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Bulletin

KRISHNAMURTI FOUNDATION INDIA

FROM THE EDITOR

The subject matter of this Bulletin, 'Krishnamurti and Women's Lives' was essentially conceived for Telugu-speaking audiences by the well-known writer, Smt. A. Chaya Devi. Smt. A. Chaya Devi selected and translated the texts into Telugu and the anthology was published as 'Women's Life — J. Krishnamurti'. In this Bulletin we present some of these original texts and reproduce the preface written in English by Dr Pasumarti N. Murti to Smt. Chaya Devi's anthology.

Let me state at the outset that Krishnamurti's approach to gender issues is not political; it will not necessarily help win greater rights for women in society, for he does not talk about measuring women's progress *vis á vis* the nation in theoretical terms. What he does talk about is an individual woman's private life, her relationship with her husband, her family and with the larger world. We see him address an individual directly, lending a compassionate ear and a helping hand to draw her out of the psychological malaise in which she is caught. Krishnamurti's response is stripped of abstract frameworks, and transcends oppositional dualities.

Krishnamurti was neither a reformer nor a traditionalist. He was a revolutionary infused with religious passion. With this wholistic sensibility he creates new ways for women of religious spirit to rebuild their lives.

— R.H.

LIFE IS ONE

Life is one, whether in men or in women. Because there is sorrow, in woman as in man, suffering is in woman as in man; so to divide human beings into men and women, from the very start, is wrong. Because they have different bodies, we think — men think — that they must be treated in a different fashion and educated in a different way. But do not women suffer in the same way as men do? Have they not the same doubts, the same troubles, the same sufferings as men? So if you look from the bigger point of view, sex disappears, as it should. With that disappearance of the compartments of humanity — men and women — life will become much simpler; and we can solve the problems that each must face.

— *Krishnamurti 100 Years*, p 137.

(Taken from an 'Address to the Women's Indian Association, Madras, 1928'.)

The history of mankind can itself be seen as the saga of how men and society treated women through the ages in different regions of the world. We see two extremes — at one end woman is worshipped as *śakti* and the all powerful mother. At the other end woman is but a slave catering to the needs of man.

In the present modern world the battle of sexes is an ongoing endeavour to correct the great injustice done to the women including the abuse of their fundamental right. To evolve a rational and balanced understanding of the relationship has been the goal of many reformers and sages. Krishnamurti's Teaching and writings are of great significance in this context.

Attracted by his noble personality and his capacity to heal the mind of sorrow and suffering, thousands went to Krishnamurti. They were people from all walks of life, the young and the old, scientists and sādhus, even politicians and administrators. Among them were also women — saints like Anandamoyi Ma, Hollywood stars like Greta Garbo, politicians like Indira Gandhi. Besides them scores of women went to talk to him over their personal problems. Women in spiritual quest as well as those seeking respite from familial problems sought Krishnamurti's guidance. And he discussed these issues with great understanding, patience and compassion. Telling them that wisdom arises from self-knowledge, he showed them how self-interest is the source of human problems and misery. He rejected all 'isms' for the discovery of truth and freedom. And he spoke of the intelligence which arose with understanding and compassion as the only way to a creative and harmonious life.

Pupul Jayakar, an intellectual and a close associate of Krishnamurti says of his teachings: '... the Teachings demand not only a life of correctness, a life free of self-centred activity but the awakening of enormous energy, radiating and integral of perception which alone frees man from duality and the bondage of time ... It is a tough, relentless pursuit, in the ending of which is the arising of insight and the flowering of goodness and compassion'.

Thus Krishnamurti's Teachings throw a new light on the issues of gender relationship, authority, violence, awareness and identity. Negating all responses based on reaction, anger and enmity, Krishnamurti points out a unique perspective to freedom.

— Dr Pasumarti N. Murti
The J Krishnamurti Centre, Hyderabad

WOMEN ARE THE KEEPERS OF TRADITION

... Women are keepers of tradition much more than men. If women made up their minds to alter anything in the world, they could alter it tomorrow. They are capable of much more self-sacrifice than men, and so have greater strength. But the woman who is a keeper of tradition, if she is to understand life, must change her attitude of mind. She must no longer be a slave. I use this word expressly, because women allow themselves to be dominated. I know that many women agree with me when they are far away from their husbands, but when they return to their homes, the trouble begins. Then the men begin to dominate. Why should you yield? You are as good as men; you have greater strength! In America, in certain schools, there have been strikes among students, because the professors treated the students in a cruel manner. So you should form a Women's Union, and strike over things that matter.

— *An address to the women of India at the annual meeting of the Women's Indian Association, Madras, 1928.*

IN EACH OF US THERE ARE THE MALE AND THE FEMALE ELEMENTS

PUPUL JAYAKAR (PJ): I was considering whether it would be worthwhile to discuss the ancient Indian attitude to alchemy and mutation, and to see whether the findings of alchemy have any relevance to what you are saying. It is significant that Nagarjuna, one of the great propounders of Buddhist thought, was himself a master alchemist. In India, the alchemist's search was not directed so much to turning base metal into gold as to investigating certain psychophysical

and chemical processes in which, through mutation, the body and mind could be made free of the ravages of time and the processes of decay. The field of investigation included the mastery of breath, the partaking of an elixir brewed in the laboratory, a substance wherein mercury played a vital part, and a triggering of an explosion in consciousness. The action of the three led to a mutation of the body and mind. The symbolism used by the alchemist was sexual; mercury was the seed of Śiva, mica the seed of the goddess; the union of the two, not only physically and in the crucibles of the laboratory but in consciousness itself, brought into being a mutation, a state that was free of time and the processes of aging, a state that was unrelated to the two constituents that in total union had triggered the mutation. Has this any relevance to what you are saying?

J. KRISHNAMURTI (K): You are asking about the state of consciousness which is out of time.

PJ: In every individual one can see the male and female elements in operation. The alchemist saw the need for union, for balance. Is there any validity in this?

