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Bulletin

KRISHNAMURTI FOUNDATION INDIA

FROM THE EDITOR

This Bulletin, the second of the Centenary year, explores the facet of Krishnamurti's teachings that relates to traditional thought.

Krishnamurti was unique among modern religious teachers in that he resolutely situated himself outside the context of traditional religious systems. Born in 1895 into an orthodox family of Telugu-speaking Brahmins, he was at the tender age of 14 embraced by the Theosophical Society as World Teacher. He was educated within the ambience of the Society's belief in the unity of all religions until 1927, when he took the first of several steps to distance himself from religious traditions, both the Brahminical background of his birth and the Theosophical one into which he had been inducted. He declared that his childhood visions of Sri Krishna and youthful visions of the Masters were conditioned by his religious upbringing. In 1929, he stepped completely outside the framework created for him by the Theosophical Society, explaining that truth was a pathless land, and that no organization could lead one to it. He thus denied himself the rich heritage and vocabulary of traditional religions.

And yet, despite his frequently stated belief that an authentic experience creates its own form of expression, the dying words of Gautama Buddha echo throughout Krishnamurti's teaching. As recorded in the *Digha Nikaya*, the words spoken to the enlightened one's favourite disciple are as follows: 'So Ananda, you must be a light unto yourself. Take refuge in nothing outside yourselves. Hold firm to the truth as a light and a refuge, and do not look for refuge to anything besides yourselves.'

A light enables one to see. As an instrument of perception, it enables us to see things as they are. In the words of an early *Nyaya* text, a light reveals both itself and its object. A light dispels darkness. A light, like that of the sun, is anonymous—it neither belongs to me nor you. A light illuminates

all sides: 'It casts no shadow across the face of another.' Krishnamurti draws out various facets of the metaphor and uses a range of cognate words like 'clarity' and 'lucidity' to describe the particular state of mind that he sought. In the process, Krishnamurti breathes new life into the Buddha's words.

Our selections also reveal important facets of Krishnamurti's own teaching—from the anti-authoritarian implication of the statement, 'Be a light to yourself', which includes denying the inner authority of conscience, to the final image of freedom as a space unimpeded by the fear and pettiness that human nature is heir to. A long extract from a conversation between Krishnamurti and Professor Huston Smith is a comprehensive rendering of the theme that the light confers neither infallibility, nor omniscience. This dialogue is followed by a shorter piece from a talk at Madras.

As the two images of light and space converge in the final selections, the reader's attention is drawn back to the Schools of Mahayana Buddhism that admit two eternal: *nirvana* and *akasa* (space).

— R. H.

THE LIGHT

THE LIGHT IS ANONYMOUS

Intelligence has no cause. It is a light. Where there is a light there is no your light or my light; the sun is not your sun or my sun.

— *3rd Public Talk, Saanen. July 1982.*

The moment one says 'Be a light unto yourself', all authority is gone, including the authority of the *Gita*, the *gurus*, the *asramas*.

— *Exploration into Insight.*

A man who wants to be a light to himself has to be free of all this. And the light to oneself can only take place when there is no self. Then that light is the eternal, everlasting, immeasurable light.

— *Brockwood Park. August 28, 1979.*

Light operates on that which has a core, which is darkness; that is, darkness exists so long as the self is there; the self is the origin of darkness, and that light dispels the very centre of darkness.

— *6th Conversation with Dr. David Bohm. April 1, 1980.*

THE LIGHT IS FALLIBLE

That intelligence will not accept any authority, be it of the saviour, the master, the guru, or anybody; it has to be and it is a light to itself; it may make a mistake, it may suffer, but in the very process of suffering, of making a mistake, it is learning and therefore it is becoming a light to itself.

— *9th Public Talk, Saanen. July 25, 1968.*

THE LIGHT IS INDEPENDENT OF CIRCUMSTANCE

Can I be a light to myself? Because to be a light to oneself means it is never put out by artificial means, by circumstance, by sorrow, by accident and incident.

— *Brockwood Park. August 28, 1979.*

Through observation you become a light unto yourself.

