

# Krishnamurti Foundation India Bulletin

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## FROM THE EDITOR

The present issue of the *Bulletin* consists of a discussion that took place in the early fifties at Rishi Valley School. Rishi Valley School was established in 1931, but had closed down for a year in 1949. So when it re-opened in 1950, with F.Gordon Pearce as Principal, it was a new beginning. Mr F.G. Pearce was a seasoned educator with several decades of experience in the Indian educational system. And although he had not worked with Krishnamurti's idea of education, he found the prospect, as he put it, 'fraught with promise'. As the Principal, he very soon attracted a group of gifted teachers that included the notable David Horsburgh. The level of discourse during the ten years that Pearce was principal centred around Krishnamurti's thoughts on freedom and the place of authority in an educational institution.

We find Krishnamurti presenting his thoughts simply. Very early on he emphatically declares, 'I am not making myself into an authority, nor am I trying to organise. I am *not* organising.' In the course of the discussion he tells the teachers that authority is 'the power to direct, to change, to control, with which you are equipped. To surround a boy with authority "for his own good"'. He accepts a teacher's suggestion that an authoritarian attitude is rooted in the sense, 'I have more knowledge; take what I give'. He then suggests that the truly non-authoritarian relationship has its roots in a self-questioning inwardness that promotes observation of the self: 'Am I discovering for myself

whether I am exercising authority or not? Can't you discover it?'

As a consequence of Krishnamurti's consistent and many-faceted non-authoritarian thought, his vision of education is pluralistic. While the non-authoritarian core of his teaching is the awakening of an intelligence which sees clearly both inner processes and outer realities, the design of the school, the structure of its classrooms, its curriculum of study are delegated to the Principal and team of teachers.

R.H.

## FIND OUT IF YOU ARE BOUND BY AUTHORITY

**J KRISHNAMURTI (K):** We shall, this day, continue our discussion on 'authority' and the 'conditioned mind'. I don't think we are sufficiently awake to the enormous problems that the teacher has to face. Are we only concerned with imparting information to the boy, or in creating a new, free boy, a boy with a mind which is free, pliable, not bound, not crippled, a boy capable of intelligent and direct action?

Most of us are actually concerned with the giving of information and there we stop. We do not see how unintelligent we are when we are conditioned. When the mind is not free, one cannot be intelligent. Therefore, each one should find out how he is conditioned and, then, break through it.

Probably, some of you have not thought about this at all.

**QUESTION (Q):** I have deeply thought over this. I know I am conditioned. But I do not know how I can help the child.

**K:** Don't carry your conditioned mind always with you. Can't you deal with the child leaving the conditioned mind aside? The more you plug it away, the better.

What are we discussing now? This morning, let us take something like 'authority' and work out – completely –

all the implications, and let us also see how we can deal with the child without the conditioning influences. Let us discuss the general feeling, the general outlook, of authority.

What do we mean by 'authority'?

**Q:** The teacher telling the boy, 'I have more knowledge; take what I give'.

**K:** Efficiency, capacity and knowledge give you a certain sense of power which you want to exercise over others. If I am inefficient, I look up to one who is efficient, so that I may survive. Thus, I gradually create an authority. There is another type: You are efficient and you know more as to what is 'good' and what is 'bad', what is 'moral' and what is 'immoral', and you impose this on another who is younger, less experienced, less mature.

You have a background already created and handed over to you, and you exercise authority. Authority is the power to direct, to change, to control, with which you are equipped. To surround a boy with authority 'for his own good' – is this the correct method of educating the boy? There is difference between individuals. But this hierarchical outlook with its sychophantism, looking up to another, adulation and so on – is this the right atmosphere in which the boy can grow and be intelligent?

**Q:** What really creates authority in an individual is the helplessness and inefficiency of others working with that individual. There is a saying that the autocracy of the wise is the salvation of the ignorant. But we see that the exercise of authority does not develop intelligence, though it helps us to run an institution.

**K:** Why are you authoritarian? Is it not more deeper and psychological than the mere running of the machinery of the institution?

**Q:** If I have ten boys, how can I manage them without exercising authority?

**K:** If you have only ten boys, why should there be any difficulty? Probably, the boys are not interested in what you are saying. You have to find out what each boy is interested in, and deal with each of your ten boys individually.

**Q:** This means too much work for the teacher.

**K:** Then you are not fit to be a teacher.

**Q:** What about satisfying the parents of the boys?

**K:** If you help the boy to grow up into a free and intelligent lad, the parent will feel more happy with the boy and more satisfied with you than if you merely coached up the boy for an examination.

**Q:** But we are all caught up in a system. Where is the time for us to devote the necessary attention to each boy individually?

**K:** As far as you are concerned, the boys whom you teach will pass through a college and get a job in about 10 to 15 years. Can't you *within* this period find out what is good for the boy?

**Q:** Suppose I ask each boy what he is interested in, and help him to progress towards it, it might be all right.

**K:** No. The boy does not know what he is interested in. Don't throw the responsibility onto the boy. You will have to constantly observe him, work with him, be humble with him, and find out.

