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FROM THE EDITOR

*Knowledge is a flash of light between two darknesses;
but knowledge cannot go above and beyond that darkness.*

Krishnamurti's views on knowledge, its limits and its place in self-understanding, are assembled in this issue of the *Bulletin*. The sentence quoted above is from the first volume of *Commentaries on Living*, a series published in the early sixties, and is part of the first selection in the issue. The somewhat difficult sentence is unique among Krishnamurti's extensive writings about knowledge in that it alludes to knowledge as though it illuminates, like lightning; it shines but 'cannot go above and beyond that darkness'. Krishnamurti states that 'we have our being in the past' and that the future is merely 'the past pushing its way through the uncertain present'. He describes the present as 'a gap, an interval' that the 'intermittent light of knowledge' covers up. 'But', he concludes, 'this emptiness holds the miracle of life'.

In the second selection, from *The First and Last Freedom*, Krishnamurti talks about the 'known', or assimilated knowledge, that is, knowledge that survives as memory. The known is incapable of revealing what is new but can project images. It follows from the argument that knowledge in the form of information, books, and scholarship cannot reach God, who is always in the realm of the unknown.

In the first selection, Krishnamurti's use of 'light' and 'darkness' as metaphors suggests that knowledge passes into the past as 'the known' but also illuminates. 'What does it illuminate?', one might well ask. The answer is not

given in either of the above selections. If one were to venture an opinion, you could say that knowledge, however intermittent, illuminates objects of the external and internal worlds, and in doing so casts a shadow over the present. The present, which is beyond the grasp of the knowledge, 'holds the miracle of life'. The words 'gap', 'interval', and 'emptiness' all refer to the hidden present.

In February 8, 1981 – which was the last talk in that series and which is the third selection contained in this issue – the metaphor of knowledge as light is left behind; knowledge is identified with the known, with the entire gamut of what is experienced: '... Knowledge is acquired through experience which then is stored up in the brain as memory and thought, and [from that we] act.' The truths of science, technology and everyday practice are encompassed within the domain of 'the known'.

The observation that 'knowledge must be set aside for the unknown to be' is the thread that consistently runs through all four selections. What needs further elucidating is the metaphor in the first selection, 'Knowledge is a flash of light between two darknesses.' Does 'light' stand for the flash of light, the Eureka-insight of scientists and mathematicians? And, is Krishnamurti claiming that even the memory of such moments of discovery have to be set aside in order to 'come upon' the Eternal? As Alexander Grothendieck, the great mathematician and admirer of Krishnamurti says, 'In our acquisition of knowledge of the Universe (whether mathematical or otherwise) that which renovates the quest is nothing more or less than innocence . . .'

R.H.

**KNOWLEDGE IS A FLASH OF LIGHT
BETWEEN TWO DARKNESSES;
BUT KNOWLEDGE CANNOT GO ABOVE AND
BEYOND THAT DARKNESS**

We were waiting for the train, and it was late. The platform was dirty and noisy, the air acrid. There were many people waiting, like us. Children were crying, a mother was suckling her baby, the vendors were shouting their wares, tea and coffee were being sold, and it was an altogether busy and clamorous place. We were walking up and down the platform, watching our own footsteps and the movement of life about us. A man came up to us and began to talk in broken English. He said he had been watching us, and felt impelled to say something to us. With great feeling he promised he would lead a clean life, and that from this moment he would never smoke again. He said he was not educated, as he was only a rickshaw boy. He had strong eyes and a pleasant smile.

Presently the train came. In the carriage a man introduced himself. He was a well-known scholar; he knew many languages and could quote freely in them. He was full of years and knowledge, well-to-do and ambitious. He talked of meditation, but he gave the impression that he was not speaking from his own experience. His god was the god of books. His attitude towards life was traditional and conformatory; he believed in early, prearranged marriage and in a strict code of life. He was conscious of his own caste or class and of the differences in the intellectual capacity of the castes. He was strangely vain in his knowledge and position.

The sun was setting, and the train was passing through

lovely country. The cattle were coming home, and there was golden dust. There were huge, black clouds on the horizon, and the crack of distant thunder. What joy a green field holds, and how pleasant is that village in the fold of a curving mountain! Darkness was setting in. A big, blue deer was feeding in the fields; he did not even look up as the train roared by.