— *3rd Public Talk, Sydney. November 25, 1970.*

THE LIGHT IS FREEDOM

To study the whole psychological structure of authority within oneself there must be freedom. And when we are studying, looking in that way, we are negating the whole structure; that very negation is the light of the mind that is free from authority.

— *Public Talk, Paris. April 27, 1967.*

Light does not divide the observer from the observed. In this fully awakened state there is no observer and the observed; there is only light, clarity. The contradiction and conflict between the thinker and thought ceases.

— *Krishnamurti's Notebook. September 25, 1961.*

Can the subconscious, the deeper, be completely revealed? Can it be revealed totally, or completely expressed to the bright light of perception?

— *6th Public Talk, Saanen. July 10, 1978.*



A DISCUSSION BETWEEN
J. KRISHNAMURTI AND HUSTON SMITH
AT CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA, NOVEMBER 1968

HUSTON SMITH (HS): Sir, both in your writing and in your speaking, time and again you come back to the wonderful little words 'lucid' and 'lucidity'. My question is whether it is possible, living as we do in this confused and confusing world, torn by conflicting voices without and conflicting passions within, to live with total lucidity. And if so, how?

J. KRISHNAMURTI (K): I wonder, sir, what you mean by that word 'lucid'. I wonder whether you mean 'clarity'.

HS: Yes, that's what first comes to mind.

K: Is this clarity a matter of intellectual perception or is it a perception not merely with a fragment but with the whole, the totality, of one's being?

HS: It certainly has the ring of the latter. Yes, it's the latter.

K: It is not fragmentary; therefore, it is not intellectual or emotional or sentimental. Now, the world is confused; there is such contradiction, such misery; there is starvation. Outwardly there are many rich societies, but inwardly, psychologically, there is such insufficiency. The question is: Is it at all possible for a human being, living in this world, to find within himself a clarity that is constant, that is true—in the sense not contradictory? Is it possible for a human being to find this clarity?

HS: That's my question, yes.

K: I don't see why not. I don't see why it shouldn't be found by anybody who is really quite serious. Most of us are not serious at all. We want to be entertained; we want to be told what to do; we want someone else to tell us how to live, we want someone else to tell us what this clarity is and how to find it. We want someone else to tell us what truth, what God, what righteous behaviour, and so on, are. Now, if thought

could completely discard, deeply negate, all the authority of the so-called psychological, and 'religious' specialists, then one would be totally relying on one's self.

HS: Well, right off I feel that I am contradicting what you're suggesting. My impulse—after you've said that it is possible to achieve this lucidity—is to ask you 'how?' Am I looking for authority?

K: Ah, no, no. You see, sir, what is necessary is the freedom from authority, not the 'how?' The 'how?' implies a method, a system, a way trodden by others; the 'how?' implies someone telling you, 'Do this and you will find it'.

HS: Are you saying that this question — How this lucidity is to be achieved? — is inappropriate?

K: No, not at all sir, but the question how implies that. It implies a method, a system. And the moment you have a method, a system, you become mechanical, you just do what you are told; and that's not clarity. It's like a child being told by it's mother or father what it should do from morning till night. It, therefore, becomes dependent on the mother or the father, and has no clarity. To have clarity, the first, the essential, thing is freedom; freedom from authority.

HS: I feel in a kind of bind, because this freedom is attractive, and I want to go towards it, but I also want to pick your mind and ask you how to proceed. Am I moving away from my freedom if I ask you how to proceed?

K: No sir, it's not a case of wandering away from freedom or any other thing of that kind. I'm pointing out the difficulty, the implication, of asking how. You see, it implies, intrinsically, a mind that says, 'Please tell me what to do'.

HS: And I ask again: 'Is that a wrong question?'

K: Yes, I should think that to ask how is a wrong question. Instead of asking at the very beginning 'What is the method?' if you were to ask, 'What are the things, the obstructions, that prevent clarity?' then we could go into it. You see, sir, there

have been a dozen methods, and they have all failed; they have not produced clarity or enlightenment or a state of peace in man. On the contrary, these methods have divided man. You have your method and somebody else has his method, and these methods are everlastingly in conflict.

