

# **Krishnamurti Foundation India Bulletin**

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Attention is a secular concept. The previous issue of the *Bulletin* explored Krishnamurti's transposition of this concept to a moral and spiritual framework, in which attention takes on normative overtones. Attention, usually understood as concentration, in his exposition becomes 'right attention' or 'total attention'.

The present issue of the *Bulletin* continues to explore the theme of attention through two texts, one drawn from a passage in *Freedom from the Known*, and the second from a discussion held at Saanen, in Switzerland. In the first, Krishnamurti probes the phenomenon against the background of conditioned consciousness. Conditioning is the 'total field in which thought functions and relationships exist'. The field contains ideas as well as 'intentions, desires, pleasures, fears, inspirations'. Embedded in it are seeds of violence, which have yielded a destructive harvest, apparent all round the world today.

Krishnamurti holds out the possibility of stepping out of the field, but not through a step-by-step analysis, because the field is unlimited and analysis circular – analysis is based on principles that take you right back into the field. Right attention or awareness leads to the understanding of 'the whole of your consciousness' and is the door to stepping out.

But when you look totally, you will give your whole attention, your whole being, everything of yourself: your eyes, your ears, your nerves; you will attend with complete self-abandonment, and then there is no room for fear, no room for contradiction, and therefore no conflict.

The second selection is a discussion in which Krishnamurti probes the concept of attention, with its associated concept of inattention. In Krishnamurti's understanding, attention is most emphatically not the opposite of inattention, 'the other side of the coin,' so to speak.

At this point in the discourse a crucially pertinent question is raised, 'Has attention the movement of time?' In other words, does attention *contain* the movement of time? Expressed in philosophical terms, is attention an intentional act? Or, to put the question more colloquially – is the act a goal-oriented act, motivated by self-interest or desire? The discourse that follows makes clear that what he has in mind is not an ordinary act of attention, but rather a meditative act of 'total attention in which concentration, which has a motive, and therefore an end, doesn't exist at all'.

The focus in the discourse shifts from the act of attention to a person, perhaps himself, who is endowed with 'total attention'. 'Attentive,' he says, 'I give my mind, my nerves, everything I have to attend, to listen, to see, and in that attention I have all the energy captured, all the energy is there. In that energy there is tremendous clarity. Now it is over, the next minute I am inattentive.' He concedes that even a totally attentive man is inattentive; he in fact implies that it arises out of a need 'to rest'.

What then is the difference between the inattention that attends in an enlightened man and an inattentive ordinary man whose life has been transformed by a transcendent experience: 'I have captured, for a second, attention, and I am struggling to maintain that attention. The struggle to maintain that attention is inattention, and out of that inattention I can't respond instantly; I will respond according to my tradition.' A crucial difference between the two persons is

that the awakening from inattention to attention in the former is instantaneous, while for the latter it is mired in time, effort and struggle; in order to recapture a state of total attention the person slips back into his or her own conditioning. And for him or her there may be no reawakening at all.

The abstract discussion of attention and inattention recalls the more vividly expressed portrait, in *Commentaries on Living, Second Series*, of an ordinary man whose life is devastated by his attempt to recapture a transcendent experience.

R. H.

## WHAT WILL OPEN THE DOOR?

When you become aware of your conditioning, you will understand the whole of your consciousness. Consciousness is the total field in which thought functions and relationships exist. All motives, intentions, desires, pleasures, fears, inspirations, longings, hopes, sorrows, joys are in that field. But we have come to divide this consciousness into the active and the dormant, the upper and lower levels – that is, all the daily thoughts, feelings and activities on the surface and below them, the so-called subconscious, the things with which we are not familiar, which express themselves occasionally through certain intimations, intuitions and dreams.

We are occupied with one little corner of consciousness which is most of our life; the rest, which we call the subconscious, with all its motives, its fears, its racial and inherited qualities, we do not even know how to get into. Now I am asking you, is there such a thing as the subconscious at all? We use that word very freely. We have accepted that there is such a thing, and all the phrases and jargon of the analysts and psychologists have seeped into the language; but is there such a thing? And why is it that we give such extraordinary importance to it? It seems to me that it is as trivial and stupid as the conscious mind – as narrow, bigoted, conditioned, anxious and tawdry.