Knowledge is a flash of light between two darkneses; but knowledge cannot go above and beyond that darkness. Knowledge is essential to technique, as coal to the engine; but it cannot reach out into the unknown. The unknown is not to be caught in the net of the known. Knowledge must be set aside for the unknown to be; but how difficult that is!

We have our being in the past, our thought is founded upon the past. The past is the known, and the response of the past is ever overshadowing the present, the unknown. The unknown is not the future, but the present. The future is but the past pushing its way through the uncertain present. This gap, this interval, is filled with the intermittent light of knowledge, covering the emptiness of the present; but this emptiness holds the miracle of life.

Addiction to knowledge is like any other addiction; it offers an escape from the fear of emptiness, of loneliness, of frustration, the fear of being nothing. The light of knowledge is a delicate covering under which lies a darkness that the mind cannot penetrate. The mind is frightened of this unknown, and so it escapes into knowledge, into theories, hopes, imagination; and this very knowledge is a hindrance to the understanding of the unknown. To put aside knowledge is to invite fear, and to deny the mind, which is the only instrument of perception

one has, is to be vulnerable to sorrow, to joy. But it is not easy to put aside knowledge. To be ignorant is not to be free of knowledge. Ignorance is the lack of self-awareness; and knowledge is ignorance when there is no understanding of the ways of the self. Understanding of the self is freedom from knowledge.

There can be freedom from knowledge only when the process of gathering, the motive of accumulation, is understood. The desire to store up is the desire to be secure, to be certain. This desire for certainty through identification, through condemnation and justification, is the cause of fear, which destroys all communion. When there is communion, there is no need for accumulation.

Accumulation is self-enclosing resistance, and knowledge strengthens this resistance. The worship of knowledge is a form of idolatry, and it will not dissolve the conflict and misery of our life. The cloak of knowledge conceals but can never liberate us from our ever increasing confusion and sorrow. The ways of the mind do not lead to truth and its happiness. To know is to deny the unknown.

*Commentaries On Living: First Series,
Chapter 9: Knowledge*

KNOWLEDGE IS AN IMPEDIMENT TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE ETERNAL

QUESTION: *I gather definitely from you that learning and knowledge are impediments. To what are they impediments?*

J KRISHNAMURTI: Obviously knowledge and learning are an impediment to the understanding of the new, the timeless, the eternal. Developing a perfect technique does not make you creative. You may know how to paint marvellously, you may have the technique; but you may not be a creative painter. You may know how to write poems, technically most perfect; but you may not be a poet. To be a poet implies, does it not?, being capable of receiving the new; to be sensitive enough to respond to something new, fresh. With most of us knowledge or learning has become an addiction and we think that through knowing we shall be creative. A mind that is crowded, encased in facts, in knowledge – is it capable of receiving something new, sudden, spontaneous? If your mind is crowded with the known, is there any space in it to receive something that is of the unknown? Surely knowledge is always of the known; and with the known we are trying to understand the unknown, something which is beyond measure.

Take, for example, a very ordinary thing that happens to most of us: those who are religious – whatever that word may mean for the moment – try to imagine what God is or try to think about what God is. They have read innumerable books, they have read about the experiences of the various saints, the Masters, the Mahatma and all the rest, and they try to imagine or try to feel what the experience of another is; that is, with the known they try to approach the unknown.

Can you do it? Can you think of something that is not knowable? You can only think of something that you know. But there is this extraordinary perversion taking place in the world at the present time: we think we shall understand if we have more information, more books, more facts, more printed matter.

To be aware of something that is not the projection of the known, there must be the elimination, through the understanding, of the process of the known. Why is it that the mind clings always to the known? Is it not because the mind is constantly seeking certainty, security? Its very nature is fixed in the known, in time; how can such a mind, whose very foundation is based on the past, on time, experience the timeless? It may conceive, formulate, picture the unknown, but that is all absurd. The unknown can come into being only when the known is understood, dissolved, put aside. That is extremely difficult, because the moment you have an experience of anything, the mind translates it into the terms of the known and reduces it to the past. I do not know if you have noticed that every experience is immediately translated into the known, given a name, tabulated and recorded. So the movement of the known is knowledge, and obviously such knowledge, learning, is a hindrance.

Suppose you had never read a book, religious or psychological, and you had to find the meaning, the significance of life. How would you set about it? Suppose there were no Masters, no religious organizations, no Buddha, no Christ, and you had to begin from the beginning. How would you set about it? First, you would have to understand your process of thinking, would you not? – and not project yourself, your thoughts, into the future and

create a God which pleases you; that would be too childish. So first you would have to understand the process of your thinking. That is the only way to discover anything new, is it not?