K: I think one can observe this in oneself. I have often observed that in each one of us there are male and female elements. Either they are in perfect balance or in a state of imbalance. When there is the complete balance between the male and the female, then the physical organism never really falls ill; there may be superficial illnesses, but deep within there is no disease which destroys the organism. This is probably what the ancients must have sought, identifying the male and the female with mercury and mica. Through meditation, through study, and, perhaps, through some form of medicine, they tried to bring about this perfect harmony.

One can see very clearly in oneself the operation of the male and female. When one or the other gets exaggerated, the imbalance creates disease — not superficial ailments but disease at the depths. I have noticed personally within myself, under different situations and climates, with different people who are aggressive and violent, that the male element takes over and becomes more prominent. This prominence of the male, the other uses to assert himself. But when there is too much of femininity around one, the male does not become aggressive but withdraws without any resistance.

SUNANDA PATWARDHAN (SP): What are the male and female elements?

K: The male is generally aggressive, violent, dominating, and the female is quiet; it is taken for submissiveness and then exploited by man. But submissiveness is really gentleness which gradually conquers the other.

When the female and the male are in complete harmony, the quality of both changes; it is no longer male or female, but something totally different. The male and female as the positive and negative are dualistic because of their very nature. Whereas the complete balance, the harmony of the two has a different quality.

It is like the quality of the earth in which everything lives, but is not of it. I have noticed this operating very often. When the whole mind withdraws from the physical environment, it is as though the mind is very far away — far away not in space and time, but in a state which nothing can touch. This state is not an abstraction nor a withdrawal, but an inward, absolute non-being. When this perfect harmony takes place, because

there is no conflict, it has its own vitality. It does not destroy the other. So conflict is not only in the outer but also in the inner. And when this conflict completely comes to an end, there is a mutation which is not touched by time.

— *Tradition And Revolution*, pp 5-6.

We All Want To Show Off

QUESTIONER (Q): Why do women dress themselves up?

K: Have you not asked them? And have you never watched the birds? Often it is the male bird that has more colour, more sprightliness. To be physically attractive is part of the sexual relationship to produce young. That is life. And the boys also do it. As they grow up they like to comb their hair in a particular way, wear a nice cap, put on attractive clothes — which is the same thing. We all want to show off. The rich man in his expensive car, the girl who makes herself more beautiful, the boy who tries to be very smart — they all want to show that they have something. It is a strange world, is it not? You see, a lily or a rose never pretends, and its beauty is that it is what it is.

— *This Matter Of Culture*, pp 157-158.

THE FAMILY AND THE DESIRE FOR SECURITY

She explained that she had taken her master's degree in science, with honours, had taught, and had done some social work. In the short time since her graduation she had travelled about the country doing various things: teaching mathematics in one place, doing social work in another, helping her mother,

and organizing for a society to which she belonged. She was not in politics, because she considered it the pursuit of personal ambition and a stupid waste of time. She had seen through all that, and was now about to be married.

Have you made up your own mind whom to marry, or are your parents arranging the matter?

‘Probably my parents. Perhaps it is better that way.’

Why, if I may ask?

‘In other countries the boy and girl fall in love with each other; it may be all right at the beginning, but soon there is contention and misery, the quarrelling and making up, the tedium of pleasure and the routine of life. The arranged marriage in this country ends the same way, the fun goes out of it, so there isn’t much to choose between the two systems. They are both pretty terrible, but what is one to do? After all, one must marry, one can’t remain single all one’s life. It is all very sad, but at least the husband gives a certain security and children are a joy; one can’t have one without the other.’

But what happens to all the years that you spent in acquiring your master’s degree?

‘I suppose one will play with it, but children and the household work will take most of one’s time.’

Then what good has your so-called education done? Why spend so much time, money and effort to end up in the kitchen? Don’t you want to do any kind of teaching or social work after your marriage?

‘Only when there is time. Unless one is well-to-do, it is impossible to have servants and all the rest of it. I am afraid all these days will be over once I get married — and I want to get married. Are you against marriage?’

Do you regard marriage as an institution to establish a family? Is not the family a unit in opposition to society? Is it not a centre from which all activity radiates, an exclusive relationship that dominates every other form of relationship? Is it not a self-enclosing activity that brings about division, separation, the high and the low, the powerful and the weak? The family as a system appears to resist the whole; each family opposes other families, other groups. Is not the family with its property one of the causes of war?

‘If you are opposed to the family, then you must be for the collectivization of men and women in which their children belong to the State.’

Please don’t jump to conclusions. To think in terms of formulas and systems only brings about opposition and contention. You have your system, and another his; the two systems fight it out, each seeking to liquidate the other, but the problem still remains.

‘But if you are against the family, then what are you for?’

Why put the question that way? If there is a problem, is it not stupid to take sides according to one’s prejudice? Is it not better to understand the problem than to breed opposition and enmity, thereby multiplying our problems?

The family as it is now is a unit of limited relationship, self-enclosing and exclusive. Reformers and so-called

revolutionaries have tried to do away with this exclusive family spirit which breeds every kind of anti-social activity; but it is a centre of stability as opposed to insecurity, and the present social structure throughout the world cannot exist without this security. The family is not a mere economic unit, and any effort to solve the issue on that level must obviously fail. The desire for security is not only economic, but much more profound and complex. If man destroys the family, he will find other forms of security through the State, through the collective, through belief and so on, which will in turn breed their own problems. We must understand the desire for inward, psychological security and not merely replace one pattern of security with another.

So the problem is not the family, but the desire to be secure. Is not the desire for security, at any level, exclusive? This spirit of exclusiveness shows itself as the family, as property, as the State, the religion, and so on. Does not this desire for inward security build up outward forms of security which are always exclusive? The very desire to be secure destroys security. Exclusion, separation must inevitably bring about disintegration; nationalism, class-antagonism and war, are its symptoms. The family as a means of inward security is a source of disorder and social catastrophe.

‘Then how is one to live, if not as a family?’

