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Bulletin

KRISHNAMURTI FOUNDATION INDIA

FROM THE EDITOR

The third issue of the Centenary Bulletin is devoted to the educational implications of Krishnamurti's vision of the good life. The first selection, a 1979 discussion held at Rishi Valley with teachers and parents of the Krishnamurti Schools, describes his manner of communicating this vision indirectly, by prodding his interlocutors into exposing their often unarticulated assumptions. In this way, through the articulation of and setting aside of the audience's own partial and unexamined values, Krishnamurti enlarges the horizons of the inquiry into what is valuable and relevant to living intelligently. The letter of invitation sent to parents on the occasion sets out the context: fear and confusion are at the root of the malaise in society and that freedom from fear and confusion are necessary conditions for the awakening of intelligence. This inclusive sense of intelligence forms the basis of Krishnamurti's educational ideas.

If the first part of this Bulletin is indirect and exploratory, the second is a specific translation of Krishnamurti's vision into the Rishi Valley context; an Indian school situated in a degraded drought-prone landscape, surrounded by a marginalized local population.

Krishnamurti primarily focuses attention on what is right to be rather than what is right to do, on the need to transform human consciousness rather than on any practice. And yet, for him the being and the doing are not substantively separated; doing is both creative and interactive. Action does not consist merely of living out the remainder of an enlightened life. The last selection is thus meant to lay to rest an interpretation like that of Arthur Nethercot's:

[Krishnamurti's] whole public life is now a contradiction to his philosophy. With his views he should have become an Indian 'holy man', or recluse, and have retired into some remote desert or mountain, where he could renounce society, history, and other men's thoughts, and live in lone contemplation with his own unconditioned mind. (Arthur H. Nethercot. *The Last Four Lives Of Annie Besant*. London: Rupert Hart Davis, 1963. p. 451.)

—R. H.

A DISCUSSION BETWEEN J. KRISHNAMURTI AND THE
STAFF AND PARENTS OF THE KRISHNAMURTI
SCHOOLS

G. NARAYAN (GN): I think we should begin by reading the letter which, I hope, most—if not all—of you have received.

Considering what is happening socially, morally, economically, and religiously, not just in this country but in the whole world, we—as a group of educators—feel, very strongly, that a new generation must come into being. We who are responsible for the schools under the Krishnamurti Foundation, feel that it is urgent that you, the parents, and we, the 'teachers', co-operate in bringing this about. To bring about a 'new' generation, it is essential that our children be freed from all pressures of fear, insecurity, and their resultant confusion, because fear, insecurity and confusion prevent integrity and the awakening of intelligence. And without intelligence and goodness, there can be no right values. To free our children from fear, insecurity and confusion, entails that we actually have a new way of educating our children. If you, as parents, are deeply concerned with this, we would like you to come and meet us to discuss this further.

J. KRISHNAMURTI (K): I suppose you are all parents. Right? What do you want your children—both boys and girls—to be? What would you like them to be?

PARTICIPANT (P): A good citizen.

K: What do you mean by a good citizen? Do you mean a 'respectable' citizen—one who has a job as an engineer or a bio-chemist, and who is married and just carries on? Would you call such a person a good citizen? Please, let us talk it over.

P: When I think about it, I feel that besides being happy and contented, they should also, to some extent, reform the country.

K: Sir, let's go slowly. What kind of human beings do you want your children to be? Just 'careerists' with all the pressures of a career: competition, pressure, constant uncertainty, and all the rest of it? Do you want that?

P: Well, when we put our children in this school we understood, reasonably well, that it was not purely to get our children ready for a career. The 'end', if I may call it that, or purpose of studying in this school is much more than just getting a career. That is why I said that the children should be able to contribute something to the development of this country as a whole. That is, in addition to being 'good' human beings in themselves.

K: Ladies, what do you say? I mean, you are the mothers.

P: We would like them to be independent.

K: I know, I know. But, please, let us look at this more closely, more directly. Do you understand what I am saying? You see, what is happening now is that they are all oriented towards examinations, towards getting a job, getting married, and settling down. Right? Isn't that so? What do you say, madam?

P: I want him to be, besides being happy, in his own way, of some service to the country.

K: What do you mean 'service to the country'? Support the politicians?

P: (Audience laughs) No, no, not that.

K: Do some social work?

P: No, not that, but through the vocation he chooses, he will help.

K: You see, each one of us wants a different thing for our children. You want one thing and that gentleman wants another, and so on, and so on. Isn't that so?