When we say that learning or knowledge is an impediment, a hindrance, we are not including technical knowledge – how to drive a car, how to run machinery – or the efficiency which such knowledge brings. We have in mind quite a different thing: that sense of creative happiness which no amount of knowledge or learning will bring. To be creative in the truest sense of that word is to be free of the past from moment to moment, because it is the past that is continually shadowing the present. Merely to cling to information, to the experiences of others, to what someone has said, however great, and try to approximate your action to that – all that is knowledge, is it not? But to discover anything new you must start on your own; you must start on a journey completely denuded, especially of knowledge, because it is very easy, through knowledge and belief, to have experiences; but those experiences are merely the products of self-projection and therefore utterly unreal, false. If you are to discover for yourself what is the new, it is no good carrying the burden of the old, especially knowledge – the knowledge of another, however great. You use knowledge as a means of self-protection, security, and you want to be quite sure that you have the same experiences as the Buddha or the Christ or X. But a man who is protecting himself constantly through knowledge is obviously not a truth-seeker.

For the discovery of truth there is no path. You must enter the uncharted sea – which is not depressing, which is not being adventurous. When you want to find something new,

when you are experimenting with anything, your mind has to be very quiet, has it not? If your mind is crowded, filled with facts, knowledge, they act as an impediment to the new; the difficulty is for most of us that the mind has become so important, so predominantly significant, that it interferes constantly with anything that may be new, with anything that may exist simultaneously with the known. Thus knowledge and learning are impediments for those who would seek, for those who would try to understand that which is timeless.

*The First and Last Freedom
(Questions and Answers: 4 'On Knowledge')*

MEDITATION IS THE UNDERSTANDING OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE ENDING OF KNOWLEDGE

We began the series of these talks by enquiring into the salvaging of society: the society in which we live, the society which man has created in his relationship with others. We enquired whether society, which is man's relationship with man, can ever be transformed, can ever be salvaged. We enquired into the nature of society. Society is the product of human relationship; society is the consciousness of man. Consciousness is the society. And we went into the question whether that society (which apparently began from the immemorial days of man's existence) can ever be changed, transformed into a peaceful society, into a society in which we can live with honour and not be rooted in dishonour, and whether we can live without exploiting each other. I hope you understand.

Society, apparently, has never been able to be transformed. Man has tried every kind of way to bring about a different society: the Communists have tried it, the Socialists, the Capitalists, the Totalitarians have tried every kind of method to transform society and, apparently, society has never been able to be changed, because man himself has not been able to be changed. That is, man in his relationship with another has not been able to be changed. And 'society', which is an abstraction, is now being changed – not by man but by machines, not by any form of endeavour (political, religious, economic, and so on), but it has been changed by a machine which man has invented. It is called the 'computer'.

I won't go into all that, but one should realise what that computer can do! It is the product of thought, and whatever thought can do, the computer can do. It can learn, it can correct itself, it can think out problems, and introduce new problems. With the computer, the robot is changing industry. The Japanese are already doing it: introducing the computer and the robot to create cars, and so on and so on. So the computer is artificial intelligence; it can learn, it can correct itself, it can write out, compose music, and so on and so on. So the computer, the machine invented by man, is changing society. It is changing the structure of outward human existence. Whether you know about it or you are not conversant with it – perhaps it is of very little importance [to you] – it is taking place, it is happening. So: What is man, then? This is an important question you have to ask. If the machine can do everything that thought can do – it can invent gurus, rituals, belief in God, it can write poems, it can beat a grand master in chess, and so on – what is man, then?

I don't think many of us realise what a dangerous state we are in: man is now becoming more and more helpless, man is becoming a danger to man through the machine. These are facts, and not the speaker's invention. This machine – the computer – is going to change the structure of society. We have talked a great deal about it. Perhaps in India, in this part of the world, the danger man is facing, the crisis in his consciousness is not known.

