Is there something sacred, something long lasting, which is not conditioned by commerce? Is there that something here, in India, in this part of the world?

JAGANNATH UPADHYAYA (JU): There is certainly something in this country which is not influenced by external factors.

K: That was not my question. My question was: Is there something here which does not exist anywhere else? Is there something here which is not influenced, not corrupted, and not made ugly by all the circus that goes on in the name of religion? Is there something already here, for which—if it exists—one has to give one's whole mind and heart to preserve? Do you understand, sir?

JU: I cannot say, because in some sense I have not experienced it in a tangible way; nor can I say whether other people have. But my study of ancient texts gives me a certitude that there is something which can be experienced in a clear way.

K: I am asking, Panditji, if there is something enduring, something which is not bound by time, evolution, and all that. It must be very, very sacred. And, if it exists, one must give one's life to it; one must protect it, and give vitality to it not by doctrines and knowledge, but by a feeling for the depth of it, the beauty of it, and the enormous strength of it.

JU: We desire to find such a thing, but have not been able to do so. And our experience is such that we find ourselves tangled in many theories, in many traditions, and in many systems. Occasionally we hear a clear voice that speaks about this in a compelling way. That voice comes from you, but we are in some way unable to reach it. The whole phenomenon is like some huge fair with a lot of different chaotic voices offering solutions.

K: You are not answering my question, which is: Is there or is there not—not tradition, not a kind of historical process of ancient culture which is diminishing, being destroyed by commercialism, but the great impetus which was set going by some power, some intelligence? That power, that intelligence—does it exist now? I'm repeating the same question in different words.

JU: If I have to answer your question, then I would say that what you are talking about—that thing—is life.

K: I am asking a very simple question; don't complicate it. India exploded over the whole of Asia, like Greece exploded over the whole of Western culture. I am not talking about India geographically, but metaphorically. It spread like wildfire.

And it had the tremendous energy of something original, something enormous; it had the power to move things. Does that exist here, or is it all in abeyance? Does it exist at all now?

RINPOCHE SAMDHONG (RS): I don't know, sir. I think it exists.

K: Why? Why do you think that?

RS: Sometimes it appears, but not usually.

K: It is like a breath of fresh air. If that air is constantly flowing, it will always be fresh.

RS: It is always flowing, it is always fresh, but the contact with individuals is not always there.

K: I understand that, but it's not good enough.

RADHIKA HERZBERGER (RH): Why do you want to connect 'it' geographically with this part of the world?

K: Geographically? I'll tell you. All the ancients, as far as I understand, worshipped mountains. The gods came from there for the Greeks. And, again, for the ancient Sumerians there were the mountains; there was the sense of something holy there. Then you come to the Himalayas. The monks lived there; they meditated there. It's all there in the *Dakṣiṇāmurti-stotra*. Is it there still, or is it being commercialized?

RS: It is there. It cannot be commercialized. The commercialization is something else.

K: Is it there?

RS: Yes.

K: Why do you say, 'Yes'?

RS: Because it is there. It is...

K: Sir, you are there, physically. I can theorize about how your body is constructed, but you will still be sitting there. You will be there—to touch, to feel, to see. Is there such a thing?

RS: Yes, it is there. It is actually there.

K: It is no good telling me, 'It is there, it is there'. If it is there, why is this part of the world so corrupt, so appalling? You do not realize what I am saying.

RS: I say that it has been there right from the beginning but, unfortunately, the relationship, the contact with the masses, with the people...

K: I am not talking about the masses. It's you, you. What about you?

RS: It has diminished.

K: Why has it decreased? Why has it diminished? Why has it become something small?

RH: People are not interested.

K: So what does that mean?

RH: They are more interested in commerce.

K: Yes. Or, is it this tremendous self-interest—self-interest in the form of knowledge, in the form of Buddhism, Hinduism? Is it all basically self-interest? Is it that self-interest, which is increasing tremendously in the world, which is the door that shuts the other out? Therefore, it's gone. Do you understand?