P: No. Whatever career he chooses or whatever he wants to do in his life, depends entirely on him—on his tastes, and so on.

K: Sirs and mesdames, it depends on his intelligence. It depends on whether he is afraid, on whether he can stand alone. It depends on whether he has got some kind of integrity. Right? Now, is this what you want? As a mother, as a father, is this what you want? Do you want that your children grow up without fear? Please don't agree so quickly. (Audience laughs) See what is implied. Now he is afraid of examinations—the pressure of it all.

P: No.

K: You don't agree?

P: No, not in this school, anyway. (Audience laughs)

K: Oh yes, sir, in this school too they are frightened. They are all frightened of examinations. And some of them have been beaten up at home. Right? No? You are all godly mothers and fathers. (Audience laughs) So, the children come from homes where they are being told to do this and not to do that. They are told that they must be like their grandfather or their brother or somebody else. So, they are, in their own home, under great pressure. Right, sir? Do you see this? Why do you hesitate about this?

P: Generally speaking, I think that that's the position.

K: That is so. Now you send them to this school, and they come with all that in their mind—fear, pressure, and so on. Now, we are saying that if there is any kind of fear—of parents, of teachers, of examinations—that fear brings about insecurity and a lack of intelligence. Would you agree to this? Right, madam? You are doubtful?

P: Can one say a lack of initiative?

K: Yes, yes—a lack of initiative. They become like machines. Right, sir? Now, we are asking whether we can educate the children with the consent, with the co-operation, of their parents, in a way that will help them not to be afraid—not to be afraid of anything. Do you understand? For over nearly a month we have been discussing here whether it is possible, because *no school has tried this*.

We are saying that it is very important to bring about a new generation of people, because in this country, as well as in Europe and America, there is a great deal of disorder; there is a great deal—a great deal—of corruption. Especially in this country, from top to bottom, there is corruption. And we are saying that if we educate our children in the ordinary way, they will become like the rest of them—corrupt, uncertain, confused, unhappy, frightened, insecure, and so on. So, we are saying that the first thing is to help them not to be afraid. Help them not to be afraid of their

parents, not to be afraid of what might happen in the future. We are going to do it; not just talk about it. To help them to learn, not just a particular subject like mathematics, history, geography but *to learn*. You see, now they go through the whole gamut of subjects, but they are not learning; they are memorizing. Like a machine they memorize, and at the end of ten years or so they try to pass examinations, and are frightened if they don't—because if they don't pass examinations they can't get a job, and there are about ten thousand people trying for a particular job. Do you understand all this? So we are saying, we want to help them to learn. To learn, and not to memorize—you understand?

I come and go. Now I am going away. So, the first thing is that it is up to a group of teachers here in Rishi Valley, in Bangalore, in Madras, in Rajghat and also in Bombay—in all these five schools—to say, 'We are going to do this. We are going to help them study, to learn, first about good manners. We are going to help them to have good taste, and to appreciate the beauty of life—to watch the birds, the trees, and so on—so that they are alive to the world'. And we are saying that this group of teachers, in all these different places, will watch over them. Watch, and not bully them, not scold them, not get angry with them. Of course, the children will learn subjects, but that will not be the primary thing. The primary thing is to cultivate their minds. This will be the position of the children as they grow—between the ages of seven till they leave the school... I wonder if you understand all this.

P: Yes.

K: I have talked to students in various universities, and I see that when they become specialized they stop thinking. They are merely like machines; they just go on. You know all the ugly business—they have sex, children, but are filled with uncertainty, and have miserable quarrels with their husbands or wives.

Now, we are saying that we are going to help them to study to be intelligent—you understand?—and not just to become machines. Our chief concern, therefore, when they are here with us from the age of six or seven, whatever it is, till they leave, is to see that psychologically, inwardly, they are not afraid. We have to see

that they are attentive, that they have consideration for others, that they have affection and care for people, and are polite. At present they are not—you know that. So that's the first thing we are going to do. And also, at the same time, we are helping them to study—to study not just with the idea of passing exams, but to study the very art of it all, so that when they are nineteen, if they want to pass exams, they can, and if they don't, they don't, but they will have learnt the art of learning. Now, is this what you want as parents? Is this what you want for your children, not just for the girls, (laughs gently) because in India—you know better than I do—girls are just ...

P: You say that you are going to 'help them to study to be intelligent'. How does that intelligence come into being?

K: Sir, what do you mean by the word 'intelligence'?