As we said: Consciousness is the content; the content makes consciousness. What you think, what you believe, what your concepts, your ideals are, your anger, jealousy, your beliefs in God, your acceptance of gurus and their rituals and their absurdities – all that is part of consciousness. This consciousness is the consciousness of all human beings; it's not just your consciousness, it is the consciousness of all human beings wherever they live. If you examine it a little bit closely, objectively, you will find that wherever you live, whether in this part of the world or in the East, Far East, or in the West, man suffers, goes through various forms of anxieties, uncertainties, obeying, accepting, imitating, conforming. This is, psychologically, what man is. So you as a human being are the rest of mankind. This is a fact. We think we are individuals – but we are not – and, therefore, we seek individual salvation. But there is no individual salvation at all; there is only the salvation of the consciousness of man, of which you are. We have talked about that a great deal

We also talked about order. In our life there is so much disorder. That disorder is brought about by conflict in our relationship with each other. We all believe in something or other which contradicts other people's beliefs. We are all some form of nationalists, sectarians and that, again, brings conflict. We live in constant conflict, struggle with each

other. We belong to a certain community professing peace, but in that, too, there is hierarchical existence: the one who knows and the other who doesn't. This is the tradition, this is the whole way of living. So our consciousness – with its agonies, beliefs, sorrows, pleasures – is the consciousness of mankind. Wherever people live, mankind goes through every form of sorrow, pain, uncertainty, confusion, utter misery, loneliness, despair. Every form of neuroticism: this is the human consciousness of which we are. And this consciousness is the product of thought.

Thought has put together all our existence – both inwardly and outwardly. It has created marvellous architecture, great temples and the things that are in the temples, the marvellous mosques and all the things that are in the mosques, the cathedrals and all the things that are in the cathedrals. The rituals, the dogmas, the beliefs – all are the product of thought. There is nothing sacred that thought has produced. Thought itself is not sacred, but the thing that thought has produced we worship, we follow. (Please understand this very carefully.) And thought has brought about disorder: disorder in our private life, and disorder outwardly. This disorder cannot be brought into order by any government, by any religion, by any guru because they are all based on thought. And thought is a material process because it is based on knowledge, experience, stored in the brain as memory, and the response of that memory is thought. So whatever thought has produced, whatever it has written, whatever it has said – that there is the Timeless, the Eternal – nothing that thought has produced is sacred. But we worship that which is the product of thought – in a temple, in a guru. (One of the strange things in this country is personal worship. To worship another human being is the most undignified, inhuman thing to do.)

Thought has created disorder. That disorder is brought about in our personal relationship, which is based on 'image', about which we talked a great deal. The relationship between each other, man or woman, and so on, is based on image-making. If you have observed yourself, you will see that you have an image about your wife, or your husband, or your guru, and that image is produced, manufactured, put together by thought; so our relationship is not actual but a relationship between two images. Therefore there is – there must be – everlasting conflict. We went into that considerably. Perhaps those of you who are here for the first time may not understand it quickly and deeply, but you can see this obvious fact that you have an image about yourself – what you should be, what you are, what you might be – all put together by thought; and thought has built the image about each other, and that image has no relationship except with another image. So, we are saying, thought itself, which has created disorder, is disorder. Thought itself is disorder and, so, it cannot possibly bring about order.

We are going to go into that question because meditation is the understanding of knowledge; it is not sitting repeating some phrase, following a system which somebody has laid down. Whether it is Buddhist meditation or Tibetan or Zen, or your favourite guru putting out his particular form of meditation – it is not meditation because it is all based on thought! One must understand, very deeply, that it [this 'meditation'] is the nature of thought, because it is the outcome of knowledge. It is the outcome of knowledge, and knowledge is never, never complete. So thought is never complete and its action then must inevitably be incomplete; and therefore [there's] conflict.

As we said, we are thinking together. The speaker is not laying down any law. He has no authority. He is not a guru; he has no followers, because the follower destroys the guru and the guru destroys the follower. We are enquiring into the nature of knowledge. And meditation is the ending of knowledge. Our consciousness is the custodian of knowledge. Please, let us think together about all this; don't accept what the speaker is saying. He may sit a little higher on a platform, but that is merely for convenience. A little height doesn't give him any authority. If we could, for a change, co-operate together in our thinking! We are walking along a path, a road – not my road, or your road, or the guru's road! We are human beings, and we are walking together, investigating together, thinking together. And, so, please, don't go to sleep. We are together examining: What is meditation? – not 'how?' to meditate, which then becomes mechanical, which then becomes a repetitive, meaningless illusion.

