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TALKS BY
KRISHNAMURTI
IN INDIA
1955-1956

(Verbatim Report)

BANARAS — MADRAS — MADANAPALLE — BOMBAY

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*This Report is issued primarily
for those who heard the Talks*

BANARAS — MADRAS — MADANAPALLE — BOMBAY

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I

TALK IN BANARAS

If we could go into the question of what is teaching and learning, I think it might be of significance; because after all, you have gathered here to learn something, have you not? When you attend a talk, it is generally to gather information, to learn something of which you may not yet be aware. So I think it is important to discuss what it is that we are learning and what it is that is being taught, and I hope at the end of this little talk that we can go into the matter together so that it becomes clear to each one of us what it is that we are trying to do when we attend a meeting of this kind.

Are you here to learn something from the speaker? You may come with the idea that you are going to learn something which is being taught; but if that is not the intention of the speaker at all, then there is no direct communication between the speaker and the audience, and therefore you will go away feeling rather disappointed and asking yourself what you have got from it.

In order to prevent that entirely, we must discuss this question of learning and teaching, and I hope you will go into it with me. It is important to unravel this idea that we are learning something, for I think a great deal of mischief lies in this conception of learning.

Through learning does one perceive directly something which may be true, real, something other than the formulations of the mind? Do you follow what I mean? Is there direct perception through learning, through knowledge, or do we perceive directly only when there is no barrier of learning, when there is no knowledge?

What do you mean by learning? You want to find happiness, reality, serenity, freedom—that is what most of you are groping after. Being discontented, dis-

satisfied with things, with relationships, with ideas, you are seeking something beyond, and you go to a *swami*, a *guru*, or X, who you think has this quality you are seeking. You want to learn how to arrive at this extraordinary integration of the totality of human consciousness, so you come here as you go to any religious teacher, with the intention to learn. After all, that is the intention of the majority of the people who are here, and if you will kindly pay attention to what is being said, I am sure it will be worth while.

Now, can you be taught to have direct perception? Can there be this totality of integration, this clarity of perception through knowledge, through learning, through a method? Will the learning of a technique or the following of a particular system lead to it? With the majority of us, learning is the acquiring of a new technique, substituting the new for the old. I hope I am making myself clear in this matter.

There are various methods with which you are quite familiar, one or other of which you practise in the hope of directly perceiving something which may be called reality, that state which has no becoming but is only being. Similarly, you have come here to learn, have you not? You want to find out what method the speaker will offer to reveal this extraordinary state. You want to learn how to approach this state step by step through the practice of certain forms of meditation, through the cultivation of virtue, self-discipline, and so on. But I do not think that any method will bring about clear perception; on the contrary.

Method implies time, does it not? When you practise a method you must have time to bridge the gap between what *is* and what *should* be. Time is necessary to travel the distance created by the mind between the fact and the dissolution of the fact, which is the end to be achieved. Our whole ideology is based on this sense of achievement through time, so we begin to acquire,

to learn, and therefore we rely on the master, the *guru*, the teacher, because he is going to help us to get there.

So, is perception or direct experience of that reality a matter of time? Is there a gap that must be bridged over by the process of knowledge? If there is, then knowledge becomes extraordinarily important. Then the more you know, the more you practise, the more you discipline yourself, and so on, the greater your capacity to build this bridge to reach reality. We have taken it for granted that time is necessary. That is, if I am violent I say time is necessary for me to be in a state of non-violence; I must have time to practise non-violence, to control, discipline the mind. We have accepted this idea and it may be an illusion, it may be totally false. Perception may be immediate, not in time. I think it is not a matter of time at all—if I may use the phrase 'I think', not to convey an opinion, but an actual fact. Either one perceives, or one does not perceive. There is no gradual process of learning to perceive. It is the absence of experience, which is based on knowledge, that gives perception.

Is this all too difficult or too abstract? Let me put the problem differently.

Our activities, our pursuits are self-centered. To use an ordinary word, our action, our thought is selfish, it is concerned with the 'me', and we read or hear that the self is a barrier and that it is therefore necessary for the self to cease—not the higher or the lower self, but the self, the mind which is ambitious, which is afraid, which is cunning in the devious pursuits of its own greed and dependence, the mind which is the result of time. That mind is self-concerned; and can that self-concern be washed away immediately, or must it be peeled off layer after layer through a gradual process of knowledge, experience, and the continuation of time? Do you understand the problem, sirs?