P: That's what I am asking.

K: I am going to tell you, but what do you mean by it? What do you all mean by the word 'intelligence'?

P: Better grasping power? Better understanding?

K: Better understanding of what?

P: Whatever you want us to understand.

K: (Laughs) No, sir.

P: I wonder whether you can teach all this? Or do children and even adults observe things themselves and, so, learn? I feel that it may not be possible to teach 'intelligence', that it is not something that can be imparted or moved from one person to another. At least, I feel, that it's not easy to teach intelligence and freedom from fear.

K: Why not? Why not, sir?

P: If I am a good man, I am a good man; if I am a bad man, I am a bad man. I mean, there is nothing that ... (Audience laughs)

K: (Denies strongly) No, no, that cannot be accepted of human beings, sir. If a student has bad manners, you teach, you help, the

student not to behave in such a way. You help him, first of all, not to be frightened; you help him not to tell a lie. Surely that's possible. Or do you think that the students are like that, you know, lying, and so on, and, so, you leave them alone? You see, sir, that is why I asked, right at the beginning, 'What do you want your children to be?' Perhaps you haven't thought about it.

P: Sir, what about the consequences of allowing them to be free and independent?

K: Sir, freedom means not just doing what you like. Freedom means responsibility. Right?

P: That the children must understand.

P: Yes. When the children are given so much freedom, they must also be made to understand their responsibility.

K: Of course. Sir, freedom means responsibility; without responsibility you are not free. Our question is: Can we help them to have freedom and not to misuse that freedom—which is to become rude, insulting, rough, and to say, 'I am independent, I am going to do what I like'? So our task is to help them to understand what freedom is. Freedom is from fear, right? So we will ask them what they are afraid of. K has gone into this, sir, and will go into it with the students. I will ask them: What are you afraid of? Because they have come, please sir, I am not insulting any of you, from homes where they are frightened. Right?

P: To some extent there may be fear.

K: 'To some extent' ... That's good enough. They have been beaten ...

P: (General disagreement)

GN: Yes, it is so. It may not be so with you all, but some of our parents, in spite of all the things we do, do beat their children, and sometimes put pressure on them—pressure which the children don't even understand.

K: Please bear in mind that the children come here with all this on their minds, and we have to help them to free themselves from

the past. Children come to this school with their minds conditioned. Right? They come here with a conditioned mind, and when we tell them that we are teaching them freedom then, quite naturally, they do what they want. So we have to take all that into account.

The thing is to help the children become intelligent. Now, a man or a woman who is frightened is not intelligent. We say here, 'Don't be frightened', and we help them not to be frightened, and so on. And they go home ... (Laughs gently). So you as parents will have to co-operate with us and say that you will help us. That is the purpose of this meeting.

P: What do you do at the end of the year if they don't learn anything?

K: Sir, what's wrong with it if at the end of the year they learn nothing? What's wrong with it? 'What do we do at the end of the year', the gentleman asks, 'if the children have learned nothing?' Sir, when you say that they have learned 'nothing', what do you mean by that? You mean they have learned nothing about books.

P: Yes, exactly.

K: But they might have learned how to behave. They might have learned how to be kind, generous. They might have learned not to hurt people—which is far more important than a beastly book. You see, sir, that is why parents need to be educated too. Sorry. Do you see our difficulty?

We are going to, with the children here, do this, that is, help them to learn. And we say, 'Please, will you co-operate with us?' For example, here we don't eat meat, because we have thought it out. Nutritionists, scientists, have worked it out. They say that eating meat is not necessary. (In fact, right now at Rishi Valley, we have somebody who is helping us draw up the right diet, and so on.) Now, the children go home and, if you eat meat, you encourage them to eat meat. Right? So what is their life? Here we teach the children not to eat meat. We say, 'Don't hurt animals; be kind to animals; look after them'. Then they go home and there they eat meat. You see what you are doing to them? You are confusing them. Right? You are creating trouble for the

child. The child might say, 'My God, in school I am taught not to hurt, not to kill, and so on. When I go home it's quite the opposite'. So, sirs and mesdames, will you, please, co-operate?

P: Do you mean, sir, that only hurting the animal world is 'hurting'? You see, even plants have life. So when we eat a vegetable, we are hurting the plant world.

K: That's a very good argument. But you see, sir, we kill the least thing possible. Right, sir?

P: I am not convinced. You are distinguishing life: it is not all right to kill animals, but it is all right to kill plants. You don't mind killing plants because your mind is used, conditioned, to that.