HS: Right. Now, are you saying that once you abstract certain principles and formulate them into a method, this becomes too crude to meet the intricacies . . .

K: Yes, the complexities and the living quality of clarity.

HS: So the 'how?' would always be from the immediate, from where one stands.

K: No, sir. I would never put the question 'how?' at all; it should never enter into the mind.

HS: Well, this is a hard teaching. It may be true and I'm reaching for it, and yet I don't feel that it is possible to completely relinquish the question 'how?'.

K: Sir, I think we will be able to understand each other if we could go a little slowly, not into the question or the implications of the 'how?' but rather into what the things that prevent clarity are. That is, through negation come to clarity, and not through the positives method of following a system.

HS: Fine, all right, this is the *via negativa*; the approach through the back door.

K: Yes.

HS: That's good. I can follow that.

K: I think that's the only way.

HS: All right.

K: The positive way of the question 'how?' has led man to divide himself, his loyalties, his pursuits. You have the 'how?' of yours and the 'how?' of somebody else's and the method of this and the method of that; and they are all lost.

HS: Yes.

K: So, if we could put aside that question 'how' for the time being, probably you will never put it up again; I hope you won't.

HS: Well, let's see.

K: Sir, what is important is to find out what the obstructions, the hindrances, the blocks, that prevent the clear perception of human anxiety, fear, sorrow, the ache of loneliness, the utter lack of love, and all that are.

HS: Good, let's explore the virtues of the negative. What are these?

K: Now, first of all I feel there must be freedom; freedom from authority.

HS: Could we stop right there? — on this matter of authority. When you say we should renounce all authority, it seems to me that the goal of total freedom and self-reliance is a valid one, and yet along the way it seems to me that we rely, and should rely, on all kinds of authority in certain spheres. When I go to a new territory and I stop to ask the filling station attendant which way to go, I accept his authority as knowing more about that place than I do.

K: Obviously, sir, the specialist knows a little more than the lay man. The experts—in surgery or in any technological subject—obviously know much more than any other person who is not concerned with that particular technique. But we are considering authority not along any particular line, but the whole problem of authority.

HS: And is the answer to understand that there are areas in which authority is necessary . . .

K: Yes, areas where we should accept authority, and areas where authority is detrimental, destructive.

HS: All right.

K: So there are two areas involved in this question of authority. There is the authority of the expert—let's call him that for

the moment—which is necessary, and there is the authority of the man who, with regard to the psychological, says, 'I know, and you don't', 'This is true, and that is false', 'You must do this, and you must not do that'.

HS: So one should never turn over one's life to anyone else.

K: Yes. Because throughout the world, various religions have said, 'Give your life to us, and we will direct it, we will shape it; we will tell you what to do'. They say, 'Do this, do that. Follow the saviour, follow the church, and you will have peace'. But on the contrary, churches have produced terrible wars.

HS: True.

K: Religions of every kind have brought about the fragmentation of the mind. So the question is not freedom from any particular authority, but the whole conceptual acceptance of authority.

HS: Yes, I think I see that. I see that one should never abdicate one's own life and conscience.

K: No, I am not talking of the conscience. Sir, our conscience is such a petty little affair.

HS: Well, may be I am thinking about conscience in terms of how I should live my life.

K: No, no. Sir, we started out by asking the question: 'Why is it that man, who has lived for two million years and more, is not capable of clear perception and action?'

HS: Yes, that is the question. And your first point is that it's because he doesn't accept the full responsibility for his action.

K: We haven't come to that point yet. We are saying that we must approach this problem negatively, which means that we must find out what the blockages, the obstacles, which prevent clear perception are.

HS: Right.

K: Now, one of the major blocks or hindrances is this total acceptance of authority.

HS: Yes. 'Be ye lamps unto yourselves' is the quotation.

K: That's right, so you must be a light to yourself. And being a light to yourself, you must deny every other light—however great that light be. You must deny every other light, whether it be the light of the Buddha or x, y, z.

HS: Nevertheless you retain the say-so as to where and whose light you might find valid.

K: No sir, no sir.

HS: You do not accept that?