Sir, sometime ago three very clever people—they were scientists—came to Brockwood, and we talked. They said that they were trying to find artificial intelligence. If they can find that, then we will all be gone. Our knowledge, the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Gita—everything—will be gone, because the machine will be able to repeat it much better than you and I ever can.

JU: The question which you just posed presents a wonderful opportunity to ask a counter question. And the counter question is: What you say appeals to us, but how are we, in today's society, going to find it, experience it, and share it?

K: You cannot experience it. To experience it there must be an experiencer—an experiencer who has had a thousand experiences, and who adds another to it. It's not an experience; it's not something that you and I experience. That's my whole point. It's there like electricity. I could admire it, I could worship it, but it would be there.

JU: We human beings have only one gift, that is, the ability to experience, and you are snatching that away. After that, what are we to hold on to?

K: I am not snatching anything away, but I see that experience is a very small affair. You experience; then what?

Experience gives you knowledge of how to climb a mountain. We depend on experience, but *that* thing cannot be experienced. You can experience sex, you

can experience something hitting you, you can experience somebody praising you, but you cannot experience water, for it—water—is just there.

RH: Yes, water exists. But I only know it through the experience of it.

K: You only know water because you perceive it. You perceive the quality of it. For example, you can float on it; but all that is part of your knowledge of it.

RH: But if I had no knowledge, I wouldn't have any experience.

K: What you call 'experience' is based on sensory perception. And your sensory perceptions are partial; they are never complete. Now, to observe with all your senses alert—that's not an experience. Sir, I look at that piece of cloth and say, 'It is red', because I have been conditioned to call it red. If you have been conditioned to call it 'purple', you will call it purple. The brain is always conditioned by our experience, by our sensory responses—how to argue, how to deny, and all the rest of it.

If I happened to be a Catholic, my whole attitude towards religion would be Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and all the rest of it. As you are a Hindu or a Buddhist—sorry, I'm not comparing—everything will be from that conditioning. Therefore, when you say, 'Experience', or 'You must learn this', or 'Do that', it's all from a brain which has become small, conditioned.

RS: We understand about conditioning, self-interest, and so on; however, we once again come to that point which we have discussed before, and that is: There is the possibility of moving away but, unfortunately, we just stop there.

K: Why, sir?

RS: Or should I say that the moving away is not absolutely possible?

K: Why don't you remain where you are, and not move away? Do you understand? Remain where you are, and see what happens. That is, sir, you never stay whole; you never abide with 'what is'.

RS: Yes, that is obvious.

K: Wait, sir. Wait, wait. You never stay there. You are always moving, moving. Right? 'I am this, I will be that'—is a movement away from 'what is'.

RS: Either we stay where it is, or we stay out of the movement.

K: What is the movement?

RS: Change, force...

K: Then we have to understand what time is, the movement in time.

RS: Yes.

K: We have to enquire as to what time—the time by which we live daily—is. What is time?—time as past, time as present, time as future. Do you understand, sir? It requires a lot of time to learn Sanskrit. It requires a lot of time to enquire into the earliest doctrines, the various literature, what the ancients—the Buddha, Nagarjuna, and so on—said. To learn a skill requires time. To cover a distance from here to there requires time. Everything we do requires time. So we must enquire: What is time?

RH: Time is the means of achieving.

K: Yes. Success, failure, acquiring a skill, learning a language, writing a letter, covering a distance from here to there, and so on—to us that is time. But, what is time?

N. S. DESHPANDE (NSD): It's a movement of the mind; it is a subtle, incessant movement of the mind.

K: Then what is the brain? What is the mind? Don't invent. Look at it. What is the brain?

NSD: It is very difficult to make out the difference between the brain and the mind.

K: Sir, let's take time. There is time by the clock. To cover a distance, to learn a language, requires time. Also, we have lived on this earth for two-and-a-half-million years. During this period there has been a tremendous evolution, which is time.