K: And, sir, you are stuck to meat; you want meat.

P: What's wrong with that?

K: That means you are killing animals, right? You may not, personally, do it, the poor butcher does it; but you are encouraging killing. You encourage killing animals and gradually you encourage the killing of human beings. But if that's what you want, it's all right.

P: Have all vegetarians been non-killers?

K: No. Hitler was a vegetarian. Mussolini was a vegetarian.

P: So, what does it prove?

K: Sir, it doesn't prove anything... We are just saying that in this school we are vegetarians. Please don't send your children here if you want your children to be non-vegetarians. That is all. You see, here they insist: Do not kill animals. And when the child goes home he is encouraged to eat meat—which is killing. So, please, look at what happens to the child. On one side there is encouragement not to kill, and on the other, encouragement to kill. Right? What happens to the child?

P: Are there any other reasons against non-vegetarian food?

K: Sir, scientists, doctors, have found out that it is much healthier to be a vegetarian, and not eat meat. Economists are pointing out

that a cow, for example, needs more than a couple of acres of land for its sustenance—to grow fodder, and so on. They say that that is a waste of land. That land which is used for the cow can be used to grow quite a bit of food—wheat and other cereals—for human beings, especially as human population is increasing.

P: Sir, excuse me; I have a problem. Is it 'killing' that you object to or is it 'meat-eating' that you object to? Because if it is 'killing', then all of us kill; we just can't help it. Taking a life—I don't feel easy about it; I don't think I would like to kill any thing, but when a mosquito . . .

K: I know all this argument. Please go on.

KABIR JAYATHIRTHA (KJ): Let me put it this way: I am a human being living in this world. I am a part of the world and, so, I live in harmony with the rest. This harmony may involve a bit of violence and a bit of non-violence. I live with the least bit of violence.

K: No sir; no sir. I am just pointing out something. You all seem to miss it altogether . . . Look at your child—son or daughter—who comes here, and to whom we say, 'We are not going to kill animals; we are vegetarians'. When your child goes back home there he or she eats meat. My point is: What happens to the mind of a child who lives in contradiction? Do you understand?

P: We accept the contradiction as it is.

K: All right. You accept the contradiction. Just see what happens to the mind that lives in contradiction.

P: Is it possible to live in this world without contradiction?

K: Sir, to live in contradiction is a lack of intelligence. (Laughs) And each one here, each human being, lives in conflict, in contradiction, doesn't he?

P: Yes, generally we all have conflict in our minds. Unless one detaches oneself completely from this world, it is impossible, I feel, to be without conflict, without contradiction.

K: No, sir. Sir, we are trying to help the student to live without contradiction. Right? *To live without contradiction is intelligence ...* Sir, there is a great deal of violence in the world—an enormous amount—and we want to help the child to grow up without having this feeling of violence. We want to help the child to grow up without conflict. What's wrong with that?

P: Nothing; I understand, and I will support ...

GN: Supporting means this: When your boy comes back to you during the holidays and says, 'I will only eat vegetarian food', you will allow it, even though you might eat a lot of meat at home.

P: If he says he doesn't want it, I won't force him.

GN: Will you help him?

P: Yes.

K: That's all, madam, that's all. (Laughs) Sir, look how excited we are about food. It is most extraordinary! When we talk about not having fear you are not as excited as when we talk about food.

P: Fear is a little more complex.

K: Much more complex, yes; and you are not interested in it. You are all keen about food. Now, my question is: Which is more important—food or cultivating a mind that is not violent?

P: Both are important.

GN: Cultivating a mind that is not violent is a deeper aspect; it will, automatically, take care of food. But if you talk, argue, about food all the time, we will be lost.

P: We are not just arguing about it. We are trying to see how we can ...

GN: Supposing the school, actually, helps to cultivate the child's mind so that he frees himself from violence—would you support us?

P: Yes. Definitely.

K: That's all, that's all.

P: Yes, but we also want to be educated as to how we can support them.

KJ: Yes, that's what is very important. The same conflict that arises between vegetarian and non-vegetarian pressures at home and something taught at school, arises with regard to other things also. For example, we say at the school that we want the child to learn without any fear whatsoever, and the child goes home and is subjected to fear; it is really the same kind of contradiction.

K: But sir, these people here say, 'That's life. We have to live in contradiction'. They accept that. I refuse to accept that. I refuse to live in contradiction. Why should I? You see, you don't discuss that point.

