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## DAVID BOHM 1917 - 1992

David Bohm -- physicist, philosopher, restless questioner; innovator, teacher, gifted expositor; associate of Robert Oppenheimer, Albert Einstein and J. Krishnamurti -- died in London in October 1992. This issue of the *Bulletin* commemorates Dr. Bohm's long and active engagement with Krishnamurti's teachings and with the practice of dialogue.

A native of Pennsylvania, David Bohm studied physics at the University of California, Berkeley, under Robert Oppenheimer; and early in his career wrote a classical text on Quantum Physics. Shortly thereafter he moved to Princeton University, where discussions with Einstein encouraged him to question the foundations of his subject. Although Quantum Theory provided very precise predictions for a wide range of phenomena, it did so through calculations which, however successful, had not yielded a coherent picture of things. Many physicists resigned themselves to a "modern" acceptance of this state of affairs; but Bohm, like Einstein, persisted throughout his life in questioning and searching for a deeper understanding.

At this critical period in his career, the course of Bohm's life was changed by Senator Joseph McCarthy's inquisition against Robert Oppenheimer and others in the early years of the Cold War. Bohm showed his moral courage by refusing to testify against his friends and colleagues. Instead, he chose exile -- first in Brazil, later in Israel. Finally he settled in England, to teach and pursue his questioning wherever it might lead.

Bohm's strength of character was described by his wife Sarah in simple but moving words: 'When I first met Dave, it struck me that here was tremendous courage in looking at things honestly, whatever the consequences... whether it would go along with what he might be proposing or not. And this really did strike me very forcibly.'

It was physics that drew Bohm to Krishnamurti. Speaking of this, Bohm said: 'I first became interested in him in 1959. I came across a book of his in the public library at Bristol -- *First and Last Freedom* - which interested me because he referred to the observer and the observed, which is of course the thing in quantum theory. He said there is no distinction between the observer and the observed, which quantum theory is always saying, which I really felt was one

of the essential new features of quantum theory. He was referring of course to the psyche, but I felt a great similarity.'

Bohm's association with Krishnamurti flourished across two decades, and was a creative and enriching encounter for both. Bohm found ways of drawing together various strands in Krishnamurti's teachings. During this period, those teachings began to unfold in a more systematic fashion which attracted a wider audience, including experts in various branches of science. Bohm's dialogues with Krishnamurti seemed to hold the promise of an authentic convergence between science and religion.

These encounters with Krishnamurti encouraged Bohm to extend his own questioning beyond pure science, into areas like creativity, relations between art and science, questions of meaning, and the philosophy of life. Eventually he wrote *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*, an essay of enormous range wherein Bohm's scientific insights merged with his philosophical ideas to offer glimpses of the underlying unity he had always sought behind all the apparent multiplicities in the universe.

Bohm was a master of images. Among the most vivid of his expository devices was a rotating jar filled with glycerine. When a drop of ink is introduced and the jar is rotated, the ink spreads and diffuses, only to be completely restored to its original form when the jar is rotated the other way. Just as the original drop of ink underlies its diffused form, Bohm argued that a unified order underlies all multiplicity. He fastened on this image to illustrate what he called the 'implicate' and the 'explicate' orders of things.

A lifelong quest for wholeness drew Bohm into the realm of action and, in 1969, he became a Trustee of the Krishnamurti Foundation of England. He worked closely with Dorothy Simmons and others to establish Brockwood Park, the Krishnamurti School in Hampshire. On weekends Bohm would drive from London to the school and engage students and staff in discussions on the varied issues of our times, patiently applying his formidable intelligence to helping those young people clarify their minds on matters which concerned them.