NSD: All that you have just mentioned is physical time. But the real problem of time seems to hinge on how it works within the psyche. There is something unresolved here that we want to resolve.

K: Sir, may I humbly suggest that before we talk of the mind, we should enquire into what the brain is?

NSD: The brain is possibly the physical base or biological structure of the mind.

K: The brain is the centre of all our actions; it is the centre of all our sensory responses. The brain, which is inside the skull, is the centre of all thinking. What is the quality of the brain that asks the question regarding the nature of time? How do you receive the question?

JU: We have understood, after discussing with you, that it is only total attention which will bring about a total transformation. That is where the problem begins.

K: Would you mind if I say something? Time is the past, time is now; and the 'now' is controlled, shaped, by the past. And the future is a modification of the present. I am putting it dreadfully simply. So the future is *now*. Therefore, the question is: If all time is contained in the 'now'—all time: past, present and future—then what do we mean by change?

JU: The word 'change' does not have any meaning.

K: No, wait. The 'now' contains all time. If it is a fact—a fact, not a theory, not some kind of speculative conclusion that all time is contained in the 'now', then *this* is the future, *this* is the present. There is no movement towards or fore. There is no movement. Movement implies time, right? So there is no change. Change becomes idiotic. Then I am what I am. I am greedy, and I say, 'Yes, I am'.

JU: There is a wide difference between you and us even though we may be saying the same thing.

K: Oh, no, no. I don't admit anything of the kind.

PUPUL JAYAKAR (PJ): You are saying that all time is now. I am also saying the same thing: All time is now. But my saying it and your saying it are two totally different things.

K: Why?

RS: Because we say it from logic and speculation.

K: That's it. That means time is operating.

JU: How can we remove this difficulty?

K: Panditji, answer the question: How can we break this stream in which we flow?

RH: The stream is broken through logic. There is a big gulf between you and us. I understand what you are saying speculatively. The problem is: How do we remove this gulf? Because we have reached a certain 'meeting', in the sense of an understanding.

K: I will tell you. No, I will *show* you. Please, I am not a guru. Time is now; all time is contained in the 'now', at this second—is this a fact? Really, this is a most extraordinary thing: to see that the future, the past, is now. Do you see that as a fact, and not as an idea of the fact?

NSD: There are two things: perceiving and conceiving. Now I am conceiving, and not perceiving.

K: So what is the point of it?

NSD: No point, but I would like to go on from here—from conception to perception.

K: Conception is not a fact.

NSD: Conception is not a fact. Perception is a fact, but we are all caught up in conception, in time. The simultaneity of conception and time has to be broken. One has to get away from...

K: Who gets away?

NSD: I mean, for perception to operate.

K: The very word ‘operation’ means time.

PJ: Just a minute. May I come in at this point and say one thing? If all time is in the ‘now’, then there will be nothing else.

K: Which means what?

RH: That one stops looking.

K: Now you are already preconceiving.

PJ: I am not preconceiving. If all time is now...

K: If you go into it, you may realize that that may be the most extraordinary thing. That may be the essence of compassion. That may be the essence of an amazing, indefinable intelligence. But you can’t say that all time is now, if it isn’t a reality. The other things don’t matter. I do not know if I am making myself clear.

Sir, if all time is contained in the ‘now’, there will be no movement. What I do now, I will do tomorrow. So tomorrow is now. What am I to do if the future—tomorrow—is now? As I am greedy and envious now, I will be greedy and envious tomorrow. Is there a possibility of ending that greed instantly?

JU: That is very difficult.

K: It’s not difficult at all. If I am greedy and envious today, I see that unless something happens now, I will be greedy and envious tomorrow. It is very important that something happens *now*. So can I change, mutate, *now*?