K: Sir, 'My own authority'—What authority have I? 'My' authority is the authority of the society. I'm conditioned to accept authority; when I reject the authority of the outer, I accept the authority of the inner. And my authority—the authority of the inner—is the result of the conditioning in which I've been brought up.

HS: All right, but while assuring, accepting, affirming and maintaining one's own freedom . . .

K: Ah, you can't . . . Sir, how can a prisoner, except ideologically or theoretically, accept that he's free? He is in prison, and that is the fact from which we must move, and not accept a vague, fantastic, ideological freedom which doesn't exist. What exists is that man is bound to this total authority.

HS: All right, and this is the first thing that we must see, and must remove or rise above.

K: Yes, absolutely. Authority must completely go, for a man who is serious, who wants to find out the truth, to see things very clearly. So, one of the major points is the demand of freedom—freedom not only from authority but also from fear, which makes him accept authority.

HS: Right, that seems true: beneath the craving for authority is fear which leads to the looking to authority.

K: That's right. Fear makes man violent—territorially, sexually, and so on.

HS: Yes, all right.

K: So, freedom from authority implies freedom from fear.

HS: All right.

K: And the freedom from fear implies the cessation of every form of violence.

HS: If we stop violence, then does our fear recede?

K: No sir, it is not a question of recession of fear. Let me put it around the other way. Man is violent—linguistically, psychologically; in his daily life he is violent. And this ultimately leads to war.

HS: Yes, there is a lot of war around.

K: Man has accepted war as the way of life, whether it's in the office, or at home, or in the playing field. Everywhere he has accepted war as the way of life—which is the very essence of violence.

HS: Quite right; yes.

K: So, as long as man accepts violence, and lives a life which is violent, he perpetuates fear and, therefore, authority.

HS: So these three are a kind of vicious circle, each playing into the other.

K: Yes. And the churches say, 'Be peaceful. Be kind and love your neighbour'. All that is sheer nonsense; they don't mean it. 'Live peacefully', and so on, are merely verbal assertions that have no meaning at all. The morality of society, which is the morality of the church, is immoral.

HS: As we try to see the things that stand between us and lucidity and freedom, we find authority, fear and violence working together to obstruct us . . . Where do we go from there?

K: It is not a question of going to some place, but understanding the fact that most of us live a life in this ambience, in this cage of authority, fear and violence, and that we can't go beyond it unless we are free from it—not intellectually or theoretically, but actually.

HS: Yes, I see that.

K: Is it possible for a human being to be completely free of fear, not only at the superficial level of one's consciousness but also at the deeper level, at what's called the unconscious.

HS: Is it possible?

K: Otherwise, sir, you are bound to accept authority. Any Tom, Dick and Harry, with a little bit of knowledge, a little bit of cunning explanation, or intellectual formulas—you're bound to fall for him.

K: So the basic question, sir, is whether a human being, so heavily conditioned as he is through propaganda—of the church, of society, and all the rest of it—can really be free from fear.

HS: That's what I am waiting to hear.

K: I say that it is possible, not in abstraction but actually.

HS: All right, and my impulse again is to ask 'how?'

K: Don't, please, don't; refrain, please, refrain. You see, when you ask how, you cease to learn.

HS: All right, let's just forget that I said that.

K: No, no, sir, you can never ever ask how. Because we are learning. We are learning about the nature and the structure of human fear—at the deepest and also at the most superficial level. We are learning about it. And when you are learning, you can't ask suddenly: 'How am I to learn?' There's no how. If you are interested, if the problem is vital, intense, it has to be solved. To live peacefully there is no how—you say instead, 'Let's learn about it'.

HS: All right, all right.

K: Sir, the moment you bring in the question how, you move away from the central fact of learning.

HS: All right, that's fine. Let us continue on the path of learning about this.

K: Sir, what does it mean to learn?

HS: Are you asking me?

K: Yes sir, obviously. What does it mean to learn?

HS: It means to perceive how one should proceed in a given domain.

K: No sir. Let's go slowly. Here is a problem of fear. I want to learn about it. First of all, I mustn't condemn it. I mustn't say 'It's terrible' and run away from it.

HS: It sounds to me like you've been condemning it in one way or another.