P: Can't there be two opinions in the community? Can't there be two opinions, not in myself but in the community?

GN: About what?

P: About anything.

GN: We are not discussing differences in opinion. There may be a hundred odd different opinions in society. We are not concerned with that. We are discussing this school and education.

K: Sir, may I point out something? We have a school in California. In that school, too, we said that we wouldn't eat meat, we wouldn't smoke, take drugs, and so on. Now, when we had a meeting with the parents, a parent said to me, 'Why should I give up all my pleasure—drugs, drink, tobacco, and all that—for my kids?' You see, to him his pleasure was much more important than his child ...

Sir, let's take another aspect of this school, which is no competition. Right? Professionals in Europe and America are saying that competition is destroying the world. Economic competition, spiritual competition among the gurus, and all that stuff, is destroying the mind. Any form of competition destroys the mind.

Do you understand? And we are saying that we are going to help the students not to have a competitive spirit.

P: Is growth possible, sir, if there is no competitive spirit? There should be healthy competition. Children should know when it is required to compete.

K: Have you gone into the question of competition? Do you know what it means to compete with another? Mesdames, sirs, when your son or daughter competes with another, and when the teacher encourages competition, what is happening? Think it out; please go into it. The teacher who says to a child, 'You must be as good as "A"'. You must have as many marks as "A"', is saying that "A" is far more important than "B". Are you following all this?

P: A child who doesn't score a lot of marks who is forced to compete with another child who scores a lot of marks will become jealous, and have an inferiority complex.

K: There will be fear, which means ... No, sir, you have missed the whole point. Let's go slowly. My father tells me, 'You must be as good as your brother'. Now what has happened to me? My brother is destroying me. You people don't see all this. Sir, competition is inborn in people. And competition implies aggressiveness. Right? So we are encouraging, through competition, violence which is unintelligent. We are saying that to be intelligent implies not having the competitive attitude towards life. The question is: Do you want your child—your son or daughter—to be violent, aggressive, ruthless?—for all this is implied in competition. If you say that we must live with violence, and so on, then it's all right.

P: This school is at least 50 years old. Have any students who have 'developed' here ...?

K: I can tell you, sir—not one, because we have never said, 'We are going to do this'. Do you understand, sir? You asked me a question, namely, whether during these 50 years one boy, one girl, turned out to be different. I am saying, 'No'.

P: So you are saying that in spite of 50 years there is not one single human being who is different from the others.

K: Different from the rest of the monkeys. Of course they are all very clever, argumentative, and get good jobs. But they are not human beings. To be a human being means to love people, to be kind to people; it means not to hurt people, and not to think about oneself all the time.

P: Does it not prove that it is not possible to teach all these things?

K: No, no, on the contrary ...

KJ: It means, sir, that the schools have never done it. The teachers have never demanded it. The parents have never demanded it. You, the parent, have never said, 'I will bring up this child to be a tremendously good human being'. Parents always send their children to the school saying, 'Goodness is all right, but pass the examination first'. And the teachers have fallen in line.

P: Does it mean that you want to change the line of the institution?

GN: Some of the parents are not too bothered about the exams. They say, 'Let the child, the student, take the exam when he is ready, when he chooses to do so. If he doesn't want to take the exam, he need not'. There are a few parents who are prepared to go to that extent, because they feel that growing up intelligently without fear is a very important thing. So would you, as parents, let us know how you feel?

P: If there was no economic necessity, I would do that. I wouldn't bother.

GN: Yes, but you must see economic necessity in its proper perspective. It doesn't mean that the child who is educated this way will be less skillful or less intelligent.

P: If he is able to be an individual and, yet, carry on for the rest of his life, fine, but otherwise?

GN: No, it will follow, it will follow. You see, if he is brought up intelligently and without fear, the quality of his intelligence will be much greater.

P: If you put a good child in any school, he or she will do better; a good child will do nicely in any school. A bad child in any school, will always do badly. We are talking about the majority between these two extremes. By putting these children in a better environment, we can make them that much better. That's all that one can do.

PUPUL JAYAKAR (PJ): May I ask: What is a bad child?

P: Well a child who doesn't behave, a child who doesn't...

K: Sir, this is becoming quite incredible. You call a child 'bad' because he doesn't behave according to your...

P: Not according to my expectations, but according to what society expects.

PJ: Society may be wrong.