After Krishnamurti's death in 1986, during the last years of his own life, Bohm was drawn into contact with a growing cross-Atlantic public that saw humankind drifting into calamitous ecological and social realities. Always concerned with facing facts, however disagreeable, he had the courage to ask: 'What is the point of life if you live in an invented world; if there's no

relationship either to the world or to people or to anything? It *isn't* a relationship if you're related to something which isn't there, or which is just there to make yourself comfortable. I think we all have this tendency, and it's the problem of mankind.' This was a motif which permeated his life and his work:

'In the long run it is far more dangerous to adhere to illusion than to face what the actual fact is...I could put it in terms of three words: illusion, delusion, and collusion. These are all based on the word *ludere*, meaning 'to play'. Illusion as 'playing false with perception', delusion as 'playing false with thought', and collusion as people playing false to support their illusions and delusions. This is the thing that has always made mankind's life miserable, and which is threatening our survival. We can't face the implications of what we're doing and it will lead us over the edge into the abyss.'

'The essential point is ... when thought is playing false, it's also playing. Einstein emphasized that -- thought is free creation; thought is play. You have to play with thought and discover to what extent it has any significance, rather than to say you're grasping truth. Now, the attempt of thought to say it's grasping final truth, starts it playing false. That's why people who think they have the final truth are unwilling to change their ideas.'

#### Sources

Robert Temple, "Interview with David Bohm" (*New Scientist* 11 November 1982, 361-364).

John Horgan, "Last Words of a Quantum Heretic" (*New Scientist* 27 February 1993, 38-42).

-- R.H.

## INSIGHT INTO MEASURE, IN THE EAST AND THE WEST

Most people who are at all observant are now aware of an intense and pervasive fragmentation of the entire fabric of human life, both social and individual. Such an awareness tends to give rise to the urge to end this fragmentation so that man may live in wholeness and integrity, as he perhaps once did before the current disruptive phase of human development began. In the search for this sort of release from fragmentation, many people are turning to other cultures and other forms of society, hoping that these may provide an approach superior to the one that is now dominant. Particularly in the West, more and more people are beginning to feel that perhaps in the East (especially in India) such a superior approach still survives, in the sense that religion and philosophy emphasize wholeness, and imply the futility of a way of life based on seeing everything as analyzed into separate parts. It may thus seem natural to suggest that we drop our fragmentary Western approach and adopt instead the Eastern way. This way generally includes not only a view of the self and the world that denies division and fragmentation, but also, techniques of meditation aimed to lead the whole process of mental operation non-verbally to the quiet state of smooth and orderly flow needed to end fragmentation at its very source, i.e., the chaotic, turbulent and generally confused state of mind in which we ordinarily tend to live most of the time.

To understand more deeply what is involved in these questions, it is useful to go into the difference between Eastern and Western notions of measure. For these have been of crucial significance in the development of the different general attitudes to life that have come about over the centuries in these two parts of the world.

Now, in the West, the notion of measure has, from very early times, played a key role in determining the general self-world view, and the modes of living implicit in such a view. Thus, among the ancient Greeks, from whom we derive a large part of our fundamental notions, to keep everything in its right measure was regarded as one of the essentials of a good life (e.g. Greek tragedies generally portrayed man's suffering as a consequence of his going beyond the proper measure of things). In this regard, measure was not

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looked on in its modern sense as being primarily some sort of comparison to an object with an external standard or unit (e.g. so many inches or pounds). Rather, this latter procedure was regarded as a kind of outward display or appearance of a deeper 'inner' measure or proportion, which played an essential role in everything. When something went beyond its proper measure, this meant not merely that it was not conforming to some external standard of what was right, but much more, that it was inwardly out of harmony, so that it was bound to lose its integrity, and break up into fragments. One can obtain some insight into this way of thinking by considering the earlier meanings of certain words. Thus, the Latin 'mederi' meaning 'to cure' (the root of the word 'medicine') is based on a root meaning 'to measure'. This reflects the view that physical health is to be regarded as the outcome of a state of right inward measure, or proportion, in all parts and processes of the body. Similarly, the word 'moderation', which describes one of the prime ancient notions of virtue, is based on the same root; and this shows that such virtue was regarded as the outcome of a right inner measure underlying man's social actions and behaviour. And again, the word 'meditation' which is based on the same root, implies a kind of weighing, pondering, or measuring, of the whole process of thought, which could bring the inner activities of the mind to a state of harmonious measure. So, physically, socially and mentally, awareness of the inner proportion or measure of things was seen as the essential key to a healthy, happy, harmonious life.