Please, we are going to discuss this matter when I have talked a little while

longer, if I may; because after all, we are here to experience, not to learn, and I want to differentiate between learning and experiencing. You can experience what you learn, but such experience is conditioned by what you have learned. You can learn something and then experience it, which is fairly obvious. I can read about the life of the Christ and get very emotional, very thrilled by it all, and then experience what I have read. I can read the *Gita*, conjure up all kinds of ideas, and experience them. Both conscious reading and unconscious learning bring about certain forms of experience. You may not have read a single book, but because you are a Hindu, conditioned by centuries of Hinduism, consciously or unconsciously the mind has become the repository of certain traditions and beliefs which may produce experiences to which you attach tremendous importance; but actually, when you examine these experiences, they are nothing but the reaction of a conditioned mind.

Now, what we are trying to find out in this talk, and in the coming talks that are to be held here, is whether there can be direct experience stripped of all knowledge, of all learning, so that it is true and not merely the reaction of one's conditioning as a Hindu, a Buddhist, a Christian, or as a member of some other silly sect. Perception cannot be true as long as it is based on a method, because the method obviously produces its own experience. If I believe in Christianity, or in some other religion, and I practise a method which will lead me to truth according to that belief, surely the experience it produces has no validity at all. It is an experience based on my own conviction, on my own pettiness, on my conditioned mind. What is experienced is merely the outcome of that particular method, whereas what I am talking about is something entirely different.

If we see that the method is false, an illusion, the product of time, and that time cannot lead to direct experience,

then that very perception is the liberation from time. Our relationship is then entirely different. Do you follow, sirs? We are not here to learn a new method or technique, a new approach to life, and all that business. We are here to strip the mind of all illusion and perceive directly, and that requires astonishing attention to what is being said, not a casual communication with each other as if you were attending just another talk. What matters is to free the mind from knowledge and from the method, the practice based on that knowledge, which can only lead to the thing we crave for. That is why it is very important to understand what I am saying, to see the illusion the mind has created as time through which to acquire, to learn, to arrive, to gain.

Don't immediately say that reality, God, the Atman is within us, and all the rest of it. It is not. That is your idea, your superstition, your conditioned way of thinking. You say that God is within us, and the Communist, who has been differently trained from childhood, says that there is no God at all, that what you are saying is nonsense. You are conditioned to believe in one way, and he in another, so you are both the same. Whereas, the whole concern of this talk is to find out if the mind can strip itself immediately of this belief, this knowledge, this conditioning, so that there is direct perception. One may live a thousand lives and practise self-discipline, one may sacrifice, subjugate, meditate, but this will never lead to direct perception, which can take place only in freedom, not through control, subjugation, discipline; and there can be freedom only when the mind is immediately aware of its conditioning, which brings about the cessation of that conditioning.

Now, can we discuss this?

Questioner: We are normally so closely identified with our conditioning that we are not aware of our conditioning at all.

Questioner: There is a ceaseless movement with which we are totally identified and from which we are constantly trying to run away, and the nervous exhaustion born of this conflict brings about dullness of body and mind. Would it be right to say that a certain alertness of both body and mind is absolutely essential if we are to pursue the investigation which you have laid before us?

KRISHNAMURTI: Obviously, sir. If I want to run a race I must have the proper diet; if I want to do anything very efficiently I must eat the right food, not overload the stomach, get the proper amount of exercise, and so on. My mind and body must be extraordinarily alert.

Questioner: This alertness does not come to us unless we have lived thoughtfully the previous day. The moment we sit down in serious thought it is necessary that we should sit properly, otherwise the mind will wander and we shall not be able to think strenuously. When you say that direct perception cannot come through any form of discipline, but only when there is the utmost freedom, our minds immediately tend to slouch into a kind of slothfulness. I see it happening to myself. While it is obvious that such things as discipline, correct posture, and regulated breathing, are not going to give us direct experience, they do bring about a certain alertness of body in which the mind is neither slothful nor is it chasing about without knowing what it is running after. Unless one is able to live in this state of alertness, which is a normal condition of the mind, anything that you are talking about is Greek.