Is it not odd how the mind is always looking for a pattern, a blue-print? Our education is in formulas and conclusions. The ‘how’ is the demand for a formula, but formulas cannot resolve the problem. Please understand the truth of this. It is only when we do not seek inward security that we can live outwardly secure. As long as the family is a centre of

security, there will be social disintegration; as long as the family is used as a means to a self-protective end, there must be conflict and misery. Please do not look puzzled, it is fairly simple. As long as I use you or another for my inner, psychological security, I must be exclusive; *I* am all-important. *I* have the greatest significance; it is *my* family, *my* property. The relationship of utility is based on violence; the family as a means of mutual inward security makes for conflict and confusion.

‘I understand intellectually what you say, but is it possible to live without this inward desire to be secure?’

‘To understand intellectually is not to understand at all. You mean you hear the words and grasp their meaning, and that is all; but this will not produce action. Using another as a means of satisfaction and security is not love. Love is never security; love is a state in which there is no desire to be secure; it is a state of vulnerability; it is the only state in which exclusiveness, enmity and hate are impossible. In that state a family may come into being, but it will not be exclusive, self-enclosing.

‘But we do not know such love. How is one ...?’

It is good to be aware of the ways of one’s own thinking. The inward desire for security expresses itself outwardly through exclusion and violence, and as long as its process is not fully understood there can be no love. Love is not another refuge in the search for security. The desire for security must wholly cease for love to be. Love is not something that can be brought about through compulsion. Any form of compulsion, at any level, is the very denial of love. A revolutionary with an ideology is not a revolutionary at all; he only offers a

substitute, a different kind of security, a new hope; and hope is death. Love alone can bring about a radical revolution or transformation in relationship; and love is not a thing of the mind. Thought can plan and formulate magnificent structures of hope, but thought will only lead to further conflict, confusion and misery. Love is when the cunning, self-enclosing mind is not.

— *Commentaries On Living, II Series*, pp 109-113.

WHAT MORE CAN A MOTHER DO?

A mother of three children, she seemed simple, quiet and unassuming, but her eyes were alive and observant; they took in many things. As she talked, her rather nervous shyness disappeared, but she remained quietly watchful. Her eldest son had been educated abroad and was now working as an electronic engineer; the second one had a good job in a textile factory, and the youngest was just finishing college. They were all good boys, she said, and you could see she was proud of them. They had lost their father some years ago, but he had seen to it that they would have a good education and be self-supporting. What little else he had, he had left to her, and she was not in need of anything, for her wants were few. At this point she stopped talking, and was evidently finding it difficult to come out with something that was on her mind. Sensing what she wanted to talk about, I hesitantly questioned her.

Do you love your children?

‘Of course I do,’ she answered quickly, glad of the opening. ‘Who doesn’t love their children? I have brought them up

with loving care, and have been occupied all these years with their comings and goings, their sorrows and joys, and with all the other things that a mother cares about. They have been very good children, and have been very good to me. They all did well in their studies, and they will make their way in life; they may not leave their mark upon the world, but after all, so few do. We are all now living together, and when they get married I shall stay, if I am wanted, with one or other of them. Of course, I have my own house too, and I am not economically dependent on them. But it is strange that you should ask me that question.'

Is it?

'Well, I have never before talked about myself to anyone, not even to my sister, or to my late husband, and suddenly to be asked that question seemed rather strange — though I *do* want to talk it over with you. It took a lot of courage to come to see you, but now I am glad I came, and that you have made it so easy for me to talk. I have always been a listener, but not in your sense of the word. I used to listen to my husband, and to his business associates whenever they dropped in. I have listened to my children and to my friends. But no one ever seemed to care to listen to me, and for the most part I was silent. In listening to others, one learns, but most of what one hears is nothing that one doesn't already know. The men gossiped as much as the women, besides complaining about their jobs and their bad pay; some talked about their hoped-for promotion, others about social reform, village work or what the *guru* had said. I listened to them all, and never opened my heart to anybody. Some were more clever, and others more stupid than I, but in most things they were not very different from me. I enjoy music, but I listen to it with a different ear. I seem to be listening to somebody or other most of the time; but there is also something else to

which I listen, something which always eludes me. May I talk about it?

Isn't that why you are here?

'Yes, I suppose it is. You see, I am approaching forty-five, and most of those years I have been occupied with others; I have been busy with a thousand-and-one things, all day and every day. My husband died five years ago, and since then I have been more than ever occupied with the children; and now, in a strange way, I am coming upon myself all the time. With my sister-in-law I attended your talk the other day, and something stirred in my heart, something which I always knew was there. I can't express it very well, and I hope you will understand what it is I want to say.'

May I help you?

'I wish you would.'

It is difficult to be simple right to the end of anything, isn't it? We experience something that is simple in itself, but it soon becomes complicated; it is hard to keep it within the bounds of its original simplicity. Don't you feel this is so?

'In a way, yes. There is a simple thing in my heart, but I don't know what it all means.'

You said that you loved your children. What is the meaning of that word 'love'?

'I told you what it means. To love one's children is to look after them, to see that they don't get hurt, that they don't make too many mistakes; it is to help them prepare for a good job, to see them happily married, and so on.'

Is that all?

‘What more can a mother do?’

If one may ask, does your love for your children fill your whole life, and not just a part of it?

‘No,’ she admitted. ‘I love them, but it has never filled my whole life. The relationship with my husband was different. He might have filled my life, but not the children; and now that they have grown to be young men, they have their own lives to live. They love me, and I love them; but the relationship between a man and his wife is different, and they will find their fullness of life in marrying the right woman.’

Have you never wanted your children to be rightly educated, so that they would help to prevent wars, and not be killed for some idea or to satisfy some politician’s craving for power? Doesn’t your love make you want to help them to bring about a different kind of society, a society in which hatred, antagonism, envy, will have ceased to exist?

‘But what can I do about it? I myself haven’t been properly educated, so how can I possibly help to create a new social order?’

Don’t you feel strongly about it?

‘I’m afraid not. Do we feel strongly about anything?’

Then is love not something strong, vital, urgent?

‘It should be, but with most of us it is not. I love my sons, and pray that nothing bad will happen to them. If it does, what can I do but shed bitter tears over it?’

If you have love, isn't strong enough to make you act? Jealousy, like hate, is strong, and it does bring about forceful, vigorous action; but jealousy is not love. Then do we really know what love is?