K: (Laughs) These people have stopped thinking! (Pause)

Sir, are you satisfied with what you are? You have been educated. You have had competition. You have passed examinations. You have a job, and so on. Sir, is that life? Is that 'complete' life? I am not being personal, sir, please don't mistake me, but what is your relationship with your wife? What is one's relationship with one's wife or husband? Have you any relationship at all—except a sexual relationship? Have you any relationship with your children? Sir, 'relationship' means 'to be in contact with'. To be related to them means to know what they are feeling; it means to understand them, to love them. Do you follow?

P: Well, it's a question of degree.

K: No, no, it's not a question of degree. Good Lord. I beat my son less than you do. Oh for God's sake, these people are...

P: If I beat my son and, then, later on explain to him that I did it in a fit of anger, is it wrong? And, after all, even then the child still loves me.

K: Sir, do you know what you have done to the child when you beat him? Or you haven't even thought about all this?

P: Can we change ourselves so drastically?

KJ: If you care for your child *you will*—immediately. Or you will say, 'For God's sake take care of him'. You will not say, 'Take care of my child under the conditions that I put'.

P: Are we not assuming that we can change ourselves so...?

KJ: No, I am not assuming. I say that if I am tremendously interested, I will look at everything. I won't sit back and think, 'Well, I don't want to change myself but as far as it is possible I will be good to my child'. If my child is my chief concern—and to us teachers the child is—I will be willing to look at myself in every aspect. For the sake of that child who is extraordinarily important to me, I will look at myself. And even if the parents ask me to destroy him I will not. If the parents ask me to teach him competition, and so on, I will not.

Sir, all that we are saying is that a majority of parents, because of their fears and confusions and so on, talk of education, and think of education, only as leading to a career. Most parents do. Don't say, 'No'. It is a fact. There is no need for us to run a school for them. There are plenty of other schools to teach geography, history, and mathematics. Our concern as a group of parents and teachers is to create an environment where a child, from the age of five right up till he is eighteen or nineteen, can live and learn to live without fear.

P: Well, we must try.

KJ: If we are deeply concerned, we will break every barrier.

P: But every barrier is a questionable thing.

KJ: If you don't want to break every barrier, you will not want to try.

P: Has the school tried that? Has the school tried to break every barrier?—because I think at one meeting where we, teachers and parents, had a discussion, it was mentioned that this school has been 'disgustingly successful' in the other way. (Laughter) This was the term used. So does that mean that the school has not wholeheartedly tried?

KJ: No, it has not.

K: Sir, may I say something? India—this country—at one time exploded over all of Asia and China, just as Greece did over the West. Now, however, there is no spiritual awakening. Of course there is superstition—a vast amount. The Catholics go to their churches, the Hindus to their temples and all the rest of it, but that's just superstition. Sir, in India the sense of true religion has gone. Right? I don't know if you know about all the filth that is going on. And it is important to bring about a religious spirit because only then you can have a new culture. Sir, all cultures, from the most ancient of days, come into being when there is not imitation either from the East or the West, but this true religious feeling. Today the East is copying the West, completely. The East is copying the West morally, ethically—you know all this, don't you? Right? And the real spirit of human beings is dying. We are saying, please, let's move in a different direction. Some of you may want to, some of you may not. For those who don't want to, Rishi Valley School has a part that goes on with the whole circus—examinations, and all the rest of it. But, please understand, sir, that at the same time—not only in Rishi Valley but in all the other schools with which we are connected—we are trying to bring about a different spirit. That's all. And we say to you parents, if you are interested in helping them *to learn*, 'Please co-operate with us'. And during those years that the children are with us they will be capable of passing an examination—if they want to—without any fear, without the agony of competition.

Please, sirs, the idea of this meeting is to find out if there are any parents here who want to have their children live this way—not only in Rishi Valley, but also in Bangalore, in Benaras, in Madras, and so on. If there are parents who want their children to live this way, please help us, co-operate with us. That's all. If you don't want this, it's all right. The school will go on. The children will just pass exams, and continue with the whole monkey business. But we are going to—at the same time—have this. Is that clear, sirs?

P: I think that the children are already, to a great extent, living that way. I can see, for myself, that my children are different

now that they have been here for one year, and I would, definitely, like them to continue in this way.

K: So, we are only asking: Do you want your children this way—that is, to grow up without competition, fear, and so on—or that way, the way of the world? If you want it this way—which is as we explained, no exams and all the rest—please help us; please join us; please co-operate with us. It's very simple. The complexity arises when there is contradiction between the parents, the students and what we want to do. Do you understand, sir? Sir, in this country we have lost love. We don't know what love is. We are not kind, we are not concerned with the poor. We are concerned with nothing except ourselves...