K: No, there's no condemnation at all. Sir, I want to learn. And when I want to learn about something, I look.

HS: Well, we were going at this through a negative route . . .

K: Which is what I'm doing.

HS: To see an obstacle, and fear is an obstacle.

K: About which I am going to learn.

HS: All right.

K: And therefore I can't condemn it.

HS: Well, all right, but it's not 'good'; you are not advocating it.

K: Ah no, I am neither advocating nor not advocating . . . Sir, here is a fact of fear, and I want to learn about it. The moment I learn about something, I'm free of it. So learning matters.

HS: Yes.

K: What is implied in learning? First of all, to learn about something there must be the complete cessation of condemnation or justification.

HS: All right, yes, I can see that if we are going to understand something, we must keep our emotions out of it, and just try to dispassionately . . .

K: You are introducing words like 'dispassion'; that's unnecessary. If I want to learn about that camera, I begin to look at it, undo it, go into it. There is no question of passion or dispassion. In the same way, to learn about fear there must be no condemnation, no justification and, therefore, no escape verbally from the fact of fear.

HS: All right.

K: But the tendency is to deny it.

HS: To deny the reality of fear?

K: Yes, to deny the reality of fear, the reality that fear is causing all these things—to deny by saying, 'I must develop courage'. So, please, we are going into this problem of fear, because the question whether the human mind can ever be free of fear is really a very important one.

HS: It certainly is.

K: Whether the mind is capable of looking. Looking—not in abstraction but actually—at fear as it occurs.

HS: Yes, whether it is capable of facing fear. I agree with you. We should do this, but we aren't.

K: No wait. To look at it or to face it there should be no condemnation, no justification.

HS: All right, we should simply be objective . . .

K: Aware of fear.

HS: Acknowledging . . .

K: No, not acknowledging. Sir, there is the camera there. I don't acknowledge it. It is there.

HS: All right, I don't want to distract our line of thought with these words.

K: That's why, please, one has to be awfully careful of words, because the word is not the thing; and I don't want to move away from this. So, to learn about fear there must be no condemnation or justification.

HS: All right.

K: That's a fact. Then my mind, the mind, can look at fear. What is fear? There are so many psychological fears: fear of darkness, fear of the wife, fear of the husband, fear of war, fear of a storm. And you cannot possibly have the time to analyse all the fears. That would take a whole lifetime and then, you would have not even understood a thing.

HS: Right. So it's the phenomenon of fear itself, rather than any specific fear.

K: Yes, not any particular fear.

HS: Right. Now, what should we learn . . .

K: Wait, I'm going to show you, sir. Go slow. To learn about something you must be in complete contact with it. Now I want to learn about fear. Right? Therefore I must look at it, I must face it. And to face something implies a mind that is not seeking solutions. So, in looking at fear, the mind does not want to solve the problem of fear. To look at fear is not to solve the problem of fear.

HS: I am a little confused.

K: Wait sir; look, look, this is very important to understand. You see sir, because I want to solve the problem of fear, I am more concerned with the solution of fear than facing fear. And in saying 'I must solve it' I am beyond it already; I am not looking.

HS: You say that if we are trying to solve the problem of fear then we are not truly facing it—is that right?

K: Quite right, sir. You see, to face fear the mind must give its complete attention to fear. By saying, 'Well I want to solve it, and also go beyond it', you are not giving complete attention to it.

HS: I can see that.

K: There are several problems involved in giving complete attention to the learning about fear. I must be brief because our time is limited. We generally consider fear as something outside of us.

HS: True.

K: So there is this question of the observer and the observed. The observer says 'I am afraid' and he puts fear as something away from him.

HS: I'm not sure that that's true. When I feel afraid I am afraid. I feel it very much in here.

K: Yes, in here; but wait. You see, when you observe it, it is different.

HS: When I observe fear then I tend to put it outside.

K: Sir, at the moment of fear, there is neither the observer nor the observed.

HS: True. That is very true; yes.

K: That's all I'm saying. At the crisis, at the moment of actual fear there is no observer.

HS: It fills the horizon.