'I have always thought that I loved my children, even though it hasn't been the greatest thing in my life.'

Is there then a greater love in your life than your love for your children?

It had not been easy to come to this point, and she felt awkward and embarrassed as we came to it. For some time she wouldn't talk, and we sat there without saying a word.

'I have never really loved', she began gently. 'I have never felt very deeply about anything. I used to be very jealous, and it was a very strong feeling. It bit into my heart and made me violent; I cried, made scenes, and once, God forgive me, I struck. But that's all over and gone. Sexual desire was also very strong, but with each baby it diminished, and now it has completely disappeared. My feeling for my children isn't what it should be. I have never felt anything very strongly except jealousy and sex; and that doesn't go very far, does it?'

Not very far.

'Then what is love? Attachment, jealousy, even hate, is what I used to consider to be love; and of course sexual relationship. But I see now that sexual relationship is only a very small part of a much greater thing. The greater thing I have never known, and that is why sex became so consumingly important, at least for a time. When that faded away, I thought I loved my sons; but the fact is that I have loved them, if I

may use that word at all, only in a very small way; and although they are good boys, they are just like thousands of others. I suppose we are all mediocre, satisfied with petty things: with ambition, prosperity, envy. Our lives are small, whether we live in palaces or huts. This is all very clear to me now, which it has never been before; but as you must know, I am not an educated person.'

Education has nothing to do with it; mediocrity is not a monopoly of the uneducated. The scholar, the scientist, the very clever, may also be mediocre. Freedom from mediocrity, from pettiness, is not a matter of class or learning.

'But I have not thought much, I have not felt much; my life has been a sorry thing.'

Even when we do feel strongly, it's generally about such petty things: about personal and family security, about the flag, about some religious or political leader. Our feeling is always for or against something; it isn't like a fire that burns brightly, without smoke.

'But who is to give us that fire?'

To depend on another, to look to a *guru*, a leader, is to take away the aloneness, the purity of the fire; it makes for smoke.

'Then, if we are not to ask for help, we must have the fire to begin with.'

Not at all. At the beginning, the fire is not there. It has to be nurtured; there must be care, a wise putting away, with understanding, of those things that dampen the fire, that destroy the clarity of the flame. Then only is there the fire that nothing can extinguish.

'But that needs intelligence, which I haven't got.'

Yes you have. In seeing for yourself how little your life is, how little you love, in perceiving the nature of jealousy, in beginning to be aware of yourself in everyday relationship, there is already the movement of intelligence. Intelligence is a matter of hard work, quick perception of the subtle tricks of the mind, facing the fact, and clear thinking, without assumptions or conclusions. To kindle the fire of intelligence, and to keep it alive, demands alertness and great simplicity.

‘It is kind of you to say that I have intelligence; but *have I?*’ she insisted.

It’s good to inquire, but not to assert that you have or have not. To inquire rightly is in itself the beginning of intelligence. You hinder intelligence in yourself by your own convictions, opinions, assertions and denials. Simplicity is the way of intelligence — not the mere show of simplicity in outward things and behaviour, but the simplicity of inward non-being. When you say ‘I know’, you are on the path of non-intelligence; but when you say ‘I don’t know’, and really mean it, you have already started on the path of intelligence. When a man doesn’t know, he looks, listens, inquires. ‘To know’ is to accumulate, and he who accumulates will never know; he is not intelligent.

‘If I am on the path of intelligence because I am simple and don’t know much ...’

To think in terms of ‘much’ is to be unintelligent. ‘Much’ is a comparative word, and comparison is based on accumulation.

‘Yes, I see that. But, as I was saying, if one is on the path of intelligence because one is simple and really doesn’t know anything, then intelligence would seem to be tantamount to ignorance.’

Ignorance is one thing, and the state of not knowing is quite another; the two are in no way connected. You may be very learned, clever, efficient, talented, and yet be ignorant. There is ignorance when there is no self-knowledge. The ignorant man is he who is unaware of himself, who does not know his own deceits, vanities, envies, and so on. Self-knowledge is freedom. You may know all about the wonders of the earth and of the heavens, and still not be free from envy, sorrow. But when you say 'I don't know', you are learning. To learn is not to accumulate, either knowledge, things or relationships. To be intelligent is to be simple; but to be simple is extraordinarily arduous.

— *Commentaries On Living, III Series*, pp 170-176.

THE MOTHER — ALONE AND BEREFT OF ALL TEARS

The little girl next door was ill, and she had been crying, off and on, all day long, and far into the night. This had been going on for some time, and the poor mother was worn out. There was a small plant in the window which she used to water every evening, but for the past few days it had been neglected. The mother was alone in the house, except for a rather helpless and inefficient servant, and she seemed somewhat lost, for the child's illness was evidently serious. The doctor had driven up several times in his big car, and the mother became sadder and sadder.

A banana-plant in the garden was irrigated by the kitchen water, and the soil around it was always damp. Its leaves were dark green, and there was one very large leaf, two or three feet across and much more in length, which had so far

not been torn by the winds, like the other leaves. It would sway very gently in the breeze, and it was touched only by the western sun. It was a wonderful thing to see the yellow flowers in descending circles on a long, drooping stem. These flowers would soon be young bananas, and the stem would become quite thick, for there might be dozens of them, rich, green and heavy. Now and then a shiny black bumble-bee would go in among the yellow flowers, and several black and white butterflies would come and flutter about them. There seemed to be such an abundance of life in that banana-plant, especially with the sun upon it, and with its large leaves stirring in the breeze. The little girl often used to play around it, and she was so full of fun and smiles. Sometimes we would walk together a short distance down the lane as the mother watched, and then she would go running back. We couldn't understand each other, for our words were different, but that didn't stop her from talking; so we talked.

One afternoon the mother beckoned me in. The little girl was skin and bones; she smiled weakly, then closed her eyes in utter exhaustion. She was sleeping fitfully. Through the open window came the noise of other children, shouting and playing. The mother was speechless and bereft of all tears. She wouldn't sit down, but stood by the little cot, and there was despair and longing in the air. Just then the doctor came in, and I left, with a silent promise to return ...