KRISHNAMURTI: I understand, sir, but I think the problem is somewhat different. One may acquire the correct posture of body, breathe rightly, and all the rest of it, but that has relatively little significance in regard to what we are talking about.

Let me put it differently. If I see that I hate, is it possible for me to love immediately, or must hate be gradually

washed away so that I can love eventually? That is the problem. Do you follow, sir? Is it possible for the mind to transform itself immediately and be in a state of love?

Questioner: If I may refer to your previous talk about memory, it is conceded that a great deal of our mentation is a purely mechanical response of memory, and through identification most of us are constantly getting lost in our loves and hates without being aware of it. Even when we are aware of it, is that awareness not also mechanical, the result of effort? Is this relevant to what you are saying, or not?

KRISHNAMURTI: I am not sure it is relevant. The problem is this. One is aware that one is ambitious, and being sufficiently alert, intelligent, or watchful, one sees how absurd, how destructive it is. Ambition, spiritual ambition included, obviously implies a state in which there is no love. Wanting to be somebody spiritually, wanting to be non-violent, is still ambition. Perceiving all that, is it possible for one to wipe away ambition instantly and not go through this everlasting struggle of investigation, analysis, discipline, idealization, and all the rest of it? Can the mind wipe away ambition instantly and be in the other state? Is this possible? Don't agree, sirs, it is not a matter of agreement or disagreement. Have you thought about it?

Questioner: Our minds are always trying to modify our conditioning.

KRISHNAMURTI: Just stick to my point, if it is a problem to you. Or am I making it a problem to you, and therefore it is not really your problem? What is your response?

Questioner: We should like to know how to do it.

KRISHNAMURTI: The gentleman here asks how to do it, and that is the whole thing. First please look at the question itself, the 'how.' I am ambitious and I want to be in a state of love; therefore I must wipe away ambition, and how am I to do it? Please follow this. The very question involves time, does it not? The moment you ask 'how', you have introduced the problem of time—time to bridge the gap, time to arrive at that state called love—and therefore you can never arrive at it. Do you understand, sirs?

Questioner: You have talked about the state of direct perception. Is it not legitimate to inquire into that state? Perception involves three factors, the seer, the seeing, and the object seen. That is how we apprehend perception. Are you talking of a faculty apart from this?

KRISHNAMURTI: I also am quite good at all this kind of stuff! What is the perceiver, and is the perceiver separate from the object of his perception? Is the thinker apart from the thought? That is what you are saying, is it not? But that is not our problem for the moment. Don't misunderstand me, I am not trying to . . .

Questioner: You used the words 'direct perception'.

KRISHNAMURTI: We can change the words, they are not important. Let me put it differently.

I am aware that I am ambitious, cruel, stupid, what you will, and it is generally accepted, and supported by the sacred books, the rituals, the belief in Masters, in evolution, and all the rest of it, that through a slow, gradual process of effort I shall transcend what I am and come to something beyond. I see what is involved in that: the maker of effort, the effort, and the object towards which he is making the effort,

which is all a process of mentation. Seeing this, I say to myself, 'Is it possible for me to drop ambition completely and be in that state which may be called love?' I am not going to describe what that state is. My problem is, I am violent; and is it possible for me to drop my violence completely, instantly?

Questioner: Is the possibility a matter of chance or of effort?

KRISHNAMURTI: Just look at it, sir. If there is effort you are back in the old field of gradualness. If it is merely chance, a matter of good luck, then it has no meaning. If I may say so, I don't think you are really putting the question to yourself.

I am aggressive, ambitious, and I see that the whole rotten society around me is also ambitious and aggressive in different degrees. It is all very tawdry, stupid, vain, and yet I am caught in it; and is it possible to drop ambition completely, to leave it and never touch it again? Do you follow my question, sir? But this is not my question, it is your question if you have ever tackled this problem. Or do you say, 'I am ambitious and I will get rid of ambition slowly, tomorrow or in my next life, through discipline, through using the right mantram, practising right awakening,' and the whole rigmarole of it? Is this your problem, sir? If it is not, I am not going to foist it on you. But if it is your problem, what will you do with it?