So is it possible to be totally aware of the whole field of consciousness and not merely a part, a fragment, of it? If you are able to be aware of the totality, then you are functioning all the time with your total attention, not partial attention. This is important to understand because when you are being totally aware of the whole field of consciousness there is no friction. It is only when you divide consciousness, which is all thought, feeling and action, into different levels that there is friction.

We live in fragments. You are one thing at the office, another at home; you talk about democracy and in your heart you are autocratic; you talk about loving your neighbours, yet kill him with competition; there is one part of you working, looking, independently of the other. Are you aware of this fragmentary existence in yourself? And is it possible for a brain that has broken up its own functioning, its own thinking, into fragments – is it possible for such a brain to be aware of the whole field? Is it possible to look at the whole of consciousness completely, totally, which means to be a total human being?

If, in order to try to understand the whole structure of the ‘me’, the self, with all its extraordinary complexity, you go step by step, uncovering layer by layer, examining every thought, feeling and motive, you will get caught up in the analytical process which may take you weeks, months, years – and when you admit time into the process of understanding yourself, you must allow for every form of distortion because the self is a complex entity, moving, living, struggling, wanting, denying, with pressures and stresses and influences of all sorts continually at work on it. So you will discover for yourself that this is not the way; you will understand that the only way to look at yourself is totally, immediately, without time; and you can see the totality of yourself only when the mind is not fragmented. What you see in totality is the truth. Now can you do that? Most of us cannot because most of us have never approached the problem so seriously, because we have never really looked at ourselves. Never. We blame others, we explain things away or we are frightened to look. But when you look totally you will give your whole attention, your whole being, everything of yourself, your eyes, your ears, your nerves; you will attend with complete self-abandonment, and then there is no room for fear, no room for contradiction, and therefore no conflict.

Attention is not the same thing as concentration. Concentration is exclusion; attention, which is total awareness, excludes nothing. It seems to me that most of us are not aware, not only of what we are talking about but of our environment, the colours around us, the people, the shape of the trees, the clouds, the movement of water. Perhaps it is because we are so concerned with ourselves, with our own petty little problems, our own ideas, our own pleasures, pursuits and ambitions that we are not objectively aware. And yet we talk a great deal about awareness. Once, in India, I was travelling in a car. There was a chauffeur driving and I was sitting beside him. There were three gentlemen behind discussing awareness very intently and asking me questions about awareness and, unfortunately, at that moment the driver was looking somewhere else and he ran over a goat, and the three gentlemen were still discussing awareness – totally unaware that they had run over a goat. When this lack of attention was pointed out to those gentlemen who were trying to be aware, it was a great surprise to them.

And with most of us it is the same. We are not aware of outward things or of inward things. If you want to understand the beauty of a bird, a fly, or a leaf, or a person with all his complexities, you have to give your whole attention, which is awareness. And you can give your whole attention only when you care, which means that you really love to understand – then you give your whole heart and mind to find out.

Such awareness is like living with a snake in the room; you watch its every movement; you are very, very sensitive to the slightest sound it makes. Such a state of attention is total energy; in such awareness the totality of yourself is revealed in an instant.

When you have looked at yourself so deeply you can go much deeper. When we use the word ‘deeper’ we are not being comparative. We think in comparisons – deep and shallow, happy and unhappy. We are always measuring, comparing. Now is there such a state as the shallow and the deep in oneself? When I say, ‘My mind is shallow, petty, narrow, limited’, how do I know all these things? Because I have compared my mind with your mind which is brighter, has more capacity, is more intelligent and alert. Do I know my pettiness without comparison? When I am hungry, I do not compare that hunger with yesterday’s hunger. Yesterday’s hunger is an idea, a memory.