The sun was setting behind the trees, and the huge clouds above it were brilliantly golden. There were the usual crows, and a parrot came screeching in and clung to the edge of a hole in a large, dead tree, with its tail pressed against the trunk; it hesitated, seeing a human being so close, but an instant later disappeared into the hole. There were a few villagers on the road, and a car went by, loaded with young

people. A week-old calf was tied to a fence post, with its mother grazing nearby. A woman was coming down the road with a brightly-polished brass vessel on her head, and another on her hip; she was carrying water from the well. She used to go by every evening; and that evening especially, against the setting sun, she was the earth itself in motion.

— *Commentaries On Living, III Series*, pp 207-208.

SHE HAD TRIED TO ESCAPE

She said she had always been active in one way or another, either with her children, or in social affairs, or in sports; but behind this activity there was always boredom, pressing and constant. She was bored with the routine of life, with pleasure, pain, flattery, and everything else. Boredom was like a cloud that had hung over her life for as long as she could remember. She had tried to escape from it, but every new interest soon became a further boredom, a deadly weariness. She had read a great deal, and had had the usual turmoils of family life, but through it all there was this weary boredom. It had nothing to do with her health, for she was very well.

Why do you think you get bored? Is it the outcome of some frustration, of some fundamental desire which has been thwarted?

‘Not especially. There have been some superficial obstructions, but they have never bothered me; or when they have, I have met them fairly intelligently and have never been stumped by them. I don’t think my trouble is frustration, for I have always been able to get what I want. I haven’t cried for

the moon, and have been sensible in my demands; but there has nevertheless been this sense of boredom with everything, with my family and with my work.'

What do you mean by boredom? Do you mean dissatisfaction? Is it that nothing has given you complete satisfaction?

'It isn't quite that. I am as dissatisfied as any normal person, but I have been able to reconcile myself to the inevitable dissatisfactions.'

What are you interested in? Is there any deep interest in your life?

'Not especially. If I had a deep interest I would never be bored. I am naturally an enthusiastic person, I assure you, and if I had an interest I wouldn't easily let it go. I have had many intermittent interests, but they have all led in the end to this cloud of boredom.'

What do you mean by interest? Why is there this change from interest to boredom? What does interest mean? You are interested in that which pleases you, gratifies you, are you not? Is not interest a process of acquisitiveness? You would not be interested in anything if you did not get something out of it, would you? There is sustained interest as long as you are acquiring; acquisition is interest, is it not? You have tried to gain satisfaction from everything you have come in contact with; and when you have thoroughly used it, naturally you get bored with it. Every acquisition is a form of boredom, weariness. We want a change of toys; as soon as we lose interest in one, we turn to another, and there is always a new toy to turn to. We turn to something in order to acquire; there

is acquisition in pleasure, in knowledge, in fame, in power, in efficiency, in having a family, and so on. When there is nothing further to acquire in one religion, in one saviour, we lose interest and turn to another. Some go to sleep in an organization and never wake up, and those who do wake up put themselves to sleep again by joining another. This acquisitive movement is called expansion of thought, progress.

‘Is interest always acquisition?’

Actually, are you interested in anything which doesn't give you something, whether it be a play, a game, a conversation, a book, or a person? If a painting doesn't give you something, you pass it by; if a person doesn't stimulate or disturb you in some way, if there is no pleasure or pain in a particular relationship, you lose interest, you get bored. Haven't you noticed this?

‘Yes, but I have never before looked at it in this way.’

You wouldn't have come here if you didn't want something. You want to be free of boredom. As I cannot give you that freedom, you will get bored again; but if we can together understand the process of acquisition, of interest, of boredom, then perhaps there will be freedom. Freedom cannot be acquired. If you acquire it, you will soon be bored with it. Does not acquisition dull the mind? Acquisition, positive or negative, is a burden. As soon as you acquire, you lose interest. In trying to possess, you are alert, interested; but possession is boredom. You may want to possess more, but the pursuit of more is only a movement towards boredom. You try various forms of acquisition, and as long as there is the effort to acquire, there is interest; but there is interest; but there is always an end to acquisition, and so there is always boredom. Isn't this what has been happening?

'I suppose it is, but I haven't grasped the full significance of it.'

That will come presently.

Possessions make the mind weary. Acquisition, whether of knowledge, of property, of virtue, makes for insensitivity. The nature of the mind is to acquire, to absorb, is it not? Or rather, the pattern it has created for itself is one of gathering in; and in that very activity the mind is preparing its own weariness, boredom. Interest, curiosity, is the beginning of acquisition, which soon becomes boredom; and the urge to be free from boredom to interest to boredom again, till it is utterly weary; and these successive waves of interest and weariness are regarded as existence.

'But how is one to be free from acquiring without further acquisition?'

Only by allowing the truth of the whole process of acquisition to be experienced, and not by trying to be non-acquisitive, detached. To be non-acquisitive is another form of acquisition which soon becomes wearisome. The difficulty, if one may use that word, lies, not in the verbal understanding of what has been said, but in experiencing the false as the false. To see the truth in the false is the beginning of wisdom. The difficulty is for the mind to be still; for the mind is always worried, it is always after something, acquiring or denying, searching and finding. The mind is never still, it is in continuous movement. The past, overshadowing the present, makes its own future. It is a movement in time, and there is hardly ever an interval between thoughts. One thought follows another without a pause; the mind is ever making itself sharp and so wearing itself out. If a pencil is

being sharpened all the time, soon there will be nothing left of it; similarly, the mind uses itself constantly and is exhausted. The mind is always afraid of coming to an end. But, living is ending from day to day; it is the dying to all acquisition, to memories, to experiences, to the past. How can there be living if there is experience? Experience is knowledge, memory; and is memory the state of experiencing? In the state of experiencing, is there memory as the experiencer? The purgation of the mind is living, is creating. Beauty is in experiencing, not in experience; for experience is ever of the past, and the past is not the experiencing, it is not the living. The purgation of the mind is tranquility of heart.

— *Commentaries On Living, II Series*, pp 20-23.