K: Wait, wait. Now, the moment you begin to look at it, face it, there is this division.

HS: Between the fearful self and the . . .

K: Non-fearful self.

HS: The bear that is going to eat me out there.

K: Yes. So in trying to learn about fear there is this division between the observer and the observed. Now, is it possible to look at fear without the observer? This is really quite an intricate, complex, question, that one has to go into very deeply. As long as there is the observer, who is going to learn about the thing, there is division.

HS: That's true, we are not in full contact with . . .

K: Therefore, in that division is the conflict of trying to get rid of fear, justify it. Is it possible to look at fear without the observer? —so that one is completely in contact with it all the time.

HS: Well, then you are experiencing fear . . .

K: I don't like to use that word 'experience' because experience implies going through something, finishing with it.

HS: All right, I don't know what other word to use. It seems better than 'looking at', because 'looking at' does seem to imply a distance between the observer and the observed.

K: Yes. Therefore we are using the words 'observing', 'being aware without choice'. You see, 'choice' implies the observer; it implies 'I don't like this, I like that'. When the observer is absent there is choiceless awareness of fear.

HS: All right.

K: Right. Then what takes place? The observer creates the linguistic difference between himself and the thing observed. Language comes in, and the word prevents complete contact with fear.

HS: Yes, words can be a screen.

K: Yes, that's what we are saying.

HS: Right.

K: So the word mustn't interfere.

HS: True, we have to get beyond all that.

K: Yes, beyond all that. But is it possible to go beyond words? Theoretically we say 'Yes', but we are slaves to the word.

HS: That's true, far too much so.

K: Realizing that the word is never the thing, the mind has to become aware of its own slavery to words.

HS: Right.

K: So, in order to look, the mind must be free of the word.

HS: Right.

K: That's all implied. Sir, look at the relationship between two people—husband and wife; it is the relationship between images. You have your image about her, and she has her image about you. The relationship is between these two images. Now, real relationship, the human relationship, is when the images don't exist. In the same way, the relationship between the observer and the observed ceases when the word is not.

HS: Yes, that makes sense.

K: So he is directly in contact with fear.

HS: Yes. We pass through it.

K: Now, there is fear at the conscious level; this one can understand fairly quickly. But there are also the deeper layers of fear, fear at the so-called hidden parts of the mind. One must be aware of all that; aware without analysis, for analysis takes time.

HS: Right. Surely it is possible.

K: You say, 'Surely it's possible'. Is it? There is this whole reservoir of fear. There is the whole content of the unconscious, and the content is the unconscious. Right? Now, to be aware of all that—not through dreams, for again that takes too long.

HS: Now you are talking about whether we can be explicitly aware of the full reach of the mind.

K: Yes, the full content, the full reach, of the mind which is both the conscious as well as the deeper layers; the totality of consciousness.

HS: Yes. And whether we can be explicitly aware of all of it.

K: Yes.

HS: I'm not sure.

K: I say that it is possible. It is only possible when you are aware during the day of the words you use, the gestures, the way you talk, the way you walk, what your thoughts are—completely and totally aware of all that.

HS: Do you think all of that can be before, in front of you, and that you can be totally aware of it all?

K: Yes, sir. There is total awareness, when there is absolutely no condemnation, no justification, when you are directly in contact with it.

HS: It seems to me that the mind is like an iceberg, with regions below the surface.

K: Sir, an iceberg is nine-tenths below and one-tenth above. The point is to see the whole of it.

HS: To be explicitly aware . . .

K: Yes, during the day to be aware of your thoughts, of your feelings, of your motives. Sir, to be so aware demands a mind that is highly sensitive.

HS: Well we can certainly be aware of much, much, more than we usually are, but when you say that we can be aware, totally, of all the psychological factors inside . . .

K: Yes, sir, I'm sure. You are denying it. You are saying 'It's not possible'. And when you say 'It's not possible', then it's not possible.

HS: No, I'd like to believe this.

K: Ah, no, no; it's not a question of belief. I don't have to believe in what I see. It's only when I don't see that I believe in God, this or that.

HS: Well, for me it's a matter of belief, may be not for you.