Sir, look. Most of us have no love, whatever that quality is. We may have a temporary feeling which we call love, but which is almost akin to hate, it is not that extraordinary thing. Perhaps some of us may have this flowering, this nourishing, creative thing, but most of us are in a state of confusion and sorrow. Now, can one simply drop all this and be the other without going through the tremendous complications

of trying to become something, without arguing about whether the perceiver is apart from the object perceived, and so on?

Questioner: Again it will involve time.

KRISHNAMURTI: What will you do, sir?

Questioner: Nothing.

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, what is actually happening to you now? Either we talk theoretically, abstractly, in order to pass an afternoon discussing together, or else we really want to find out, to experience and not just keep on everlastingly verbalizing. What is the actual response to this problem on the part of each one of us? If we can discuss, verbalize what is actually taking place in response to the problem, it will have significance, but merely to spin a lot of words, theories, is of no value.

Questioner: This whole discussion is nothing but a verbal one.

KRISHNAMURTI: What does it mean to you? Leave the others alone. Please, sir, I am not attacking you, I am not pushing you into a corner; but when this problem is put to you, what is your response?

Questioner: Being is being. It cannot be described by any words.

KRISHNAMURTI: I understand that, sir. But here is a very grave problem involving a complete revolution in thinking; it means scrapping all leaders, all *gurus*, all methods, does it not? And what happens when a problem of this kind is put to one?

That is, when we are aware that we hate, and we want to be free from hate,

what do we generally do? We try to find a method of getting rid of it from a book, from a *guru*, and so on. Now, does one see that the practice of a method is an illusion, or does one say that a method is necessary? That is the first question, obviously. What do you feel, sir? Not that you are being compelled by me to say there must be no method; that would be another illusion, a mere repetition of words, or a pose, which would have no meaning at all. But if you actually see that any practice of a method to get rid of hate is an illusion, and therefore has no validity at all, then your looking at hate will have undergone a total transformation, will it not?

When we look at hate now we say, 'How am I to get rid of it?' But if we can look at hate without the 'how', then we shall have quite a different reaction to that which we perceive. So we must know what our response is to this question. Do you understand, sir?

Please, would you kindly listen to find out first, and not ask how to get rid of hate. I am not concerned with how to get rid of it. That is a very trivial matter. The problem is this. Being aware that we hate, we now say, 'How am I to get rid of it, what am I to do to be free of this venom?' The moment that reaction arises in us, how to be free, we have introduced several factors which have no validity at all. One of those factors is the process of gradually wearing down hate over a period of time; another is the making of effort to achieve a result; and still another is depending on somebody to tell us how to do it. These are all self-centered activities which are also a form of hate. I don't know if you are following all this.

So, does one still think in terms of how to get rid of hate? That is the issue—not how to be free, or what happens when one is free, but does one still think in terms of 'how'?

Questioner: Then the 'how' is not so important.

KRISHNAMURTI: What is actually happening to you, sir? What really takes place when you are confronted with this question? If you are very honest with yourself you will see that you are still thinking in terms of 'how', which reveals that the mind still wants to achieve a state, does it not? And achievement is the process of time. A scientist who is experimenting to find something, for example, obviously needs time; but is hate to be dissolved through time? The *yogis*, the *swamis*, the *Gita*, the *Mahatmas*—all of them say that hate is to be dissolved through time, but they may all be wrong and probably they are. Why should they not be? And I want to find out if there is a different way of looking at this problem instead of accepting the traditional approach, which I see invariably degenerates into mediocrity. Merely to accept tradition is stupid. Even if ten thousand people say that something is true, it does not mean they are right. So my problem is: is it possible to be free of hate now, not in the future?

Questioner: If one may ask a direct question, what is the purpose of your talks?

KRISHNAMURTI: What is the purpose of talking? To communicate, is it not? Otherwise one would not talk. Now, what is it that I am trying to communicate to you? I am trying to communicate to you the fact that a certain widely accepted way of thinking is illusory and has no basis at all. But to communicate there must be someone to listen, someone who says, 'I am really listening to you'. Are you, sir, listening to me? Yes? And what do you mean by listening? I am not trying to corner you. Do you really ever listen to anything, or do you listen only partially? If your mind is still concerned with the 'how', you are not listening. You can listen only when you give complete attention, and you are not giving complete attention as long as you are thinking that

there must be a method, because then your mind is not free to look at what is being said. There is complete attention only when one says, 'He may be totally wrong, he may be talking nonsense, but at least I am going to find out what it is he is trying to convey'. And are you doing that? That is a very difficult thing in itself, is it not? Because to give complete attention is to know love, it is to have the total feeling that one is going to find out what another is saying without acceptance or rejection—which does not mean that I am going to become your authority. Do you give attention in that way?