Meditation is the way we live; meditation is part of our daily life. Meditation is not something separate but an actual activity in our daily life, and our daily life is based on knowledge, on memory, on remembrance – which is, our life is based on the past, the past experiences, the past knowledge, the past incidents, and all the remembrances of all that. Our life, our daily existence, is based on knowledge: psychological, inward knowledge, and scientific knowledge, the vast technological knowledge which has been accumulating with such rapidity within the last fifty years or so. Knowledge is the basis of our life. That knowledge is acquired through experience which then is stored up in the brain as memory and thought, and [from that we] act.

It is a fact that we are always operating from the past which is the known. The past meeting the present is modified and then goes on in the future. So our action is based on knowledge: how to speak a language is based on knowledge; how to drive a car; how to put things together. All that is outwardly but, also, inwardly [there is] knowledge. Our relationship with each other is based on knowledge, which is the image you have built about your wife, husband, and so on.

Now: Meditation is the understanding of knowledge and the ending of knowledge. As we said, our consciousness is the storehouse of knowledge: knowledge of fear, knowledge of pleasure, knowledge of all the travail, the labour, anxiety, jealousy, envy, the immense sorrow that mankind carries, the despairing loneliness, and all those entertaining activities through which we escape from the actual facts of life. All that consciousness is the storehouse of knowledge. You are the self, and the self is the essence of knowledge. Meditation is the enquiry – free, sceptical enquiry – into the whole field of knowledge which is our consciousness. To enquire freely, you must have doubt. Doubt is an extraordinary factor that cleanses the mind. Doubt – to doubt your guru, to doubt the tradition, to question your relationship, to never accept any psychological authority – gives freedom. [But doubt must be] like leading a dog on a leash. If you keep the dog all the time on a leash, the dog is never free to enjoy itself. So one must know the art of the whole movement of doubt, when to let it go, and when to hold it back. So we are asking, we are saying, we are enquiring together; please, it's 'together', which means: exercising our brains to enquire into what meditation is.

As long as we function in the field of knowledge – which we do: we are acting, functioning, living in the field of knowledge – as long as we are doing that, our brains become mechanical. It becomes routine: like going to the office from 9 o'clock in the morning and coming back home at 5 o'clock or 6 o'clock or whatever it is. This repetition, this constant mechanical way of living is essentially knowledge.

I hope, one hopes, that we are moving together

So: Our consciousness is the storehouse of knowledge. We know we are afraid; we know we are lonely; we know we have great sorrow; we know we are depressed, anxious, uncertain, unhappy, trying to fulfil, trying to become, trying to get something all the time. All that is the movement of knowledge. We are asking whether knowledge can come to an end – not the scientific knowledge, not the knowledge of driving a car, of speaking a language, writing a letter, not all the technological, physical knowledge; we are not talking about that; that must go on; that is inevitable, but we are talking about the psychological knowledge which always overcomes, distorts the technological knowledge. That is, technology has invented the most extraordinary instruments of war, and the psychological world is divided into nationalities, into various [groups]: socialist, communist, capitalist, and so on. The inward always overcomes the outer. Unless there is order inwardly, outwardly there will be disorder, there will be wars, and so on. So it becomes very urgent, important that we understand the whole psychological world of which man is, and that psychological world is the world of knowledge.

Knowledge means time. Time – of which we talked about the other day – are of three types. There is biological time,

psychological time, and time by the watch, that is, chronological time. Time psychologically is: I will become; I will be, if I am not [now]; if I am angry, I will be less angry tomorrow – all that implies psychological time. And there is biological time; time which is involved in the genes: the growth from childhood to manhood. Psychological time is knowledge. To know myself requires time. The self is put together by thought. This is obvious – isn't it? Thought has put together the structure, the psychological structure of the 'me', the self through education, through the past knowledge, and so on. The nature of 'me', 'you', as the self, is knowledge. The self is knowledge, and that knowledge requires time. So, to know oneself, we say, 'We need time'. So time is knowledge and knowledge is thought, so time is thought. And we think that the ending of knowledge, the ending of any fear, the ending of acquisitiveness, attachment needs time. We are saying: Time must have a stop; which is, thought must have a stop, and that is meditation.

Enquiry – to enquire, not follow any system – means freedom. [There must be] freedom to enquire, and you can only have that freedom if you begin to doubt, question, not accept any spiritual authority. Where there is authority in the world of the spirit, it is not spiritual; it – [authority] – destroys the spirit of man.