In this connection, it is instructive to call to mind ancient Greek notions of measure in music and in the visual arts. These notions emphasized that a grasp of measure was necessary for the understanding of harmony in music (e.g. measure as rhythm, right proportion in intensity of sound, right proportion in tonality, etc.). Likewise, in the visual arts, right measure was seen as essential to overall harmony and beauty (e.g. consider the 'Golden Mean'). All of this indicates how far the notion of measure went beyond that of comparison with an external standard, to point to a universal sort of inner proportion, perceived both through the senses and through the mind.

As time went on, however, this notion of measure gradually began to change, to lose its subtlety, and to become relatively gross and mechanical. Probably this was because man's notions of measure became more and more routinized and habitual, both with regard to its outward display in measurements relative to an external unit and to its inner significance as a universal sort of proportion

relevant to physical health, social order, and mental harmony. Men began to learn such notions of measure mechanically, by conforming to the teachings of their elders or their masters, and not creatively through an inner feeling and understanding of the deeper meaning of the measure or proportion which they were learning. So measure gradually came to be taught as a sort of rule that was to be imposed from outside on the human being, who in turn imposed the corresponding measure physically, socially and mentally, in every context in which he was working. As a result, the prevailing notions of measure were no longer seen as forms of insight. Rather, they appeared to be 'absolute truths about reality as it is', which men seemed always to have known, and whose origin was often explained mythologically as binding injunctions of the Gods, which it would be both dangerous and wicked to question. Thought about measure thus tended to fall mainly into the domain of unconscious habit and, as a result, the forms induced in perception by this thought were now seen as directly observed objective realities, which were essentially independent of how they were thought about.

Even by the time of the ancient Greeks, this process had gone a long way, and as men realized this, they began to question the notion of measure. Thus Protagoras said: 'Man is the measure of all things', thus emphasizing that measure is not a reality external to man, existing independently of him. But many who were in the habit of looking at everything externally also applied this way of looking to what Protagoras said. Thus, they concluded that measure was something arbitrary, and subject to the capricious choice or taste of each individual. In this way, they of course overlooked the fact that measure is a form of insight that has to fit the overall reality in which man lives, as demonstrated by the clarity of perception and harmony of action to which it leads. Such insight can arise properly only when a man works with seriousness and honesty, putting truth and factuality first, rather than his own whims or desires.

The general rigidification and objectification of the notion of measure continued to develop, until in modern times, the very word 'measure' has come to denote mainly a process of comparison of something with an external standard. While the original meaning still survives in some contexts (e.g. art and mathematics) it is generally felt as having only a secondary sort of significance.

Now, in the East, the notion of measure has not played nearly so fundamental a role. Rather, in the prevailing philosophy in the Orient, the immeasurable (i.e. that which cannot be named, described, or understood through any form of reason) is regarded as the primary reality. Thus, in Sanskrit (which has an origin common to the Indo-European language group) there is a word 'matra' meaning 'measure', in the musical sense, which is close to the Greek 'metron'. But then there is another word 'maya' obtained from the same root, which means 'illusion'. This is an extraordinarily significant point. Whereas, to Western society, as it derives from the Greeks, measure, with all that this word implies, is the very essence of reality, or at least, the key to this essence, in the East, measure has come to be regarded as being in some way false and deceitful. Indeed, the entire measurable structure and order of forms and proportions that present themselves to ordinary perception are regarded as a sort of veil, covering the true reality, which cannot be perceived by the senses, and of which nothing can be said or thought.

It is clear that the different ways the two societies have developed fit in with their different attitudes to measure. Thus, in the West, society has mainly emphasized the development of science and technology (dependent on measure) while in the East, the main emphasis has gone to religion and philosophy (which are directed ultimately toward the immeasurable).

If one considers this question carefully, one can see that in a certain sense, the East was right to see the immeasurable as the primary reality. For as has already been indicated, measure is an insight created by man. A reality which is beyond man and prior to him cannot depend on such insight. Indeed, the attempt to suppose that measure exists prior to man and independently of him leads, as has been seen, to the 'objectification' of man's insight, so that it becomes rigidified and unable to change, eventually bringing about falseness and deception in our overall apprehension of the self and the world.