K: No, sir, belief is most destructive part of life. Why should I believe that the sun rises? I see that the sun rises. Sir, when I do not know what love is, then I believe in love.

HS: When I listen to you speak, it seems to me like a half truth which is stated as a full truth, and I wonder whether that's for the sake of emphasis or whether it really is.

K: It is. To me it really is.

HS: We have been speaking of the elements, the things, that block us, from a life of lucidity and freedom: authority, violence, fear. Our time is short and I wouldn't like to spend all the time on these obstacles. Is there anything affirmative we can say about this condition?

K: Sir, anything affirmative indicates authority. It is only the authoritarian mind that says, 'Let's be affirmative'—that is in opposition to negation. The negation we are talking about has no opposite.

HS: Well now, when I ask you for an affirmative statement it doesn't seem to me that I'm turning over a decision to you as an authority. I just want to hear if you have something interesting to say, which I will then stand judgement upon . . .

K: With regard to what, sir?

HS: To whether it speaks to my condition.

K: You said something about . . .

HS: Yes, about the state of life it seems to me we are groping for in our words to describe.

K: Are you trying to say, sir, that life is only in the present?

HS: In one sense, I think that's true. Is that what you are?

K: No, I'm asking you. Is this what you're asking? Is life to be divided into the past, present and future, which means then it is fragmentary and not total?

HS: Well, again, as so often, it seems to me that the answer is 'both-and'; in one sense it is a unity and it is present and the present is all we have, and in another sense it is not, for man is a time-binding animal as they say . . .

K: Yes, he is time-binding.

HS: A time-binding animal who looks before and after.

K: Yes, sir. So, man is the result of time.

HS: Yes.

K: Not only of chronological time but also of psychological time.

HS: Yes.

K: Man is result of time: the past, the present and the future. He lives mostly in the past.

HS: Yes, mostly.

K: He is the past.

HS: All right, again it's half true.

K: No, no, no; I'll show it to you. He is the past, because he lives in memory.

HS: Not totally.

K: No, wait sir; follow it step by step. He lives in the past; therefore he thinks, examines and looks from the background of the past.

HS: Yes, which is both good and . . .

K: No, no, we are not speaking in terms of good and bad.

HS: All right.

K: There is no good past and bad past.

HS: All right.

K: We are concerned with the past. Don't give it a name, don't call it 'good' or 'bad'; for then we're lost. He lives in the past, examines everything from the past, and projects the future from the past.

HS: Yes.

K: So, he lives in the past—he is the past—and when he thinks of the future or the present he thinks in terms of the past.

HS: All right but, you see, it seems to me that though most of the time that is true, there are new perceptions, there are breakthroughs, there are new experiences that break through . . .

K: Wait, sir. New experiences break through only when there is the absence of the past.

HS: Well, it seems to me like it's a merging of things that we perforce bring with us from the past, but bring to play upon the newness of the present. And that it is a fusion of those two.

K: Look, sir; look. If I want to understand something new I must look at it with clear eyes. Right?

HS: Yes.

K: I can't bring the past with all the recognition process, with all the memories and then translate what I see as new. Surely, sir, the man who invented the jet must have forgotten or been completely familiar with the propeller . . .

HS: Right, right.

K: And then there was an absence of knowledge in which he discovered the new.

HS: That's fine, but . . .

K: No, no, it is not a question of 'That's fine'; sir, that is the only way to operate in life.

HS: Yes.

K: That is, there must be complete awareness of the past, an absence of the past, to see or to come upon the new.

HS: All right.

K: (Laughs) You are conceding reluctantly.

HS: I'm conceding reluctantly, because I think I see what you're saying and I think I agree with the point that you are making, but it is also true that one operates in terms of the symbols that one has . . .

K: Of the past . . .

HS: It is not as though we begin *de novo* or with a *tabula rasa*.

K: But we have to begin *de novo* because life demands it. We have lived in this way, accepting war, hatred, brutality, competition, anxiety, guilt, and all that. And I am saying: 'To bring about a different quality, a different way of living, the past must disappear.'

HS: We must be open to the new.

K: Yes; therefore the past must have no meaning.