So, together, we are going to enquire whether this enormous field of knowledge which man has acquired, which is our consciousness, whether that consciousness can ever come to an end as knowledge. Are we following each other? [Are we following] all this, or is all this very strange? Or, probably, you are [just] not used to this kind of enquiry; probably you are all used to being told what to do: guided,

led; [you] follow a leader like so many sheep. Probably you are not free to enquire because if you begin to enquire, you awaken all the fears in you which you have submerged by accepting authority.

There must be freedom to enquire, and that freedom begins only when you are questioning, doubting, asking, never accepting, but always searching, asking, demanding. And that is why we are doing it now. So we are saying: Please don't accept a thing that the speaker is saying. Follow his reason which is logical; go into it step by step; [go into] all the subtleties that are involved in this. Your mind, your brain, has to be quick enough to follow – not drugged: drugged by a belief, drugged by following somebody. This demands that you be not the light of another, but a light to yourself, a light which comes through enquiry.

Religion is sceptical enquiry; religion is that. Religion isn't all the circus that goes on in the world. The puja, the rituals, the worship of idols, worship of symbols in the Christian world, and so on – that is not religion; that is just amusement; what is religion is sceptical enquiry into the whole of our existence which is our consciousness. Our consciousness is made up of its content. The content is your belief, your dogma, your rituals, your jealousies, your anxieties, your nationalities, your favourite guru, and so on, and so on. All that is your consciousness, and that is the essence of knowledge. Now we are asking (I am not asking but, please, let us ask together) whether that whole field of knowledge in which we have lived, in which there is conflict, in which there is never peace, in which there is never a sense of light but always strife, struggle, and the escape from reality, whether that knowledge can come to an end. *That* is meditation. Just see the reason, the logic of it.

You may intellectually – if you are intellectual or inclined to think intellectually – see the reason of this.

Please, first verbally understand – that’s the communication through words – then exercise your brains to be logical, objective, not personal. Then we can enquire into what religion is. Is that which is going on – is that religion? Putting on various clothes, and [performing] various types of rituals in which there is fear, superstition, worship of personalities, worship of symbols – is that religion? Obviously it is not! So if you discard all that – discard it absolutely – [then] there are no illusions but only the facing of facts – ‘facts’ being that which is actually happening in our daily life. Facts are that which is happening from the movement of thought which has put together our consciousness. So we are asking something; we’re asking whether thought, which is based on knowledge, whether thought – except in the technological world – can come to an end. Thought, as we said, is operating always in the field of knowledge, and when it is operating in that field it must be mechanical. And our brains have become mechanical: following systems, obeying, imitating, conforming, repeating, repeating, repeating in different forms. You may leave America to come to this country – [India] – and join some *ashrama* and think you are totally new, but you are not! It is the same problem that exists for each one of us.

So, how do we begin to enquire into the nature of religion? Man throughout millennia upon millennia has sought something beyond himself, something that which is not born of knowledge, something timeless, something most holy, sacred. Man has always sought that because he realises life is a flux, life is constant change, life is uncertainty, sorrow,

misery. So he says, 'There must be something beyond all this chaos'. And in his search he is trapped by the priest, by the guru, by some clever individual who has a certain philosophy. So he gets lost; he gets caught up in these things and, thus, he never finds that which is beyond time, beyond thought, beyond all measure. And meditation, which is part of the enquiry into what religion is, that enquiry is the ending of knowledge. You hear that statement – probably you have heard it many times. [It's] in your books or somebody tells you this: the ending of time, the ending of thought, the ending of knowledge. [Now]: Is that possible? Please, enquire with me.

Is it possible for the brain which has been accustomed, trained, conditioned to function within the field of knowledge – is it possible for that brain – to break through [all] that, through that conditioning? And there is a whole group who say, 'It is not possible; that is just imaginary'. So they say, 'As man is conditioned – conditioned within the field of knowledge, naturally – let us improve the conditioning ecologically, socially, morally, and so on, but [he'll] remain in that conditioning'. Which means: Remain in the prison and beautify the prison; make it more convenient for him to live in that prison. There is a whole school of philosophy of all that. Then there are the so-called religious people who have their belief in something which is non-existent: their gods, their rituals are all invented by thought. Thought, [and all] that which is created by thought, is not sacred. Though you may worship the image, that image is not sacred. You have made it sacred by your thought, and thought is a material process. If you realise all this, then you put aside all the religious nonsense – including your gurus with their authority. Then we can proceed to enquire, proceed to enquire with a free mind, a mind that is not clogged – clogged by fear, clogged by the