If I am all the time measuring myself against you, struggling to be like you, then I am denying what I am myself. Therefore I am creating an illusion. When I have understood that comparison in any form leads only to greater illusion and greater misery, just as when I analyse myself, add to my knowledge of myself bit by bit, or identify myself with something outside myself, whether it be the State, a saviour or an ideology – when I understand that all such processes lead only to greater conformity and therefore greater conflict – when I see all this, I put it completely away. Then my mind is no longer seeking. It is very important to understand this. Then my mind is no longer groping, searching, questioning. This does not mean that my mind is satisfied with things as they are, but such a mind has no illusion. Such a mind can then move in a totally different dimension. The dimension in which we usually live, the life of everyday which is pain, pleasure and fear, has conditioned the mind, limited the nature of the mind, and when that pain, pleasure and fear have gone (which does not mean that you no longer have joy: joy is something entirely different from pleasure) – then the mind functions in a different dimension in which there is no conflict, no sense of ‘otherness’.

Verbally we can go only so far: what lies beyond cannot be put into words because the word is not the thing. Up to now we can describe, explain, but no words or explanations can open the door. What will open the door is daily awareness and attention – awareness of how we speak, what we say, how we walk, what we think. It is like cleaning a room and keeping it in order. Keeping the room in order is important in one sense but totally unimportant in another. There must be order in the room but order will not open the door or the window. What will open the door is not your volition or desire. You cannot possibly invite the other. All that you can do is to keep the room in order, which is to be virtuous for itself, not for what it will bring. To be sane, rational, orderly. Then perhaps, if you are lucky, the window will open and the breeze will come in. Or it may not. It depends on the state of your mind. And that state of mind can be understood only by yourself, by watching it and never trying to shape it, never taking sides, never opposing, never agreeing, never justifying, never condemning, never judging – which means watching it without any choice. And out of this choiceless awareness perhaps the door will open and you will know what that dimension is in which there is no conflict and no time.

*Freedom from the Known, Chapter 3*

## ATTENTION AND NON-ATTENTION

**J KRISHNAMURTI (JK):** Has attention the movement of time? So I have to enquire into the factor of inattention, and not into what is attention. Please see the importance of it. That is, I am attentive one minute – that’s quite a long time. Attentive: I give my mind, my nerves, everything I have to attend, to listen, to see. And in that attention I have all the energy captured, all the energy is there. In that energy there is tremendous clarity. Now it is over, the next minute I am inattentive. Right? Then I say to myself, ‘Goodness, I wish I could keep that attention all the time’. So I begin to train – listen to it – train myself. I begin to train myself and say, ‘I must be attentive’, ‘I must watch myself’, ‘I must drill myself’, ‘I must eat the right food’, ‘I must concentrate on attention’ – you follow? But I never ask: What is inattention? Because attention I have had for a second or for a minute, and I fall back into inattention, the understanding of inattention is much more important than attention.

You’ve got it? Right? Is that clear? May we go on?

Now, what is inattention? Why is the mind inattentive? And why shouldn’t the mind be inattentive?

**QUESTIONER (Q):** We must be attentive ...

**JK:** No, sir; no, sir. No, sir; I explained. Sir, look. One minute I am very attentive, I see everything very clearly, I have no conflict, there is a sense of a great thing; I am, you know, completely attentive, there is no problem, there is nothing. And that attention goes away, and I find that, suddenly, I am inattentive, I have lost that quality of clarity, and then I say, ‘How am I to recapture that attention?’ And I struggle, and I ask questions, and I get miserable

because I can't get that attention. So I am saying, what is important is not the understanding of attention, for the moment, but the understanding of inattention. Right? That's simple enough, sir. What is inattention, why is the mind inattentive?

**Q:** It seems that thought causes inattention.

**JK:** So you are saying, the operation of thought may cause inattention, is that it? Are you sure of what you are saying, sir, or is it just a guess? Don't let us guess this; it is not a guessing game. I want to find out – please listen – the importance of inattention, and the importance of attention. Right? Inattention may be because the mind needs rest, it needs not that heightened, tremendous energy [needed for] attention. And therefore it says, 'Let me have a few minutes'. But in those few minutes – just listen to it – in those few minutes any action becomes corrupting action. You understand what I am saying? I wish you would come with me quickly; I am racing and you are not.