On the other hand, it would clearly be wrong to accept the notion that measure is inherently incapable of being anything else but a false and deceitful veil of illusion, covering the true nature of reality. Rather, one may perhaps say that whatever can be assimilated within the field of measure is real, but of a dependent conditional sort of reality. What it depends on is ultimately the immeasurable totality. But this totality is not separate from the field of measure. Rather, the immeasurable overlaps and includes the

measurable. Or to put it in another way, all that can be measured has its origin, its sustenance, and its ultimate dissolution in the immeasurable and undefinable which is the creative source of everything. Nevertheless, an adequate understanding of the measurable aspect of reality as a whole is evidently necessary for clear perception and right action in every phase of life.

One may speculate that perhaps in very early times, the men who were wise enough to see that the immeasurable is the primary and independent source of all reality were also wise enough to see that measure is insight into a secondary and dependent aspect of this reality, which is capable of helping to bring about order and harmony in our lives. What they may have said is perhaps that when measure is identified with 'the whole of reality as it is' *this* is illusion. But then, when men learned this by conforming to the teachings of tradition, the meaning became largely habitual and mechanical. In the way indicated earlier, the subtlety was lost, and men began to say simply: 'measure is illusion'. Thus, both in the East and in the West, true insight may have been turned into something false and misleading, by the procedure of learning mechanically through conformity to existent teachings, rather than through a creative and original grasp of the insights implicit in such teachings.

It is of course impossible to go back to a state of wholeness that may have been present before the split between the East and West developed (if only because we know little, if anything, about this state). Rather, what is needed is to learn afresh, to observe, and to discover for ourselves the meaning of fragmentation and wholeness. Of course, we have to be cognisant of the teachings of the past, both Western and Eastern. But to imitate these teachings or to try to conform to them would have little value. However, to develop new insight into fragmentation and wholeness requires a creative work, even more difficult than that needed to make fundamental new discoveries in science, or great and original works of art. It might in this context be said that the one who is similar to Einstein in creativity is not the one who imitates Einstein's ideas, nor even the one who applies these ideas in new ways. Rather, it is the one who learns from Einstein, and then goes on to do something original, which is able to assimilate what is valid in Einstein's work, and yet goes beyond this work in qualitatively new ways. So what we have to do with regard to the great wisdom from the whole of the past, both in the East and in the West, is to assimilate it and to go on to new and original insight relevant to our present condition of life.

In doing this, it is important that we be clear on the role of techniques, such as those used in various forms of meditation. In a way, techniques of meditation can be looked on as measures (actions ordered by knowledge and reason) which are taken by man to try to reach the immeasurable, i.e. a state of mind in which he causes to sense a separation between himself and the whole of reality. But clearly, there is a contradiction in such a notion. For the immeasurable is, if anything, just that which cannot be brought within limits determined by man's knowledge and reason.

To be sure, in certain specifiable contexts, technical measures, understood in a right spirit can lead us to do things, from which we can derive insight, if we are observant. But such possibilities are limited. Thus, it would be a contradiction in terms to think of formulating techniques for making fundamental new discoveries in science or creative and original works of art. For the very essence of such action is a certain freedom from dependence on others, who would be needed as guides. How can this freedom be transmitted in an activity in which conformity to someone else's knowledge or pattern of behaviour is the main source of energy? And if techniques cannot teach creativity and originality in art and science, how much less is it possible for them to enable us to 'discover the immeasurable'?