Questioner: Is it possible, sir?

KRISHNAMURTI: If it is not possible, there is no communication. That is the difficulty. Sir, look. If you are telling me something and I want to find out what it is you are trying to convey, I must listen to you, must I not? I cannot be thinking to myself that you are talking the same old stuff, that you are this or that, or that it is time to go. I must pay complete attention to what you are saying and have no verbal or other barrier in my mind. Do we listen in that way?

Questioner: Is complete attention a state of mind different from the ordinary state of attention?

KRISHNAMURTI: You see, you are not listening at all to what I am talking about. You want to know what complete attention is. I can describe it, but what does that matter? The thing of first importance is, are you listening? You see how difficult it is for most of us really to inquire, to find out, to listen. Not that you must listen especially to me, because whether you listen to me or not does not matter to me; but since you have taken the trouble to come here, I say for God's sake listen, not

only to me, but to the working of the machinery of your own mind, which is now confronted with a problem. The problem is, can hate be dissolved immediately? To find out how you respond to that question, has validity. If you say, 'Yes, I am listening', but your intention is to find a method to get rid of hate, then you are not looking at the problem because you are only concerned with the 'how'. But in psychological matters, is there ever a 'how'? Do you follow, sirs? This is a very complex problem, so don't just say 'yes' or 'no'. In technical processes, in building, cooking, putting together the jet plane, washing dishes efficiently, and so on, there is a 'how', and the more alert you are the more efficient the 'how' becomes; but in psychological matters, is there a 'how' at all? Is there a gradual process of evolution, change, or only immediate transformation?

Questioner: Then what is to be done with the psychological problem?

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, look at the problem. I shall have to stop now. You cannot absorb more than an hour of this kind of talk.

There is the problem of dying. We are all dying; and can the mind be in a state in which there is no death? It is essentially the same problem, only I am using a different set of words. The mind is aware that it is going to die, so it turns to various doctrines, to knowledge, to experiment, it believes in reincarnation, it reads the *Upanishads*, and so on, all of which is based on the desire to continue. And can I find out directly for myself if there is a state in which there is no death, and not depend on some bearded gentleman to tell me what there is after death? This is the same problem as being ambitious, violent, greedy, envious, and whether it is possible to drop all that completely—which means, really, finding out if one is pursuing a method.

Are you pursuing a method to help you to dissolve hate? Most of you have accepted as a fact that a method is necessary, and as I am now questioning the factual nature of that which you have accepted, you are resisting what I am saying. But if through questioning, through looking at the problem, you yourself are aware that the practice of a method is a total illusion, then your way of looking at hate will have undergone a tremendous change, and this perception of illusion obviously does not come about through effort.

Sirs, please, we are going to meet, I don't know how often, and instead of my lecturing can't we for a change go into this matter as two human beings, as friends who are really listening to the problem and trying to find out what is true? We are not opposing each other, nor are you accepting what I say, because in this search there is no authority, there is no master and *shishya*, no *guru* and all that nonsense. Here we are all equal, because in trying to find out what is true there is real equality. Please, sirs, listen to what I am telling you. It is only when you are not seeking reality that there is this phoney division of the master and the disciple. Surely, where there is love there is no inequality. There must be love when we seek, and we are not seeking when we treat another as a disciple or as a *guru*. For the inquiry into truth there must be the cessation of all knowledge. Where there is love there is equality, not the man who is high and the man who is low.

December 11, 1955

II

TALK IN BANARAS

I would like, if I may, to discuss with you the problem of search, and what it is to be serious. What do we mean when we say we are seeking? So-called

religious people are supposed to be seeking truth, God. What does that word signify? Not the dictionary meaning, but what is the inward nature of seeking, the psychological process of it? I think it would be significant if we could go into this matter very deeply; and may I again remind those who are here that through the description or verbal explanation they should actually experience what is being discussed, otherwise it will have very little meaning. If you regard these talks merely as something to be taken down, just a new set of ideas to be added to your old set of ideas, they will have no value.