Look: I am attentive for one minute, and there, there is no border, there is no time, there is no 'me', there is no problem; the whole energy is involved in that attention; it is a heightened attention, energy. That's, for the mind, a tremendous movement. Then it's tired and moves to inattention. Now, in that state of inattention any action – any action – must be conditioning. *Capito, signora?* Right? You understand my question?

Look: I am attending, and in that state of attention I can do things – you know, do things – without effort, without thought. That's real creativeness – we won't go into that. And in the state of inattention action has to go on – right? – I have to meet a friend, I am bored with that, there action has to happen. At the moment of action, if I am aware, inattention is not. I wonder if you are following all this.

You understand my question, sir? The moment the mind is aware that it is inattentive there is attention – not that we must maintain attention. I wonder if you understand this.

So inattention is part of attention. Got it? *Bene*? Not, from inattention go to attention. You know, sir, meditation is total attention in which concentration, which has a motive and, therefore, an end, doesn't exist at all. Are you following all this? And in meditation there can be inattention – you understand?

Oh, do follow this. No, you don't. Please, don't agree with me. I don't think you follow what I am saying, because it, this thing, is really quite complex. I mustn't discuss meditation ... perhaps we can do it tomorrow, if you want it.

What I am pointing out is, in the state of attention, state, it is a movement, it is not a dead thing, it is a movement of attention, not the movement of time – the movement of time is concentration. And in that quality of attention there is no time, there is no border. You understand 'border'? – A fixation. And because there is no centre, there is therefore no circumference. That is attention. Now in that attention why shouldn't there be inattention? You follow? It is within the whole area; I don't separate inattention from attention. I wonder if you get this. It's only when inattention says, 'By Jove, I must leave this and capture that', that you separate inattention from attention.

**Q:** Sir, are you saying that when there is awareness in inattention...

**JK:** No, sir; no sir. Now the problem of energy – what time is it? Sir, look, conformity is a wastage of energy. Right? When I conform to the pattern set by tradition – the whole involvement of tradition, not just one tradition, the whole, that is authority and all

that – when there is conformity there is a wastage of energy because then there is conflict – I mustn't conform, and where am I to draw the line of conformity? You follow all this? So that is a wastage of energy. And accepting authority – authority, let's understand this before: that is, there is the authority of law, that I have to conform to otherwise I would be put in prison. That is, if I don't conform on the road, keep to the left or to the right, well I will soon have an accident, so I have to conform. Now we are saying conformity, when we become aware of the whole nature of conformity and I see what is implied in it, and I see that is a wastage of energy, in that awareness of attention and inattention – you follow? – then a totally different intelligence comes into being, which then says, 'Conform', 'Don't conform'. It is not your reactions that dictate. I wonder if you get this. Am I going too fast?

**Q:** (*Inaudible*)

**JK:** Wait. No, no. You are translating it differently. I don't know what I said just now; I can't repeat it. Look, sir: we are rather a mindless people. We are reflexive people, always reacting. Now I have got a problem of conformity, which is part of the structure of tradition. The mind becomes aware of the implications and the structure of conformity. The mind conforms because it is afraid, it wants to protect itself, and so on, and so on. Now in that awareness, *when* there is a reaction, it is still a reflexive reaction. And I see in that awareness the reflexive reactions are from my background, and the background says, 'Conform'. Right? So can the mind become aware of conformity, its reactions and its successive waves of reactions? And when you are so attentive of conformity, reaction and the waves of reactions, in that attention there is an intelligence which operates and tells you when to conform, when not to conform – which is not based on reaction. Right? It is simple enough.

**Q:** (*Inaudible*)

**JK:** Wait, sir. You will say what you have to say. Have you understood what I have to say? Right.

**Q:** (*Inaudible*)

**K:** We are going to, sir. We are going into the question of what is inattention. Because, sir, the highest form of intelligence is necessary in a mad world, and intelligence is not yours or mine. Of course not. It is not national, it is not religious – it is not religious in the sense, belonging to a religion. It is the very essence of religion. Wait. I am going to go into it if you will listen.