**Q:** Then what about the system?

**K:** You have to bring up the boy so as to break the system.

**Q:** By 'system' I mean the objective of the school, namely, giving information to the boy.

**K:** While taking active interest in the boy, you can certainly introduce all the information required. The important thing is that you should study the boy, and find out what he is interested in. You have to make him feel secure with you and then you can find out.

**Q:** I now see that 'pushing' does not do any good.

**K:** If you are free of authority, how are you going to deal with the child?

I am conditioned in tradition, in authority, in discipline. I see that authority does not create intelligence. I want the boy to grow into a creative, free individual. I am authority-bound and crippled; yet I encourage him to criticise me, to question me.

If you are conditioned and if you exercise authority, but tell the boy not to be conditioned, the boy will criticise you. In your relation with the boy, you have to find out how you exercise authority. He will point out, and you must be prepared to learn from him as much as you expect him to learn from you.

Because you think that authority is wrong, would you allow the boy complete freedom to do just as he likes: to hit you on the head, to spit in the room, and so on? Obviously, you cannot! Experiments have been made in giving complete freedom to boys, and the results have been a complete mess.

If I feel that authority ensures some order, general comfort to the teacher, and orderliness in the class, then I exercise authority. But if I feel that authority is not the true way of education, will I not find a way of giving the boy freedom *and* watching him all the time?

**Q:** There are instances where immediate action is necessary, which may be construed as exercise of authority. When a boy is endangering his own safety, I may have to use physical force on the boy. I do not want to dominate, but physical interference is necessary.

**Q:** Is not the exercise of authority discoverable by the individual? Is it exercise of authority if you forcibly take a boy away from proximity to a cobra?

**K:** Am I discovering for myself whether I am exercising authority or not? Can't you discover it? If this is clear, it does not matter what act you do; but you have to find out whether, in doing that particular act, you are exercising authority.

**Q:** What is the inward urge in doing a thing?

**K:** After all, the profession of a teacher is the highest and most difficult of all professions. To be a teacher demands

the greatest vision, the greatest intelligence. Most of us, though we may have intelligence, have not pulled out and utilised that intelligence.

You can, if you are alert, find out whether you are authority-bound. Even if you use force on a boy, you can – without exercising authority – take the boy out for a walk, and explain why you acted in the manner.

**Q:** We should not make the boy feel that he is inferior, stupid; we should not build up inferiority in him. Authority is only a short-cut to make the teacher comfortable in doing his work as a teacher.

**K:** At least a few of you should be dedicated to this way where there would be no exercise of authority. You shall then bring in the other teachers, also.

It is much easier to get things done through conditioning: forcing, compelling, cajoling or offering a reward. If you are concerned only with easy achievement, then you must exercise authority.

All who are working with you have to co-operate to bring about a new state in yourself and in the boy, to create an environment where there is no conditioning.

Are we too tired, too old, too bored mentally, to try this new method?

**Q:** The trouble is that the boys have no freedom to think because the boys are always eager to find out an answer which would satisfy the examiner.

**K:** Where is the intelligence in an examination?

You have agreed that exercise of authority is no good. Then, what are you going to do? If you vitally feel that this is the right way, you will discuss with each other, dedicate yourselves to the work, and create a new school.

**Q:** For this work, youthfulness is necessary.

**K:** Why youthfulness? The youth has his own problems.

**Q:** We have not got the energy of youth.

**K:** Have you not got vitality now? Youthfulness has not any thing vital to do with this, which you cannot do. You have not thought about it. Is it not possible to work out how you would set about this, without systematising it? This cannot be systematised. When you act without exercising authority, you will deal with each situation as it arises. You may completely fail, but this does not matter.

**Q:** We are conditioned to achieve success.

**K:** The pursuit of success would really mean exercising authority.

**Q:** We are afraid to try the new method.

**K:** No, you are not afraid. You have not thought about it fully. You have been beaten by life, *but* you can get together and see how far you can go in experimenting with the new way. If you are clear, you will attract. You are afraid to be pioneers.

**Q:** We have to watch ourselves and see that we are not authoritarian.

**K:** If you are really concerned with freedom from authority, then every teacher in the school is equally

important; there is no enormous prestige, as at present, in being the Principal of the school.

**Q:** Some people have to be here because they cannot be anywhere else. So it is impossible to talk frankly.

**K:** Now the circumstances have not been created for it. 'This is our school' should be the feeling of all. We have no vitality because we have not understood clearly what we want to do.

**Q:** Each man must have his own school – for if more people join together, there is bound to be conflict.

**Q:** Suppose one teacher comes and criticises me when I have tried. What am I to do to avoid conflict?

**K:** Are you patient enough to find out if he is criticising you out of facts? Why not try and see if there is any justification for criticism, see whether you have exercised authority?

Is it not possible to do this work of running a school in a collective way? Does not this freedom from authority give you a feeling of relief? Don't the boys work better when they are happy and free? Does not exercise of authority destroy their happiness?