Actually, there are no direct and positive things that man can do to get in touch with the immeasurable. For this must be immensely beyond anything that man can grasp with his mind or accomplish with his hands or his instruments. What man can do is to give his full attention and creative energies to bring clarity and order into the whole of the field of measure. This involves, of course, not only the outward display of measure in terms of external units, but also, inward measure or proportion, as health of the body, moderation in action, and meditation, which gives insight into the operation of thought. This latter is particularly important because fragmentation has its root in the kind of thought that goes beyond its proper limits of harmony, by confusing its own content with a reality that would be independent of thought. In the West, this confusion has arisen, largely in the routine and mechanical application of measure, in such a way that everything is treated as broken up into separate parts, because the measurable limits of each part are seen as independently existent realities. In the East, a correspondingly routine and mechanical approach through acceptance of the authority of other people's ideas and techniques has rather generally led to a fragmentation between the everyday measurable aspects

of reality and some special immeasurable domain that would be totally different (as well as between the methods imposed by the authority and the spontaneously creative responses of the individual who tries to conform to these methods).

To end this general fragmentation requires intelligent insight, not only into the world as a whole, but also, into how the instrument of thought is working. In particular what is needed is not the measurement of thought, to determine whether it has gone beyond its proper limits or not. Rather, there has to be a kind of observation from moment to moment, of how thought as a whole tends continually to carry measurement into contexts in which it is not relevant. This requires a creative act of perception through the senses and through the mind, that contains its own spontaneous discipline, not dependent on the authority of another or on the imposition of a technique for its order or its sustenance. Through meditation involving such perception and such spontaneous discipline, thought will come to work in a proper order, and the whole field of the measurable will then be harmonious, so that it can move in parallel with the immeasurable.

When such harmony prevails, man can then not only have insight into the meaning of fragmentation and wholeness, but what is much more significant, he can realize the truth of this insight in every phase and aspect of his life.

This requires, however, that he give his full creative energies to the enquiry into the whole field of measure, and that he drop his demands (generally implicit and unexpressed) for some sort of guidance in this enquiry. To do this may perhaps be extremely difficult and arduous. But since everything turns on this, it is surely worthy of the serious attention and utmost consideration of each one of us.

## REALITY, ACTUALITY, TRUTH

**J.KRISHNAMURTI (K):** I was thinking about the question of what is truth and what is reality and whether there is any relationship between the two, or whether they are separate. Are they eternally divorced, or are they just projections of thought? And if thought didn't operate, would there be reality? I thought that reality comes from 'res', thing, and that anything that thought operates on, or fabricates, or reflects about, is reality. And thought, thinking in a distorted, conditioned manner is illusion, is self-deception, is distortion. I left it there, because I wanted to let it come rather than my pursuing it.

**DR D.BOHM (DB):** The question of thought and reality and truth has occupied philosophers over the ages. It's a very difficult one. It seems to me that what you say is basically true, but there are a lot of points that need to be ironed out. One of the questions that arises is this: if reality is thought, what thought thinks about, what appears in consciousness, does it go beyond consciousness?

**K:** Are the contents of consciousness reality?

**DB:** That's the question; and can we use thought as equivalent to consciousness in its basic form?

**K:** Yes.

**DB:** I wonder whether, just for the sake of completeness, we should include in thought also feeling, desire, will and reaction. I feel we should, if we are exploring the connection between consciousness, reality and truth.

**K:** Yes.

**DB:** One of the points I'd like to bring up is: there is thought, there is our consciousness, and there is the thing of which we are conscious. And as you have often said, the thought is not the thing.

**K:** Yes.

**DB:** We have to get it clear, because in some sense the thing may have some kind of reality independent of thought; we can't go so far as to deny all that. Or do we go as far as some philosophers, like

Bishop Berkeley, who has said that all is thought? Now I would like to suggest a possibly useful distinction between that reality which is largely created by our own thought, or by the thought of mankind, and that reality which one can regard as existing independently of this thought. For example, would you say Nature is real?

**K:** It is, yes.

**DB:** And it is not just our own thoughts.

**K:** No, obviously not.

**DB:** The tree, the whole earth, the stars.

**K:** Of course, the cosmos. Pain is real.

**DB:** Yes. I was thinking the other day, illusion is real, in the sense that it is really something going on, to a person who is in a state of illusion.

**K:** To him it is real.

**DB:** But to us it is also real because his brain is in a certain state of electrical and chemical movement, and he acts from his illusion in a real way.