And that intelligence which operates at all levels, and it is really religious intelligence – not the phony religious thing – and I see that as the mind, which has conformed for generations, is becoming more and more mechanical, and such a mind, whatever it will do to transform the world or bring about greater this and that, it is still in a world of conformity. Right? Please follow this. And my concern is that the consciousness of a human being must be changed in order to bring about a different structure and nature, function in the world. I am consumed with that responsibility, it is not just words. And I see that human beings are very little aware. They are aware of their own pleasures, and their own fulfilments and their own desires, and their frustrations and their angers, and all the rest of it. But that's a very small area of awareness. And awareness implies the total movement. In that movement there is no choice, which we went into. To be so attentive, to sustain that attention – perhaps very few can do it – and they have been practising to maintain that attention, which is the whole idea of meditation. And I see where there is concentration, which has a motive, restriction, resistance, it is not awareness. And there is also

a state of inattention. Is inattention something opposite to attention?

**Q:** The other side of the coin.

**JK:** The other side of the coin. Sir, I want to find out, not verbally, I want to find out what is the relationship between attention and inattention. The moment you say, 'It is the other side of the coin', I create an image and say, 'Yes', but I haven't found out. It isn't a reality, it is just a descriptive image which I have accepted. So I have to find out what inattention is. And why shouldn't the mind be inattentive? In that state of inattention either there is an increase of pleasure or increase of fear, to that I respond. You follow? That state of inattention, I am asking: What is wrong with it, why shouldn't I be inattentive?

**Q:** Inattention brings sorrow.

**JK:** I don't know. Why shouldn't I be inattentive. I have been attentive. Look, sir, I have been attentive for an hour and a half here and why shouldn't I be inattentive for a few minutes? What is wrong with that? Is that inattention an unawareness? See it, sir.

**Q:** No, it is not.

**JK:** See it, sir.

**Q:** I am aware of my inattention...

**JK:** Yes, sir, we have said that earlier. You are not meeting my point.

**Q:** There is a quietness.

**JK:** No, sir, I am not talking of quietness or anything. Just: I am attentive; I have been attentive the whole hour and why shouldn't I now be inattentive? Just remain there for a minute. Is inattention then something opposite to attention? No. Or, is the mind taking a rest?

**Q:** That is inattention.

**JK:** That's not inattention. Sir, look, sir, for an hour and a half the speaker has been attentive. And he says, 'I will rest'. The rest period is not inattention.

**Q:** (*Inaudible*)

**JK:** Wait, wait, wait.

**Q:** If you are sensitive you are attentive, and in inattention you lose sensitivity.

**JK:** Not at all, not at all. He is saying: Sensitivity implies attention and when there is inattention you lose sensitivity. Sir, just look. When you have been attending for a long time, as we have in this tent, and if you have this morning, the mind says, 'I am resting'. In that rest the mind can respond instantly to attention – instantly. But it is taking it quietly, it is resting. What is wrong with that?

**Q:** Nothing is wrong.

**JK:** Then what are we objecting to? Wait, wait. Go slow. I will show you what you are ... In that state of inattention you are never inattentive.

**Q:** (*Inaudible*)

**JK:** Sir, give me two minutes, will you? Just follow. Attention, you know what that means, more or less. The mind can't sustain that attention unless you have gone very, very, very deeply into it. And the mind gets tired and says, 'Rest'. In that period of rest it can respond to attention instantly. And there is another kind of inattention, another kind of rest, which is, I have captured, for a second, attention, and I am struggling to maintain that attention. The struggle to maintain that attention is inattention, and out of that inattention I can't respond instantly; I will respond according to my tradition.

**Q:** (*Inaudible*)

**JK:** Of course, sir. It doesn't matter. I know I'm using ... Sir, be quick enough, move.

**Q:** (*Inaudible*)

**JK:** Are you ever inattentive? When you are driving – no, I mustn't use a simile. I won't use similes because that is dangerous. You know what it is to be inattentive, don't you? We all know it. In that state of inattention we do things which bring conflict, we do things which are not nice, we do things which maybe, hurt others, and so on. We know that inattention. Right?