So, let us see if together we can go into this real problem of what it is to seek. Can anything new be found through search? Why do we seek, and what do we seek? What is the motive, the psychological process that makes us seek? On that depends what we find, surely. Why do I seek truth, happiness, peace, or something beyond all mentation? What is the impetus, the urge that compels one to seek? Without understanding that urge, mere search will have very little meaning, because what one is really seeking may be some kind of satisfaction, unrelated to reality. But if we can uncover the whole mechanism of this process of seeking, then perhaps we shall come to a point where there is no search at all, and it may be that *that* is the necessary state for anything new to take place.

As long as the mind is seeking there must be endeavour, effort, which is invariably based on the action of will, and however refined, will is the outcome of desire. Will may be the outcome of many integrated desires, or of a single desire, and that will expresses itself through action, does it not? When you say you are seeking truth, behind all the meditation, the devotion, the discipline entailed in that search, there is surely this action of will, which is desire; and in pursuing the fulfilment of desire, in trying to arrive at a peaceful state of mind, to find God, truth, or

to have this extraordinary state of creativity, seriousness comes in.

One may seek, but if there is no seriousness one's search will be dissipated, sporadic, disconnected. Seriousness invariably goes with search, and it is apparently because you are serious that most of you are here. Sunday afternoon is a pleasant time to go boating, but instead you have gone to the trouble of coming here to listen, perhaps because you are serious. Being dissatisfied with traditional ideas and the accustomed point of view, you are seeking, and you hope by listening to find something new. If you were completely satisfied with what you have, you would not be here, so your presence at these talks indicates that you are dissatisfied; you are seeking something, and your search is obviously based on the desire to be satisfied at a deeper level. The satisfaction which you are seeking is nobler, more refined, but your search is still the pursuit of satisfaction.

That is, we want to find the total integration of our whole being, because we have read, or heard, or imagined, that that is the only state in which there is undisturbed happiness, lasting peace. So we become very serious, we read, search out philosophers, analysts, psychologists, *yogis*, in the hope of finding this integrated state; but the impetus, the drive is still the desire to fulfil, to find some kind of satisfaction, a state of mind which will never be disturbed.

Now, if we are really to inquire into this matter, our inquiry must surely be based on negative thinking, which is the supreme form of thinking. We cannot inquire if our minds are tethered to any positive directive or formula. If we accept or assume anything, then all inquiry is useless. We can inquire, search, only when there is negative thinking, not thinking along any positive line. Most of us are convinced that positive thinking is necessary in order to find out what is true. By positive thinking I mean accepting the

experience of others, or of oneself, without understanding the conditioned mind which thinks. After all, all our thinking is at present based on the background, on tradition, on experience, on the knowledge which we have accumulated. I think that is fairly clear. Knowledge gives a positive direction to our thinking, and in pursuing this positive direction we hope to find that which is truth, God, or what you will; but what we actually find is based on experience and the process of recognition.

Surely, that which is new cannot be recognized. Recognition can only take place from memory, the accumulated experience which we call knowledge. If we recognize something, it is not new, and as long as our search is based on recognition, whatever we find has already been experienced, therefore it comes from the background of memory. I recognize you because I have met you before. Something totally new cannot be recognized. God, truth, or whatever it is that results from the total integration of one's whole consciousness, is not recognizable, it must be something totally new; and the very search for that state implies a process of recognition, does it not?

I don't think what I am talking about is as difficult as it sounds. It is really fairly simple. Most of us wish to find something, let us for the moment call it God or truth, whatever that may mean. How do we know what truth or God is? We know what it is either because we have read about it, or experienced it; and when that experience comes, we are able to recognize it as truth or God. The recognizing of it can only arise from the background of previous knowledge, which means that what is recognized is not new; therefore it is not truth, it is not God. It is what we *think* it is.