**K:** In a real way, in a distorted way.

**DB:** Distorted but real. Now it occurred to me that one could say that even the false is real but not true. This might be important.

**K:** I understand. For instance: is Christ real?

**DB:** He is certainly real in the minds of people who believe in Him, in the sense we have been discussing.

**K:** We want to find out the distinction between truth and reality. We said anything that thought thinks about, whether unreasonably or reasonably, is a reality. It may be distorted or reasoned clearly, it is still a reality. That reality, I say, has nothing to do with truth.

**DB:** Yes, but we have to say besides, that in some way reality involves more than mere thought. There is also the question of actuality. Is the thing actual? Is its existence an actual fact? According to the dictionary, the fact means what is actually done, what actually happens, what is actually perceived.

**K:** Yes, we must understand what we mean by the fact.

**DB:** The fact is the action that is actually taking place. Suppose, for example, that you are walking on a dark road and that you think you

see something. It may be real, it may not be real. One moment you feel that it's real and the next moment that it's not real. But then you suddenly touch it and it resists your movement. From this action it's immediately clear that there is a real thing which you have contacted. But if there is no such contact you say that it's not real, that it was perhaps an illusion, or at least something mistakenly taken as real.

**K:** But, of course, that thing is still a reality that thought thinks about. And reality has nothing to do with truth.

**DB:** But now, let us go further with the discussion of 'the thing'. You see, the root of the English word 'thing' is fundamentally the same as the German 'bedingen', to condition, to set the conditions or determine. And indeed we must agree that a thing is necessarily conditioned.

**K:** It is conditioned. Let's accept that.

**DB:** This is a key point. Any form of reality is conditioned. Thus, an illusion is still a form of reality which is conditioned. For example, the man's blood may have a different constitution because he's not in a balanced state. He is distorting, he may be too excited, and that could be why he is caught in illusion. So every thing is determined by conditions and it also conditions every other thing.

**K:** Yes, quite.

**DB:** All things are inter-related in the way of mutual conditioning which we call influence. In physics that's very clear, the planets all influence each other, the atoms influence each other, and I wanted to suggest that maybe we could regard thought and consciousness as part of this whole chain of influence.

**K:** Quite right.

**DB:** So that every thing can influence consciousness and it in turn can work back and influence the shapes of things, as we make objects. And you could then say that is all reality, that thought is therefore also real

**K:** Thought is real.

**DB:** And there is one part of reality influencing another part of reality.

**K:** Also, one part of illusion influences another part of illusion.

**DB:** Yes, but now we have to be careful because we can say there is that reality which is not made by man, by mankind. But that's still limited. The cosmos, for example, as seen by us is influenced by our own experience and therefore limited.

**K:** Quite.

**DB:** Any thing that we see, we see through our own experience, our own background. So that reality cannot possibly be totally independent of man.

**K:** No.

**DB:** It may be relatively independent. The tree is a reality that is relatively independent but it's our consciousness that abstracts the tree.

**K:** Are you saying that man's reality is the product of influence and conditioning?

**DB:** Yes, mutual interaction and reaction.

**K:** And all his illusions are also his product.

**DB:** Yes, they are all mixed together.

**K:** And what is the relationship of a sane, rational, healthy, whole man, to reality and to truth?

**DB:** Yes, we must consider that, but first may we look at this question of truth. I think the derivation of words is often very useful. The word 'true' in Latin which is 'verus', means 'that which is'. The same as the English 'was' and 'were', or German 'wahr'. Now in English the root meaning of the word 'true' is honest and faithful; you see, we can often say that a line is true, or a machine is true. There was a story I once read about a thread that ran so true; it was using the image of a spinning-wheel with the tread running straight.

**K:** Quite.

**DB:** And now we can say that our thought, or our consciousness, is true to that which is, if it is running straight, if the man is sane and healthy. And otherwise it is not, it is false. So the falseness of consciousness is not just wrong information, but it is actually running crookedly as a reality.