HS: (Laughs) Ah, that I can't go along with.

K: Yes, I know; that is what the whole world is objecting to. The established order says 'I can't let go'. The young people, all throughout the world, say 'Let's revolt against the old, for what has it given us, except examinations, a job, repetition of the old pattern, wars, and so on?' But, you see, they don't understand the whole implication, and the complexities of it.

HS: Well, you're pointing out, it seems to me, the importance of not being slaves to the past.

K: The past being tradition, the pattern of morality, which is social morality, which is not moral.

HS: If it were to be totally rescinded, then we would start right now.

K: Oh, no, no. To break through the past, sir, demands great deal of intelligence, a great deal of sensitivity to the past. You can't just break away from it.

HS: OK, I'm content; let's go on.

K: (Laughs) So, the problem really, sir, is: Can we live a different way?

HS: Hear, hear.

K: A different way in which there are no wars, no hatreds, in which man loves man without division, without saying, 'You are a Christian; you are Catholic; you are a Protestant; and so on'. That's all so immature. There's no meaning in it. It's an intellectual, sophisticated division—that's not a religious mind at all. A religious mind is a mind that has no hatred, that lives completely without fear, without anxiety; it lives without a particle of antagonism; therefore that mind loves. It is a different dimension of living altogether. And nobody wants that.

HS: And in another sense, everybody wants that.

K: But they won't go after it.

HS: They won't go after it?

K: No, of course not; they are distracted by so many other things. They are so heavily conditioned by their past; they hold on to it.

HS: Well I think there are some who will go after it.

K: Yes, there are very few.

HS: The numbers do not matter.

K: Sir, wait; the minority is always the most important thing.

HS: Krishnamurti, as I listen to you, and try to listen through the words to what you're saying, it seems to me that what I hear is: First, that I should work out—no, each of us should work out his own salvation, not leaning on authorities outside. Second, not to allow words to form a film between us and actual experience; not to mistake the menu for the meal. And third, not to let the past swallow up the present, take possession through responding to it through conditionings from the past but rather to be always open to the new, the novel, the fresh. And finally, it seems to me—you're saying something like: the key to doing this is a radical reversal in our point of view. It is as though we were prisoners straining at the bars to get to the light, and that in looking for the glimpse of light we see out there and wondering how we could get out towards it, we fail to see that actually the door of the cell is open behind us; if only we turn around, we could walk out into freedom. This is what it sounds to me like you're saying. Is this right?

K: A little bit, sir; a little bit.



LIGHT AND LOVE

A mind that is groping after more experience, more excitement, more sensation—such a mind is not silent; therefore it experiences only within the borders of its own conditioning and within its own knowledge.

Silence is not only of thought but also of the brain. I will not go into all that; there is no time to go into all that. The brain, which is the nerves, the cells, everything, is quiet, but terribly awake, attentive—it must be. Then because of this silence, there is space; and because there is space, there is love. You cannot come to it by practice, by saying, 'I will first attempt to be aware, then choicelessly aware, then attentive, then silent'. Minds are so petty! You want it all on a blueprint, and all that you have to do is just to follow. It does not work like that. Either you see the whole thing, the whole beauty of the sunset, of the tree, and the whole beauty of this meditation, completely and at once, and therefore flow with it, or you do not see at all.

Then you will see that love does alter, immediately, every action of life. That is the only catalyst, the only thing—nothing else—that will bring about a total mutation of the mind; and we need such a mutation, because man has lived so long in his misery, with the everyday torture of existence, the uncertainty, the confusion, the conflict, and the supposed meaninglessness of life. But there is an extraordinary meaning to living. Living—going to an office, talking to your wife, doing everything that you do—has tremendous meaning, if you know how to look at it, how to come upon it. And to come upon it, to know it, to see the beauty of it—that can only take place when there is silence, when there is space and love. And that is truth, and that is the only thing that matters in life. Then all the heavens and all the hells are open. Then you do not have to seek God. Then you do not have to go to any temple or any church; you do not have to be a slave of any priest or of any book or of any authority. Then there is only light, and that light is love and silence.

— 6th Public Talk, Madras. January 3, 1965.

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