pursuit of pleasure, clogged by desire. And before we can meditate, there must be freedom from fear, otherwise that – [fear] – creates illusion. You may sit in a corner or repeat some mantra or follow some system or prostrate to some person, which is most undignified – it is unworthy of a human being to prostrate to another. All that must be totally set aside. This means that there must be no attachment whatsoever to anything, because only then is your mind, your brain free. And it's only in freedom that you can find truth. So meditation can only begin with the ending of fear. If you are afraid psychologically, [if you are] inwardly fearful because you want security, permanency, and so on – if there is fear – your meditation is utterly meaningless. If there is any kind of conformity, meditation has no meaning.

So there must be order in our relationship, not conflict. There must be the ending of sorrow – not only personal sorrow but the sorrow of mankind – and the understanding of what love is. Love – as we pointed out yesterday and other days – is not desire, is not pleasure, though we have translated love in the modern world into sexual pleasure, the pleasure of possession, the pleasure of being attached to something. All such forms of pleasure must end. And love is the very root of meditation. Without that love – which means there is no jealousy, no attachment, not a breath of hatred, [but] there is [only] that compassion with its intelligence – without that, without laying the foundation of all that, however you meditate, whatever you do, – you may sit by the hour in a room 'meditating' – it has no value. So one has to lay the foundation, *then* you can proceed to find out: What is knowledge?, and the ending of knowledge.

Also, one has to understand the whole movement of concentration. From childhood we are trained through schools, colleges and universities to concentrate.

Concentration. What is concentration? If you have gone into it, if you have examined it, what does it mean to concentrate, that is, to concentrate your energy on a particular thing, on a particular image, a picture, a word? That concentration is to exclude every other thought – you see this. When you are trying to concentrate, you are building a resistance to every movement of other thought than this one thought. Right? So in that concentration there is struggle, there is effort because your thought keeps on wandering all over the place, and thought tries to pull it back. You know all this. So concentration is a form of resistance.

Attention is something entirely different. When you attend – if you ever do – when you give attention, it means to give all your energy not to a particular thing but gathering all your energy to attend. That is: Are you now, if one may ask, attending or merely listening to a lot of words, getting emotional about those words, denying the meaning of those words because you believe in something or are you attending completely, listening with all your heart, with all your brain, with all your senses? If you are so completely attending, there is nothing more. *That* is meditation, [namely] that state of brain in which there is no centre from which you are attending. Concentration is always from a point to another point. Whereas attention is a state of the brain or the mind in which there is no point as the ‘me’ attending. Now: if you so listen, then you will find for yourself that the mind becomes, the brain becomes, astonishingly quiet. Please don’t be hypnotised by the speaker or be stimulated by the speaker because you have to be a light to yourself. And, as we said, if you listen not only to what the speaker is saying but also listen to your wife, to your husband, to your leader, to your teacher, to your guru – listen completely – then, out of that listening,

you find what is true and what is false, because in that listening there is no acceptance, in that listening there is not the one who knows and the other who does not know; there is only that acute activity of listening which is total attention.

When there is that total attention, which is, the brain becomes absolutely quiet, then the brain has its own movement [which is] not the movement of thought. I hope you see the difference. The brain must be in movement – it is its nature – but the movement that thought has created in the brain, *that* movement comes to an end. Therefore the brain which has its own natural activity, that activity may go on, but the brain has the capacity when there is this complete attention to become utterly quiet. That is, there is silence which thought can produce and there is silence which has nothing whatsoever to do with the activity of thought. You can make your brain completely still by thought controlling thought. That is, the controller is thought – he is put together by thought – and that controller says, ‘I am going to control thought’; he is playing a game with himself. But there is a silence which is not the silence of thought trying to become silent. There must be that silence. *That* is the ending of knowledge; that is the emptying of the content of consciousness which is the self, the ‘me’, my ego, myself. The ending of that self which is the essence of selfishness, which is the essence of desire, which is the essence of trying to become something – *that* must end. And that ends when the mind, the brain, has understood logically, reasonably, sanely the activity of knowledge which is the activity of the self with all its pleasures and agonies, miseries, confusion, uncertainties, sorrow. The self can never know what love is.