Sir, there are various universities in America, and in Europe that are saying, 'No more competition; no more examinations'. And big business too doesn't want people who have been educated—you understand?—in this mechanical way. They want people who can think. You must know all this.

P: Yes.

K: So, please decide what you want to do. But *we* are going to do it—you understand? If there are just two children, that's good enough. If there are just two parents who are not just playing games, but who say that they want to go the whole way, that's good enough. There are already two parents here who have said, 'Yes, all right'. And we have teachers who will undertake this. We have teachers to not just frighten the children, but to look after them. We have teachers to help the children to have good taste, to be affectionate, to be kind, to be generous, to be—you follow?—human beings, and not just...

P: Sir, may I ask something? Why should the other centre, the regular, ordinary activity, go on at all?

K: For the simple reason, sir, that if there are only two parents, you can't keep up the place...

P: Maybe others will change in time.

K: But eventually the whole school is going to work that way. It may take five years, ten years, twenty years, but the whole direction is that.

P: I want to say that you are bringing pressure through the child on the parents.

K: What, sir?

P: You see, I smoke. And if the school says, 'Don't smoke', I don't know how it give it up. It's the same with coffee in the morning. Apart from these, I suppose I am a nice fellow. (Participants laugh) I find some pleasure when I smoke. So please leave me alone; I can't give it up; and don't use my child to ask me to give up smoking.

KJ: There is no pressure. The teachers are not going to bring in any conflict. If I tell a child not to smoke because tobacco is harmful for his or her body and the environment, and if the child replies, 'Well, my father smokes', all that I will say is, 'You can't change your father—can you?—so, leave him alone'.

K: Sir, you are missing the whole point. A father smokes, and you tell the son, 'Don't smoke'. What respect has he for you?

May I go? You teachers take them on. Fight it out. That's all people know: Argument. Sir, this is a world problem. Do you understand?

P: Can you fight it out with only four schools?

K: Oh yes, sir. One man, Buddha, changed the world. The world has been changed by individual people. Hitler changed the world. Stalin changed the world. Don't, please, argue with me, sir. You don't know the facts; you just want to argue. If there are a dozen or even four students who are really 'this', they will change the world. You have no idea. Sir, that's what I was telling you. At one time India was exploding over Asia. They went to China. Sir, they changed the world. But you are all so frightened. You want *your* son to be safe.

—Rishi Valley
December 2, 1979

IF I WERE THE HEAD OF RISHI VALLEY SCHOOL

If I were the Head of Rishi Valley School, what would I do—knowing the Indian conditions, the Government business, the whole communal sense they have, and so on? Taking all this into account, what would I do, in that Valley?

First of all, I would get all the villagers together, and explain to them that we're going to have schools for *their* children. We'll see that we get enough money; we'll work for it. We'll say: 'We'll build; you help us to build'. That's one thing I would do: schools for them. And I would also see to the agriculture and all that side of it very clearly, definitely—expert work.

Then I would go into the whole question of education. As the head of that school, what is the direction I would take—all the school, not just me alone? The direction is: there must be the highest quality of intellectual life. The intellect has the capacity to evaluate, to judge, to condemn, to discern, to foresee. And an intellectual capacity which has got vitality, energy, drive—not just books, book, books, books; [although] that is to be added to it also. Right?

Then I would see that they had the proper kind of food and proper kind of clothes, exercise, cleanliness and discipline—not conformity; discipline in the sense of learning. And I would see, apart from games, apart from school timetable, curriculum and all that, that they have leisure. Leisure is very important—to do *what* they want to do . . . Have leisure to sit under a tree, look at trees, look at birds, look at girls, boys, you follow? And also . . . I would have a room where they are absolutely silent; so that their senses are awakened—all their senses. And to see that all their senses are functioning all the time, as a whole movement of senses. You follow?

And if I were the head of Rishi Valley, I would see that all the teachers there will all work together, absolutely work together. If they have complaints, I would go into it—proper money, proper food—I would go into it. And if they want holidays I would see that they have marvellous holidays. Economic protection, old age pension—you follow?