If there is a radical mutation, there will be a movement that is not of time. Do you understand, sir? Two-and-a-half-million years ago we were barbarous. We are still barbarous. We want power, position; we kill each other; we are envious; we compare, and all that. You have put me this challenge: *All time is now*. I have no escape points; I have no gates through which I can escape from this central fact. I say to myself, 'My God, if I don't change now, tomorrow or a thousand tomorrows will be the same'. So, I ask myself whether it is possible for me to totally mutate *now*, and I find out that it is possible.

NSD: Can you tell us how?

K: Not 'how', sir. The moment you ask 'how', you are already in the process of time. I tell you this, this, this, and you say that you will do this, this, and this in order to get to that. But you cannot get it, because you will be what you are now.

PJ: That means that in the listening to that statement of yours, namely, 'All time is now', there is a quality of acquisitiveness. I see that the listening has to be purified.

K: So, sir, there is no knowledge, there is no meditation, there is no discipline. Everything stops. May I put the question differently? Suppose, for instance, I know that I am going to die. There is a time interval between now and death; that is, I will die on the first of January. (I am not actually going to die on the first of January!) Doctors have told me that I have terminal cancer and that I can't survive the first of January. So I have got a couple of months to die. If all time is now, I am dying. So, I do not have time; I do not *want* time. So, death is now. Can the human brain live with death all the time? Do you understand?

I'm going to die—that is certain. If I say, 'For God's sake wait a minute', knowledge will be dividing me—knowledge that I am going to die at the end of January—and I will get frightened. I'll say, 'Please, please, wait, wait, wait. I have got to leave a will. I have to do this, I have to do that'. But if I realize the fact that all time is now I, then, will realize that death and living are together and that they are never separate. I will, then, live with death. I will be doing it all the time; that is, I will draw up my will. I will be dying now, which means, I will be living. I will be living, and death will be next door; there will be no divorce or separation between living and dying.

Can you do this, sir, or is it impossible? Death says, 'You can't take anything with you'. Your knowledge, your books, your wife, your children, your money, your character, your vanity, all that you have built up for yourself—everything—goes at the end with death. You may say that there is a possibility that you will reincarnate. But I am asking you: Can one live now without the least attachment to anything? Why postpone this—which is non-attachment—until the sick-bed? Be free of attachment now.

PJ: May we sit silently with you?

(K assents)

JU: You started the discussion with the questions: What is this thing, and is there this thing in this country? Is *this* that thing?

K: (Nods; then, after a long silence) You see, it is not difficult. It is so simple. I personally do not want any reputation. I do not have a sense of, 'I know, and you don't know'. By nature I am a very humble man—very shy, respectful, gentle. What do you want? Do you understand, sir? If you can start at that level... Right. That's enough. Let me tell you a joke.

There were three holy men in the Himalayas—of course, it has to be the Himalayas! Ten years pass, and one of them says, 'Oh, what a lovely evening this is!' Another ten years pass, and the other man says, 'I hope it will rain'. Another ten years pass, and the third man says, 'I wish you two would be quiet'.

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J. Krishnamurti's connection with the sacred city of Banaras in the north of India goes way back to 1910 when he visited it for the first time with his mentor Dr. Annie Besant. By 1928, he desired that land be bought along the banks of the river for an educational centre. Rajghat, the site of the ancient city of Kashi, situated at the confluence of the Ganga and Varuna, is that land. In this place, Krishnamurti came every winter till his death in 1986. The setting is extraordinarily beautiful, and his writings included in this book convey the magic and poetry of the landscape.

A Timeless Spring is a book with a difference. It presents a historical record of Krishnamurti's relationship to a particular place and its people over many decades. Included are some of the great public talks given here, in this pilgrim city, on meditation, death, and creation. There are also dialogues with Sanskrit pundits and Buddhist scholars, which evoke the timeless quality of his Teachings. The section on education is very special, for his talks and discussions with students and teachers are simple and direct. Each of these sections carries the flavour of Krishnamurti's presence at Rajghat, linking myth and history with a vibrant present.