And in that silence – if you have gone that far – there is something beyond words, beyond all thought which time has not touched, which is the origin of all things. God is the invention of man, but *this* is not God-which-is-the-invention-of-man. This is the origin of all things and, therefore, the most sacred, most holy, timeless. These are just words, but if you live without fear, if you have understood knowledge, have gone beyond sorrow and, therefore, have this quality of love and compassion with its intelligence – having laid the foundation – then meditation is something marvellous, something that thought can never understand. Then only there is that which is timeless, most holy.

It's finished, sirs.

Bombay
February 8, 1981, 6th Public Talk



KNOWLEDGE IS NOT WISDOM

There is a distinction between intellect and intelligence. Intellect is thought functioning independently of emotion, whereas intelligence is the capacity to feel as well as to reason; and until we approach life with intelligence, instead of intellect alone, or with emotion alone, no political or educational system in the world can save us from the toils of chaos and destruction.

Knowledge is not comparable with intelligence, knowledge is not wisdom. Wisdom is not marketable, it is not a merchandise that can be bought with the price of learning or discipline. Wisdom cannot be found in books; it cannot be accumulated, memorized or stored up. Wisdom comes with the abnegation of the self. To have an open mind is more important than learning; and we can have an open mind, not by cramming it full of information but by being aware of our own thoughts and feelings, by carefully observing ourselves and the influences about us, by listening to others, by watching the rich and the poor, the powerful and the lowly. Wisdom does not come through fear and oppression, but through the observation and understanding of everyday incidents in human relationship. *Education and the Significance of Life, Chapter 3: Intellect, Authority and Intelligence.*

KNOWLEDGE IS NOT THE FACT; IT IS THE MOVEMENT OF THE PAST

Knowledge is not the fact; it is *about* the fact and that has its proper place, but knowledge prevents perception of what actually is; then corruption takes place Knowledge, particular or extensive, is the movement of the past, and when the past overshadows the actual, corruption takes place. Knowledge, projected into the future and directing what is happening now, is corruption. We are using the word 'corruption' to mean that which is being broken up, that which is not taken as a whole. The fact can never be broken up; the fact can never be limited by knowledge. The completeness of the fact opens the door to infinity. Completeness cannot be divided; it is not self-contradictory; it cannot divide itself. Completeness, wholeness, is infinite movement. Imitation, conformity, is one of the great factors of corruption of the mind; the example, the hero, the saviour, the guru, is the most destructive factor of corruption. To follow, to obey, to conform, deny freedom. Freedom is from the beginning, not at the end. It is not to conform, to imitate, accept first and eventually find freedom. That is the spirit of totalitarianism, whether of the guru or the priest. This is the cruelty, the ruthlessness, of the dictator, of the authority, of the guru or of the high priest. *Letters to Schools: February 1, 1979.*

ANNUAL PUBLIC GATHERING (KFI) 2014

The Annual Public Gathering of the Krishnamurti Foundation India was held at the Sahyadri Education Centre (KFI) from Thursday, 20 November to the forenoon of Sunday, 23 November, 2014.

The theme of the Gathering was 'Freedom and the First Step'. Over 250 people, including staff from the various KFI Centres, attended the Gathering.

The highlights of the programme were the morning talks given on three days by Prof. P Krishna, Sri S P Kandaswamy and Dr Shailesh Shirali respectively. While Prof. Krishna explored the question of what it would mean to understand ourselves, Sri Kandaswamy dwelt on the nature of the 'Inward Pilgrimage' that can happen in the light of Krishnamurti's teachings. Dr Shirali took the audience on a journey back in time, while touching upon the questions of where mankind could have taken the 'wrong turn' that Krishnamurti and Dr David Bohm talked about.

These talks were followed by the speakers fielding questions from the audience.

Small group discussions were held on the first and third days, based on the main theme of the Gathering and on the talks given by individual speakers.

Sri Kabir Jaithirtha anchored a panel discussion on the third day, the panel consisting of Sri Siddhartha Menon, Sri Abhijit Padte, Sri Amresh Kumar and Sri P Ramesh. Here, too, the discussion was followed by questions posed by members of the audience to the panellists.

Videos of the following talks were screened on the first, second and last day of the Gathering:

1. *How is freedom to be understood and lived?*
Third Public Talk at Brockwood Park,
September 1978
2. *The intelligence which brings order and peace.* Third Public Talk at Brockwood Park,
September 4th, 1982
3. *The Last Talk.* Madras, 4 January 1986

The gathering came to a close by mid-day on the 23 November, 2014.

P.R.

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Sd/-V. Aravindan
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