I would talk a great deal about religion—the spirit of religion, not the circus of religion. I would talk about affection; forget religion. I would talk about the quality of affection. Not: ‘I love her, nobody else’. I think when there is that quality of affection, I may love her but it doesn’t stop there. I would go into all that: nature of compassion, and compassion with its own intelligence. I would go into all that, and then he’ll capture it. You follow? Most of these young children don’t care about religion. They rather despise it, say that’s all silly stuff. So they’re already prepared, in a cynical way, about religion. So I have to help them to move out of that cynicism. And I can only do it by really talking about affection—not talking about it—feeling it, so they have that quality in themselves.

Then I would help them to find out what it means to be silent. How necessary to be silent, because when you are silent you’ll hear the trees; when you are really silent you’ll hear the birds’ wings in the air—so that your senses are awakened.

I would talk to them about the sense of division. As long as you are thinking about yourself you are divided; and this division, which is limitation, causes a great deal of conflict: me first and you second; my opinion, my standard, my way and all that. I would go into all that, and help them to listen to what I am saying—to listen.

I would go into all that, day after day. I would say: ‘Sit quietly, see what happens, whether thought can ever stop. Find out; find out for yourself. Then find out why you are thinking these things’. And so on and on, so that his own brain is active. It is not active when you say: ‘Do this, don’t do that; this is what tradition says, or your grandmother and so on’. That becomes too silly. The intention, or my affection, helps to change the student...

I would talk a great deal about beauty ... I would approach it from all different directions ... Have you got the energy to do this?

—*International Trustees Meeting, Brockwood.*
September 11, 1984

BHAGIRATHI VALLEY SCHOOL

needs

creative people

interested in wholesome growth and an alternate life style

Situated on the bank of the Ganga in the Garhwal Himalayas, Bhagirathi Valley School is now six years old. High mountains, rich in vegetation and wild life, surround it to form a vast oval ring. The mountain breeze carries the fragrance of pine from across the forests and with it a peculiar rejuvenating quality. There is great space and silence here, and they mingle with the sound of the rushing river. Far off, one may hear songs of the wandering gypsies, shepherd calls and the chants of holy men on their way to Gangotri.

Amidst this, the Bhagirathi Valley School, run by Krishna-murti Foundation India, is an opportunity for a group of people, young and old, to learn: to live with affection and care, to develop a questioning mind, to grow in one's talents and interests, to discover one's responsibility to local and global issues.

The school is equipped with modern amenities and at present it has about thirty-five children. Most of them are first generation learners, coming from poor or middle income families and are highly motivated. Some of them walk several kilometres in the mountains to come to the school daily. We feel they deserve the best for they are in the process of forging a new alternative.

We envisage for them a non-formal education free from regimentation and a programme rich in cultural inputs. This should help the students understand and express themselves better and enable them to unfold their highest potential. To permit greater interaction, the school may also be made partly residential.

The new vision demands teachers of a different kind. We are looking for creative individuals, discontented with the fragmented and materialistic life style of the city and are seeking a deeper challenge—a holistic way of living. They should be willing to discover the implications of wholesome growth and strive to bring it about in themselves and in the students. The place will demand their total involvement—physical, emotional, intellectual,

and spiritual. It will provide them a beautiful setting and freedom to rediscover a life based on learning and sharing.

If you feel inclined to join the Bhagirathi Valley School (you need not be a qualified teacher) or help in any other way, please contact:

Rajesh Dalal
'Vasanta Vihar'
64, Greenways Road
Madras - 600 028
Tel. 4937803, 4937596

ACTIVITIES OF THE FOUNDATION DURING OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER, 1995

At the Bhagirathi Valley School, Uttar Kasi, on the 19th, 20th and 21st of October, there was a conference of teachers from the various Krishnamurti Schools. The aim of the Conference was to explore the phenomenon of rapid change, the breakdown of traditional values, the power of the media, and how the changing values and life styles are making inroads into the quality of learning at school. Related questions were: In what way is the teacher-student relationship affected? In the midst of these pressures and sweeping changes what happens to leisure, innocence and sensitivity? And what is the educator's responsibility?

The Krishnamurti Foundation India held its annual Gathering at the Rajghat Education Centre in Varanasi from the 16th to the 19th of November, 1995. The intention of the Gathering was 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.

As part of the Krishnamurti Centenary Activities, there was an International Conference on Education, held at Rishi Valley on the 27th, 28th, and 29th of November. Educationalists of different backgrounds and cultures attended, read papers, and had fruitful discussions. The participants were introduced to Krishnamurti's perceptions of life and education through video clippings, printed excerpts from his writings/books, and discussions.

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