So, I am asking myself, and I hope you are asking yourself, what is this thing which we call search? I have explained what is implied in this whole

problem of seeking. When we go from *guru* to *guru*, when we practise various disciplines, when we sacrifice, meditate, or train the mind in some way, the impetus behind all this effort is the urge to find something, and what is found must be recognizable, otherwise it cannot be found. So what the mind finds can only be the outcome of its own background, of its own conditioning; and if once the mind understands this fact, then search may not have this meaning at all, it may have a totally different significance. The mind may then stop seeking altogether—which does not mean that it accepts its conditioning, its travails, its miseries. After all, it is the mind itself that has created all the misery, and when the mind begins to understand its own process, then perhaps it is possible for that other state, whatever it be, to come into being without this everlasting effort to find.

Now, sirs, let us discuss this. Is this a problem to you, or am I imposing this problem on you? You must have observed how millions of people are seeking, each one following a particular *guru* or practising a particular system of meditation; or else they go from teacher to teacher, joining one society, dropping it, and going on to another, everlastingly seeking, seeking, seeking, which of course can also become a game. So perhaps you have asked yourself what it all means. You read the *Upanishads*, or the *Gita*, or listen to a talk in which certain explanations are given, certain states described, and they all say, 'Do this, abandon that, and you will discover the eternal'. All of us are seeking in some degree, intensively or in a weak way, and I think it is important to find out what this search means. Can we very simply and directly ask ourselves, each one of us, whether we are seeking, and if we are seeking, what is the drive behind this search?

Questioner: Dissatisfaction.

KRISHNAMURTI: Are you sure this is your own experience and not somebody else's? If it is your own experience that your search is based on the urge of dissatisfaction, then what do you do, sir?

Questioner: We go from guru to guru till we find satisfaction. But even then we don't know what will happen in the future. Dissatisfaction is compelling us, it is the state in which we pass our lives.

KRISHNAMURTI: And as you grow older you become more and more serious in this search; but you have never inquired if there is such a thing as satisfaction at all.

Questioner: Man is always thirsty and he wants to satisfy his thirst.

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, if you were always thirsty after drinking, would you not find out whether thirst can ever be quenched? And if satisfaction is only momentary, then why give this enormous significance to *gurus*, sacrifices, disciplines, *sadhanas*, and all the rest of it? Why break yourselves up into sects and create conflict with your neighbours and in society for the sake of a passing comfort? Why get caught in Hinduism or Christianity if it is merely a temporary relief? You may say, 'I know all this gives only temporary relief, and I do not attach much significance to it'. But do you really go to your *guru* and say that you have just come for a temporary relief? Must you not inquire into this? And can there be inquiry if one's heart is obstinate? The obstinacy of the heart prevents inquiry, does it not?

Let us begin with that. If I am obstinate in my way of thinking, which is called being positive, if my mind is committed to some form of conclusion, opinion, or judgment, can I inquire at all? You say no. We all agree, but are not our minds caught in some

conclusion, in some experience? Therefore inquiry is not only biased but impossible.

Sirs, can we really talk a little bit definitely about this, searching deeply in our own minds and thereby awakening self-knowledge? Can we find out if we are committed to some formula, to some conclusion or experience, to which the mind clings?

Questioner: There is always a hope of finding the ultimate satisfaction.

KRISHNAMURTI: First let us see if our minds are committed to some experience, to some conclusion or belief which makes us obstinate, unyielding in the deep sense. I just want to begin with that, because how can there be inquiry as long as the mind is incapable of yielding? We have read the *Gita*, the *Bible*, the *Upanishads*, this or that book, which has given a bias to the mind, a certain conclusion to which the mind is tethered. Can such a mind inquire? Is not that the case with most of us, and must not our minds be free of all commitments as Hindus, Theosophists, Catholics, or whatever it be, before we can inquire? And why are we not free of all that? When we have commitments and then inquire, it is not inquiry, it is merely a repetition of opinions, judgments, conclusions. So, in talking this evening, can we drop these conclusions?

Surely, even the greatest scientists must drop all their knowledge before they can discover something new; and if you are serious, this dropping of knowledge, of belief, of experience, must actually take place. Most of us are somewhat serious in terms of our particular conclusions, but I don't consider that to be seriousness at all. It has no value. The serious man, surely, is he who is capable of dropping all his conclusions because he sees that only then is he in a position to inquire.

Questioner: We may say we have dropped our conclusions, but they come up again.