**Q:** This requires more vigilance, more exertion. Therefore, we are not willing to try this out.

**K:** It is not only the exercise of authority that has to be thrown out, but also the whole tradition of authority – the ritual, the guru, the book.

**Q:** The man who knows becomes an authority.

**K:** Why do you worship the man who imparts knowledge to you? In exchange for knowledge, he accepts your money, your adulation. The cultivated worship of the man who knows is, really, the exercise of authority.

**Q:** Tentatively you accept the knowledge of a great scientist.

**K:** You do not worship him. See how gurus thrive! Your relationship with a man possessing more knowledge should not lead to the worship of that man. Why should the person be worshipped, and not the knowledge?

**Q:** Even when you respect or love anyone, why should that cloud us into making an authority of him?

**K:** Are we really convinced that authority is wrong – whoever it may be who says something: I or anyone else?

**Q:** Yes, we feel so. And we want to find out, with your help, what we should do.

**K:** Since you are all a group of people supposed to be working in one direction, is it not necessary to find out whether you hear the challenge and what your response to it is? If you see the importance of this, you will then go on experimenting with it as occasion after occasion arises.

All the teachers should have a common objective so that the work may be creative. If anybody is hesitant, let us discuss and find out. Authority is negative. What we are talking about is positive. We have all the time to be watchful, which is a constant endeavour.

The Communists started by saying, 'No authority', but now they are up to their neck in it! To create a new school, we have to find out whether you and I agree – not merely verbally or financially – about this. The Trustees have to be wholly with the teachers and the teachers with the Trustees. All will have to work together.

**Q:** Is not 'no authority' an objective?

**K:** No. I feel that to bring about an integrated, intelligent, free individual is essential. I also feel that I must help to bring this about. Exercise of authority in any form prevents this. So there is no objective.

We agree that authority is pernicious and we have to work together as intelligent human beings. We criticise one another with a view to knowing when and in what way we are exercising authority.

We are interested in teaching because it is the highest profession. We have to struggle for it.

**Q:** Unless I am interested, I have no place here.

**K:** Before you march out of the place, will you not spend some time to find out, examine, analyse, and go into the matter? Start on the basis of 'our school' and work together. You can soon find out what each can do, what function each can perform. Our function is as good, as important, as another's.

*November 4, 1952*  
*Discussion with the teachers at Rishi Valley*

## **A REPORT ON THE KFI ANNUAL GATHERING**

The Annual Public Gathering of the Krishnamurti Foundation India was held at the Rajghat Education Centre, Varanasi from the 5th to the 8th of November, 2012. About 250 people – most from India, and some from abroad – participated in the Gathering. The theme of the Gathering was ‘Living and Dying’.

On the 5th of November, the Gathering was inaugurated in the open-air Amphitheatre by Prof. P. Krishna. He welcomed all the participants, and gave a brief history of the song *bhayo prabhat* which was written, set to music, and sung by Sri Kanitkar to welcome Krishnamurti to Varanasi when he first came to the place in 1911. The song was sung by the teachers of the Rajghat Besant School immediately after the inauguration. Sri Rajesh Dalal spoke on the purpose of the Gathering, and introduced the theme of the Gathering: Living and Dying. He talked about the intention of the Gathering: to create an ambience

that would enable the participants to enter into a spirit of serious inquiry and dialogue regarding the fundamental issues of life. After the morning talk, the participants broke up into small groups for the purpose of having more 'intimate' dialogues.

On the second day, Prof. Samdhong Rimpoche, a trustee of the KFI and the ex-Prime Minister of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile, spoke on 'Karma and Reincarnation' from a Buddhist standpoint. He talked about how the mind is a sense that does not originate from the brain but has the capacity to be aware, and perceive both the inner and the outer. He stated that there is a subtle consciousness which does not disappear with the disintegration of the body when it dies, and is a part of the continuum of consciousness. Prof. Rimpoche emphasized that sensitivity is essential for love, and sensitivity denotes awareness of sensations devoid of dogmas, beliefs, and so on.

On the third day, Sri S. P. Kandaswamy, the Secretary of the KFI, addressed the participants, and mentioned some related basic insights of Krishnamurti. He said that we humans are so lost in the thoughts of the past and future that we never realize the 'slipping away of the present'. He pointed out that the reason why relationships lack depth today is because they are based on images. He used Krishnamurti's metaphor of two parallel railway lines that never meet to describe our relationships.

Each morning the participants went into their allotted groups to have dialogues around questions arising from the talks. Some of the questions and issues that were raised and discussed were:

1. Why are we not able to translate K's teachings into daily living?
2. Why, even after many years of studying K's teachings, is there still very little change?
3. What is our relationship with living/life and dying/death?
4. What is the relationship between sorrow, time and thought?
5. What is the role of thinking/analysis in the inquiry into life?
6. How is one to stop the mind's constant chattering?
7. What is real silence?
8. What is the individual, the "I", the centre?
9. What is transformation? Is it dependent on time?
10. Why is there no sense of urgency?

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**KRISHNAMURTI FOUNDATION INDIA**

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