**Q:** We don't know it at the moment, we only know it afterwards.

**JK:** Yes but that is the state of inattention. Right? When I say nasty things about you, or criticise you, or say, 'You are a nice man, be friends with me' and so on, those are all – we know that. And in that state of inattention actions go on. Right? Don't we act? Of course. When I say something nasty, I am acting. So most of us know what it is to be inattentive. That inattention has no relation to

attention. I can't move, the mind can't move from that inattention to attention, that movement will still be inattention. Right? Are you getting tired?

So I see that. So I see this: awareness, sensitivity, awareness, attention. In that state of attention – that state of attention is complete, the summation of energy, unless your body, your mind and everything is in complete harmony, you can't maintain that attention for a whole hour, impossible, or an hour and a half. There is that attention for a while, in that attention there is also inattention – right? – you say, 'Well, I am resting, I will be quiet'. That inattention is totally different from the ordinary inattention. Got it? That's all. Good morning.

*Saanen, August 3, 1974*

## **KRISHNAMURTI FOUNDATION INDIA, GATHERING RISHI VALLEY, NOVEMBER 15 – 18, 2019**

The annual KFI Gathering will be held this year at the Rishi Valley Education Centre, from the morning of the 15th of November to the afternoon of the 18th of November, 2019. Participants may arrive only from the morning of the 14th of November. The theme is *Violence, Identity, and Transformation*.

The charges are INR 3500/- per person (including GST). This fee is Non-Refundable. Please do not deposit cash into our account. Payment should be made only through an online transfer: RTGS/NEFT to K.F.I.R.V.E.C. INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES through the State Bank of India, Society Colony Branch, Madanapalle, Savings Bank A/c no 54035227556, IFS Code: SBIN0040002, Swift Code: SBININBB324 and an intimation sent, immediately, to [gathering@rishivalley.org](mailto:gathering@rishivalley.org) with name(s) of participant(s), address, and payment details. Forms can, also, be downloaded from [www.rishivalley.org](http://www.rishivalley.org) and sent to [gathering@rishivalley.org](mailto:gathering@rishivalley.org) along with the payment details.

Those interested in attending the Gathering should please fill out and post the Registration Form to the address below:

The KFI Gathering Committee,  
Rishi Valley Education Centre,  
Rishi Valley – 517 352,  
Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh.  
Telephones: 08571 280622 & 08571 280582/  
9493547822/ 9493547322/ 7893644717/ 7893644497  
E.mail: [gathering@rishivalley.org](mailto:gathering@rishivalley.org)

As accommodation, which is only dormitory-type, is limited, registration will be done on a first-come-first-served basis.

**The last date for receiving payment and filled-in registration form is October 10, 2019.**

## REGISTRATION FORM

(Please photocopy this form if you need more copies)

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:**

**E.mail:**

**Age:**

**Sex:**

**Nationality:**

**Occupation:**

.....

I/We wish to participate in the KFI Gathering at Rishi Valley.  
Please reserve accommodation for \_\_\_\_\_ persons at INR  
3,500/- per person. I have made an online transfer, and have sent  
the details to [gathering@rishivalley.org](mailto:gathering@rishivalley.org)

I/We will be arriving on \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date) (Place)

by \_\_\_\_\_ at Madanapalle around \_\_\_\_\_  
(Mode of transport) (Time).

### Details of Participants

S. Nr	Name	Sex	Age

Please indicate with a tick (✓) whether you are attending the Gathering as

(a) a couple (husband and wife/parent and child)

(b) a group.

This will help us to allot accommodation.

## ADDRESSES OF J. KRISHNAMURTI SCHOOLS

### RAJGHAT EDUCATIONAL CENTRE

Rajghat Fort  
Varanasi 221001  
Uttar Pradesh, India  
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E-mail: [rbskfi@gmail.com](mailto:rbskfi@gmail.com) / [kfrrajghat@gmail.com](mailto:kfrrajghat@gmail.com)  
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