**K:** So you're saying, as long as man is sane, healthy, whole and rational, his thread is always straight.

**DB:** Yes, his consciousness is on a straight thread. Therefore his reality --

**K:** -- is different from the reality of a man whose thread is crooked, who is irrational, who is neurotic.

**DB:** Very different. Perhaps the latter is even insane. You can see with insane people how different it is -- they sometimes cannot even see the same reality at all.

**K:** And the sane, healthy, whole, holy man, what is his relationship to truth?

**DB:** If you accept the meaning of the word, if you say truth is that which is, as well as being true to that which is, then you have to say that he is all this.

**K:** So you would say the man who is sane, whole, *is* truth?

**DB:** He *is* truth, yes.

**K:** Such a man *is* truth. He may think certain things which would be reality, but he *is* truth. He can't think irrationally.

**DB:** Well, I wouldn't say quite that. I'd say that he can make a mistake.

**K:** Of course.

**DB:** But he doesn't persist in it. In other words, there is the man who has made a mistake and acknowledges it, changes it.

**K:** Yes, quite right.

**DB:** And there is also the man who has made a mistake but his mind is not straight and therefore he goes on with it. But we have to come back to the question: does truth go beyond any particular man; does it include other men, and Nature as well?

**K:** It includes all that is.

**DB:** Yes, so the truth is one. But there are many different things in the field of reality. Each thing is conditioned, the whole field of reality is conditioned. But clearly, truth itself cannot be conditioned or dependent on things.

**K:** What then is the relationship to reality of the man who is truth?

**DB:** He sees all the things and, in doing this, he comprehends reality. What the word 'comprehends' means is to hold it all together.

**K:** He doesn't separate reality. He says, 'I comprehend it, I hold it, I see it'.

**DB:** Yes, it's all one field of reality, himself and everything. But it has things in it which are conditioned and he comprehends the conditions.

**K:** And because he comprehends conditioning, he is free of conditioning.

**DB:** It seems clear then that all our knowledge, being based on thought, is actually a part of this one conditioned field of reality.

**K:** Now another question. Suppose I am a scholar, I'm full of such conditioned and conditioning knowledge. How am I to comprehend truth in the sense of holding it all together?

**DB:** I don't think you can comprehend truth.

**K:** Say I have studied all my life, I've devoted all my life to knowledge, which is reality.

**DB:** Yes, and it is also about a bigger reality.

**K:** And suppose you come along and say, 'Truth is somewhere else, it's not that'. I accept you, because you show it to me, and so I say, 'Please help me to move from here to that'.

**DB:** Yes.

**K:** Because once I get that, I comprehend it. If I live here, then my comprehension is always fragmented.

**DB:** Yes.

**K:** Therefore my knowledge tells me, 'This is reality but it is not truth'. And suppose you come along and say, 'No, it is not'. And I ask: please tell me how to move from here to that.

**DB:** Well, we've just said we can't move --

**K:** I'm putting it briefly. What am I to do?

**DB:** I think I have to see that this whole structure of knowledge is inevitably false, because my reality is twisted.

**K:** Would you say the content of my consciousness is knowledge?

**DB:** Yes.

**K:** How am I to empty that consciousness and yet retain knowledge which is not twisted -- otherwise I can't function -- and reach a state, or whatever it is, which will comprehend reality. I don't know if I'm making myself clear.

**DB:** Yes.

**K:** What I'm asking is: my human consciousness *is* its content, which is knowledge; it's a messy conglomeration of irrational knowledge and some which is correct. Can that consciousness comprehend, or bring into itself, truth?

**DB:** No, it can't.

**K:** Therefore, can this consciousness go to that truth? It can't either. Then what?

**DB:** There can be a perception of the falseness in this consciousness. This consciousness is false, in the sense that it does not run true. Because of the confused content it does not run true.

**K:** It's contradictory.

**DB:** It muddles things up.

**K:** Not, 'muddles things up'; it *is* a muddle.

**DB:** It is a muddle, yes, in the way it moves. Now then, one of the main points of the muddle is that when consciousness reflects on itself, the reflection has this character: it's as if there were a mirror and consciousness were looking at itself through a mirror and the mirror is reflecting consciousness as if it were not consciousness but an independent reality.