HAPPINESS IS NOT OF TIME

She spoke easily, and words came naturally to her. Though still young, there was sadness about her; she smiled with distant remembrance, and her smile was strained. She had been married but had no children, and her husband had recently died. It was not one of those arranged marriages, nor one of mutual desire. She did not want to use the word 'love', for it was in every book and on every tongue; but their relationship had been something extraordinary. From the day they were married till the day of his death, there had never been so much as a cross word or a gesture of impatience, nor were they ever separated from each other, even for a day. A fusion had taken place between them, and everything else — children, money, work, society — had become of secondary importance. This fusion was not romantic sentimentalism or a thing imagined after his death, but it had been a reality from the very first. Their joy had not

been of desire, but of something that went beyond and above the physical. Then suddenly, a couple of months ago, he was killed in an accident. The bus took a curve too fast, and that was that.

‘Now I am in despair; I have tried to commit suicide, but somehow I can’t. To forget, to be numb — I have done everything short of throwing myself into the river, and I haven’t had a good night’s sleep these two months. I am in complete darkness; it is a crisis beyond my control which I cannot understand, and I am lost’.

She covered her face with her hands. Presently she continued.

‘It is not a despair that can be remedied or wiped away. With his death, all hope has come to an end. People have said I will forget and remarry, or do something else. Even if I could forget, the flame has gone out; it cannot be replaced, nor do I want to find a substitute for it. We live and die with hope, but I have none. I have no hope, therefore I am not bitter; I am in despair and darkness, and I do not want light. My life is a living death, and I do not want anyone’s sympathy, love, or pity. I want to remain in my darkness, without feeling, without remembering.’

Is that why you have come, to be made more dull, to be confirmed in your despair? Is that what you want? If it is, then you will have what you desire. Desire is as pliable and as swift as the mind; it will adjust itself to anything, mould itself to any circumstances, build walls that will keep out light. Its very despair is its delight. Desire creates the image it will worship. If you desire to live in darkness, you will succeed. Is this why you have come, to be strengthened in your own desire?

‘You see, a friend of mine told me about you, and I came impulsively. If I had stopped to think, probably I wouldn’t have come. I have always acted rather impulsively, and it has never led me into mischief. If you ask me why I have come, all I can say is that I don’t know. I suppose we all want some kind of hope; one cannot live in darkness forever.’

What is fused cannot be pulled apart; what is integrated cannot be destroyed; if the fusion is there, death cannot separate. Integration is not with another, but with and in oneself. The fusion of the different entities in oneself is completeness with the other; but completeness with the other is incompleteness in oneself. Fusion with the other is still incompleteness. The integrated entity is not made whole by another; because he is complete, there is completeness in all his relationships. What is incomplete cannot be made complete in relationship. It is illusion to think we are made complete by another.

‘I was made complete by him. I knew the beauty and the joy of it.’

But it has come to an end. There is always an ending to that which is incomplete. The fusion with the other is always breakable; it is always ceasing to be. Integration must begin within oneself, and only then is fusion indestructible. The way of integration is the process of negative thinking, which is the highest comprehension. Are you seeking integration?

‘I don’t know what I am seeking, but I would like to understand hope, because hope seems to play an important part in our life. When he was alive, I never thought of the future, I never thought of hope or happiness; to-morrow did not exist as far as I was concerned. I just lived, without a care.’

Because you were happy. But now unhappiness, discontent, is creating the future, the hope — or its opposite, despair and hopelessness. It is strange, is it not? When one is happy, time is non-existent, yesterday and to-morrow are wholly absent; one has no thought for the past or the future. But unhappiness makes for hope and despair.

‘We are born with hope and we take it with us to death.’

Yes, that is just what we do; or rather, we are born in misery, and hope takes us to death. What do you mean by hope?

‘Hope is to-morrow, the future, the longing for happiness, for the betterment of to-day, for the advancement of oneself; it is the desire to have a nicer home, a better piano or radio; it is the dream of social improvement, a happier world, and so on.’

Is hope only in the future? Is there not hope also in the what has been, in the hold of the past? Hope is in both the forward and the backward movement of thought. Hope is the process of time, is it not? Hope is the desire for the continuation of that which has been pleasant, of that which can be improved, made better; and its opposite is hopelessness, despair. We swing between hope and despair. We say that we live because there is hope; and hope is in the past, or, more frequently, in the future. The future is the hope of every politician, of every reformer and revolutionary, of every seeker after virtue and what we call God. We say that we live by hope; but do we? Is it living when the future or the past dominates us? Is living a movement of the past to the future? When there is concern for to-morrow, are you living? It is because to-morrow has become so important that there is hopelessness, despair. If the future is all-important and

you live for it and by it, then the past is the means of despair. For the hope of to-morrow, you sacrifice to-day; but happiness is ever in the now. It is the unhappy who fill their lives with concern for to-morrow, which they call hope. To live happily is to live without hope. The man of hope is not a happy man, he knows despair. The state of hopelessness projects hope or resentment, despair or the bright future.

‘But are you saying that we must live without hope?’

Is there not a state which is neither hope nor hopelessness, a state which is bliss? After all, when you considered yourself happy, you had no hope, had you?

‘I see what you mean. I had no hope because he was beside me and I was happy to live from day to day. But now he is gone, and ... We are free of hope only when we are happy. It is when we are unhappy, disease-ridden, oppressed, exploited, that to-morrow becomes important; and if to-morrow is impossible, we are in complete darkness, in despair. But how is one to remain in the state of happiness?’

First see the truth of hope and hopelessness. Just see how you have been held by the false, by the illusion of hope, and then by despair. Be passively watchful of this process — which is not as easy as it sounds. You ask how to remain in the state of happiness. Is not this very question based essentially on hope? You wish to regain what you have lost, or through some means to possess it again. This question indicates the desire to gain, to become, to arrive, does it not? When you have an objective, an end in view, there is hope; so again you are caught in your own unhappiness. The way of hope is the way of the future, but happiness is never a matter of time. When there was happiness, you never asked how to continue in it; if you had asked, you would have already tasted unhappiness.