**K:** Yes.

**DB:** Now therefore, the action which consciousness takes is wrong, because it tries to improve the apparently independent reality, whereas in fact to do this is just a muddle.

I would like to put it this way: the whole of consciousness is somehow an instrument which is connected up to a deeper energy. And as long as consciousness is connected in that way, it maintains its state of wrong action.

**K:** Yes.

**DB:** So on seeing that this consciousness is reflecting itself wrongly as independent of thought, what is needed is somehow to disconnect the energy of consciousness. The whole of

consciousness has to be disconnected, so it would, as it were, lie there without energy.

**K:** You're saying, don't feed it. My consciousness is a muddle, it is confused, contradictory, and all the rest of it. And its very contradiction, its very muddle, gives its own energy.

**DB:** Well, I would say that the energy is not actually coming from consciousness, but that as long as the energy is coming, consciousness keeps the muddle going.

**K:** From where does it come?

**DB:** We'd have to say that perhaps it comes from something deeper.

**K:** If it comes from something deeper, then we enter into the whole field of gods and an outside agency and so on.

**DB:** No, I wouldn't say the energy comes from an outside agency. I would prefer to say it comes from me, in some sense.

**K:** Then is the 'me' this consciousness?

**DB:** Yes.

**K:** So the content is creating its own energy. Would you say that?

**DB:** In some sense it is. But the puzzle is that it seems impossible for this content to create its own energy. That would be saying that the content is able to create its own energy.

**K:** Actually, the content *is* creating its own energy. Look, I'm in contradiction and that very contradiction gives me vitality. I have got opposing desires. When I have opposing desire I have energy, I fight. Therefore that desire is creating the energy -- not God, or something profounder -- it is still desire. This is the trick that so many played. They say there is an outside agency, a deeper energy -- but then one's back in the old field. But I realize the energy of contradiction, the energy of desire, of will, of pursuit, of pleasure, all that which is the content of my consciousness -- which *is* consciousness -- is creating its own energy. Reality is this; reality is creating its own energy. I may say, 'I derive my energy deep down', but it's still reality.

**DB:** Yes, suppose we accept that, but the point is that seeing the truth of this --

**K:** --that's what I want to get at. Is this energy different from the energy of truth?

**DB:** Yes.

**K:** It is different.

**DB:** But let's try to put it like this: reality may have many levels of energy.

**K:** Yes.

**DB:** But a certain part of the energy has gone off the straight line. Let's say the brain feeds energy to all thought processes. Now, if somehow the brain didn't feed energy to the thought process that is confused, then the thing might straighten out.

**K:** That's it. If this energy runs along the straight thread it is a reality without contradiction. It's an energy which is endless because it has no friction. Now is that energy different from the energy of truth?

**DB:** Yes. They are different, and as we once discussed, there must be a deeper common source.

**K:** I'm not sure. You are suggesting that they both spring out of the same root.

**DB:** That's what I suggest. But for the moment there is the energy of truth which can comprehend the reality and --

**K:** -- the other way it cannot.

**DB:** No, it cannot; but there appears to be some connection in the sense that when truth comprehends reality, reality goes straight. So there appears to be connection at least one way.

**K:** That's right, a one-way connection -- truth loves this, this doesn't love truth.

**DB:** But once the connection has been made, then reality runs true and does not waste energy or make confusion.

**K:** You see, that's where meditation comes in. Generally, meditation is from here to there, with practice and all the rest of it. To move from this to that.

**DB:** Move from one reality to another.

**K:** That's right. Meditation is actually seeing what is. But generally meditation is taken as moving from one reality to another.

## **KRISHNAMURTI FOUNDATION INDIA**

The annual Public Gathering of the Krishnamurti Foundation India will be held this year at the Rajghat Education Centre in Varanasi from November 18 to 21, 1993.

The intention of the Gathering is to enable interested persons to come together as friends to share, discuss and investigate fundamental questions of life in the light of Krishnamurti's Teachings.

Boarding and Lodging (in school hostels) for the period of the Gathering will cost Rs 400/- per person.

For further details please contact:

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