'You mean this whole problem arises only when one is in conflict, in misery. But when one is miserable one wants to get out of it, which is natural.'

The desire to find a way out only brings another problem. By not understanding the one problem, you introduce many others. Your problem is unhappiness, and to understand it there must be freedom from all other problems. Unhappiness is the only problem you have; don't become confused by introducing the further problem of how to get out of it. The mind is seeking a hope, an answer to the problem, a way out. See the falseness of this escape, and then you will be directly confronted with the problem. It is the direct relationship with the problem that brings a crisis, which we are all the time avoiding; but it is only in the fullness and intensity of the crisis that the problem comes to an end.

'Ever since the fatal accident I have felt that I must get lost in my own despair, nourish my own hopelessness; but somehow it has been too much for me. Now I see that I must face it without fear, and without the feeling of disloyalty to him. You see, I felt deep down that I would in some way be disloyal to him if I continued to be happy; but now the burden is already lifting, and I sense a happiness which is not of time.'

— *Commentaries On Living, II Series*, pp 91-96.

LOVE IS NOT RESPECTABILITY

She was quite young, in her twenties, and recently married, but the passing years were already leaving their mark upon her. She said she was of good family, cultured and hard

working; she had taken her M. A. with honours, and one could see that she was bright and alert. Once started, she spoke easily and fluently, but she would suddenly become self-conscious and silent. She wanted to unburden herself, for she said she had not talked to anyone about her problem, not even to her parents. Gradually, bit by bit, her sorrow was put into words. Words convey meaning only at a certain level; they have a way of distorting, of not giving fully the significance of their symbol, of creating a deception that is entirely unintentional. She wanted to convey much more than merely what the words meant, and she succeeded; she could not speak of certain things, however hard she tried, but her very silence conveyed those pains and unbearable indignities of a relationship that had become merely a contract. She had been struck and left alone by her husband, and her young children were hardly companions. What was she to do? They were now living apart, and should she go back?

What a strong hold respectability has on us! What will they say? Can one live alone, especially a woman, without their saying nasty things? Respectability is a cloak^o for the hypocrite; we commit every possible crime in thought, but outwardly we are irreproachable. She was courting respectability, and was confused. It is strange how, when one is clear within oneself, whatever may happen is right. When there is this inward clarity, the right is not according to one's desire, but *whatever is* is right. Contentment comes with the understanding of *what is*. But how difficult it is to be clear!

'How am I to be clear about what I should do?'

Action does not follow clarity: clarity *is* action. You are concerned with what you should do, and not with being clear.

You are torn between respectability and what you should do, between the hope and *what is*. The dual desire for respectability and for some ideal action brings conflict and confusion, and only when you are capable of looking at *what is*, is there clarity. *What is* is not *what should be*, which is desire distorted to a particular pattern; *what is* is the actual, not the desirable but the fact. Probably you have never approached it this way; you have thought or cunningly calculated, weighing this against that, planning and counter-planning, which has obviously led to this confusion which makes you ask what you are to do. Whatever choice you may make in the state of confusion can only lead to further confusion. See this very simply and directly; if you do, then you will be able to observe *what is* without distortion. The implicit is its own action. if *what is* is clear, then you will see that there is no choice but only action, and the question of what you should do will never arise; such a question arises only when there is the uncertainty of choice. Action is not of choice; the action of choice is the action of confusion.

‘I am beginning to see what you mean: I must be clear in myself, without the persuasion of respectability, without self-interested calculation, without the spirit of bargaining. I am clear, but it is difficult to maintain clarity, is it not?’

Not at all. To maintain is to resist. You are not maintaining clarity and opposing confusion: you are experiencing what is confusion, and you see that any action arising from it must inevitably be still more confusing. When you experience all this, not because another has said it but because you see it directly for yourself, then the clarity of *what is* is there; you do not maintain clarity, it is there.

'I quite see what you mean. Yes, I am clear; it is all right. But what of love? We don't know what love means. I thought I loved, but I see I do not.'

From what you have told me, you married out of fear of loneliness and through physical urges and necessities; and you have found that all this is not love. You may have called it love to make it respectable, but actually it was a matter of convenience under the cloak of the word 'love'. To most people, this *is* love, with all its confusing smoke: the fear of insecurity, of loneliness, of frustration, of neglect in old age, and so on. But all this is merely a thought process, which is obviously not love. Thought makes for repetition, and repetition makes relationship stale. Thought is a wasteful process, it does not renew itself, it can only continue; and what has continuity cannot be the new, the fresh. Thought is sensation, thought is sensuous, thought is the sexual problem. Thought cannot end itself in order to be creative; thought cannot become something other than it is, which is sensation. Thought is always the stale, the past, the old; thought can never be new. As you have seen, love is not thought. Love is when the thinker is not. The thinker is not an entity different from thought; thought and the thinker are one. The thinker is the thought.

Love is not sensation; it is a flame without smoke. You will know love when you as the thinker are not. You cannot sacrifice yourself, the thinker, for love. There can be no deliberate action for love, because love is not out of the mind. The discipline, the will to love, is the thought of love; and the thought of love is sensation. Thought cannot think about love, for love is beyond the reaches of the mind. Thought is continuous, and love is inexhaustible. That which is inexhaustible is ever new, and that which has continuance is

ever in the fear of ending. That which ends knows the eternal beginning of love.

— *Commentaries On Living*, pp 183-186.

WORDLESS COMMUNICATION

Anandamoyi Ma, the most famous of the then-living deified 'Mothers' (women who in their lifetime transcended the self and became symbols of Śakti, the primordial mother as energy), with a very large following in North India, came to meet Krishnaji. They met in the garden, as the Mother never entered the home of a householder. She did not speak English, and spoke through a translator. She had a radiant, smiling presence. She said that she had seen a photograph of Krishnaji many years before and knew that he was very great. She asked him, 'Why do you deny *gurus*? You who are the *Guru of Gurus*' (this was translated to him).

He replied, 'People use the *guru* as a crutch'.

'People come to listen to you in thousands', she said. 'That means you are a *guru*.' He held her hand gently and did not answer.

Many visitors came and prostrated themselves at the feet of K and Anandamoyi Ma. Anandamoyi Ma accepted their greetings, but Krishnaji was embarrassed. As always, he would not permit them to bow down, but sprang to his feet and bent down to touch the feet of the seeker of blessing.

Later, after Anadamoyi Ma left, Krishnaji spoke of her with warmth and affection. There had been communication, though

much of it had been wordless. He was, however, horrified at the prostrating, hysterical women followers who surrounded her.

— *Krishnamurti: A Biography*, p 144.

ALONE ON THE ROUGH ROAD

She was carrying a large basket on her head, holding it in place with one hand; it must have been quite heavy, but the swing of her walk was not altered by the weight. She was beautifully poised, her walk easy and rhythmical. On her arm were large metal bangles which made a slight tinkling sound, and on her feet were old, worn-out sandals. Her *sari* was torn and dirty with long use. She generally had several companions with her, all of them carrying baskets, but that morning she was alone on the rough road. The sun wasn't too hot yet, and high up in the blue sky some vultures were moving in wide circles without a flutter of their wings. The river ran silently by the road. It was a very peaceful morning, and that solitary woman with the large basket on her head seemed to be the focus of beauty and grace; all things seemed to be pointing to her and accepting her as part of their own being. She was not a separate entity, but part of you and me, and of that tamarind-tree. She wasn't walking in front of me, but I was walking with that basket on my head. It wasn't an illusion, a thought-out, wished-for, and cultivated identification, which would be ugly beyond measure, but an experience that was natural and immediate. The few steps that separated us had vanished; time, memory, and the wide distance that thought breeds, had totally disappeared. There was only that woman, not I looking at her. And it was a long way to the town, where she would sell the contents of her

basket. Towards evening she would come back along that road and cross the little bamboo bridge on her way to her village, only to appear again the next morning with her basket full.

— *Commentaries On Living, III Series*, pp 32-33.

KFI RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP

Applications are invited for a Research Scholarship of Rs 3000/- per month with free accommodation and meals, offered by the Krishnamurti Foundation India to a scholar who wishes to investigate the relationship between the Buddha's teaching and the teachings of J. Krishnamurti.

The scholar should have studied philosophy and have a deep interest in Krishnamurti's teachings. He can reside at any of the centres of the Krishnamurti Foundation India — in Varanasi, Madras, Rishi Valley or Bangalore. He will have access to the libraries of all the Krishnamurti centres as well as the Adayar Library of the Theosophical Society and the library of the Tibetan Institute of Higher Studies in Sarnath, Varanasi. Professors Rinpoche Samdhong and Krishnanath at Varanasi, and Śrīmatī Radha Burnier and Ahalya Chari at Madras will be available for consultation.

Those interested should write, enclosing their bio-data, to Prof. P. Krishna, Krishnamurti Foundation India, Rajghat Fort, Varanasi — 221 001.

APPLICATIONS INVITED

RAJGHAT EDUCATION CENTRE

Applications are invited for the following positions at the Rajghat Education Centre (Preference will be given to those interested in J. Krishnamurti's teachings. Retired persons in good health may also apply):

1. Finance Officer, Rajghat Education Centre.

2. Co-ordinator, Translation Cell in the Krishnamurti Study Centre to oversee translation, refereeing and publication of Krishnamurti's books in Hindi.
3. Archivist for the Study Centre.
4. Director, Rajghat Rural Centre, to plan and oversee the working of the entire Rural Centre, which consists of: (i) a rural primary school (ii) a charitable hospital (iii) an agricultural farm (iv) a livestock farm and (v) a vocational training centre for village women.

For all posts, salary is negotiable. Free accommodation, subsidized and modest health care are available on the campus. Those interested should write to:

The Secretary,
Rajghat Education Centre (KFI),
Rajghat Fort,
Varanasi — 221 001

giving details of their qualifications, experience and interests.

RISHI VALLEY EDUCATION CENTRE

Persons interested in Computer Hardware and Networking may kindly contact: The Secretary,

Rishi Valley Education Centre,
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Andhra Pradesh — 517 352.

OBITUARY

Theodore O.P. Lilliefelt (1906-1998)

Theodore O.P. Lilliefelt, affectionately known to his many friends and associates as 'Theo', died in Ventura, California on April 27 1998 after a long illness.

Theo was a founding member of the Krishnamurti Foundation of America, and remained a devoted friend of Krishnamurti's until the latter's death in 1986.

Theo was born in 1906 into an aristocratic family in Swedish Estonia. The several languages he learned as a child — English, Swedish, German, French, and Russian — prepared him for an international career that took him eventually to the United Nations.

Internationalism for Theo was a current that ran deep and wide. In 1947, shortly after India became independent, he joined the Kalakshetra Foundation at Madras and worked with Rukmini Devi Arundale for five years. In 1952, after attending a series of talks by J. Krishnamurti, he came within the ambit of a teacher who was saying, 'You are the World'. That was a message that Theo carried through with great force in his own life.

Through his contact with Krishnamurti, Theo met Erna Wehrle, who had also been drawn to Krishnamurti's teachings; and in 1954 they joined their lives in marriage. They had a long and fruitful life together, sustained by mutual devotion and shared interests. Together Theo and Erna built a home in Ojai Valley to which they retired in 1963, after Theo completed his assignment with the UN.

Theo's many gifts, his wide experience of human affairs and his forthright manner contributed greatly to the new Krishnamurti Foundation in America. He and Erna were also active in establishing the Oak Grove School in Ojai.

Ever the public spirited citizen, Theo was actively associated with public interest and environmental concerns. As President of the Ojai Music Board, he presided over the annual Ojai Music Festival which brought many well-known musicians to Ojai Valley, and he joined ranks with concerned citizens in several battles to protect and preserve the ecology of Ojai Valley.

Theodore Lilliefelt is gone but something of his large and stalwart presence remains in the many recorded discussions and dialogues in which he took part, with other Trustees, with Krishnamurti. In these dialogues his commanding voice can still be heard, passionate in its conviction and firm in his devotion to Krishnamurti's Teaching and its continued presence in the activities of daily life.

— R.H.

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