KRISHNAMURTI: Do we know that our minds are anchored to a conclusion? Is the mind aware that it is held in a particular belief? Sir, let me put it very simply. My son dies and I am in sorrow, and I come across the belief in reincarnation. There is great hope and promise in that belief, so my mind holds on to it. Now, is such a mind capable of inquiring into the whole problem of death, and not just into the question of whether there is a hereafter? Can my mind drop that conclusion? And must not the mind drop it, if it is to find out what is true—drop it, not through any form of compulsion or reward, but because the very inquiry demands that it be dropped? If one doesn't drop it, one is not serious.

Sirs and ladies, please don't feel frustrated by my questions, which seem so obvious. If my mind is tethered to the peg of belief, experience, or knowledge, it cannot go very far; and inquiry implies freedom from that peg, does it not? If I am really seeking, then this state of being tethered to a peg must end, there must be a breaking away, I must cut the rope. There is then never a question of how to cut the rope. When there is perception of the fact that inquiry is possible only when there is freedom from obstinacy, or from attachment to a belief, then that very perception liberates the mind.

Now, why does this not happen to each one of us?

Questioner: One feels safer with the rope.

KRISHNAMURTI: That is so, is it not? You feel safer when the mind is conditioned, so there is no adventure, no daring, and the whole social structure is that way. I know all these answers; but why don't you drop your belief? If you don't, you are not serious. If you are really inquiring you do not

say, 'I am seeking along a particular line, and I must be tolerant of any line which is different', because that whole way of thinking comes to an end. Then there is not this division of 'your path' and 'my path', the mystic and the occult, and all the stupid explanations of the man who wants to exploit are brushed aside.

Questioner: Is search itself brushed aside? Search for what?

KRISHNAMURTI: That is not our problem for the moment. I am saying that there is no inquiry when the mind is attached. Most of us say we are seeking, and to seek is really to inquire; and I am asking, can you inquire as long as your mind is attached to any conclusion? Obviously, when the question is put to you, you say, 'Of course not'.

Questioner: Do you visualize the day when there will be no churches or temples of any kind? And as long as there are churches and temples, can people keep their minds untethered?

KRISHNAMURTI: The people are always you and I. We are talking about ourselves, not the people.

Questioner: But can we keep our minds untethered as long as there are churches?

KRISHNAMURTI: Why not, sir? May I say something? Forget the people, churches and temples. I am asking, is your mind bound? Is your mind obstinate, attached to some experience, to some form of knowledge or belief? If it is, then such a mind is incapable of inquiry. You may say, 'I am seeking'; but you are obviously *not* seeking, are you, sir? How can the mind have freedom of movement if it is held? We say we are seeking, but there is really no seeking at all. Seeking implies freedom

from attachment to any formula, to any experience, to any form of knowledge, for only then is the mind capable of moving extensively. This is a fact, is it not? If I want to go to Banaras, I can't be tied, held in a room; I must leave the room and go. Similarly, your mind is now held, and you say you are seeking; but I say you cannot seek or inquire as long as your mind is held—which is a fact which you all acknowledge. Then why does not the mind break away? If it does not, how can you and I inquire together? And that is our difficulty, is it not, sirs?

Questioner: As long as the churches and temples are there, it is difficult to break away.

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, who has created the churches and temples? Men like you and me.

Questioner: They were unlike me, unlike us.

KRISHNAMURTI: You and I may not have created an outward temple, but we have our inward temples.

Questioner: That is a very high conception. It is not possible for every ordinary human being to seek the inward self.

KRISHNAMURTI: We are not meeting each other, I am afraid. It is not a question of seeking the inward self. I am saying that there is no seeking at all when there is attachment to any formula, to any experience, to knowledge in any form. That is so obvious. If you think in terms of Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism or Hinduism, your mind is obviously incapable of inquiry. When you see a fact of this kind, why is it so difficult for the mind to drop its attachment and begin to inquire? You are sitting here listening, trying to find out, trying to inquire,

and I say you cannot inquire if there is any form of attachment, that is, if the mind is in bondage to any conclusion, to any formula, to any kind of knowledge or experience. You agree that this is perfectly true, and yet you don't say, 'I am going to drop all attachment'—which really indicates that you are not serious, does it not? You may talk of being serious, but I say that word has no value, no meaning, as long as your mind is tethered. You may get up at 4 o'clock and meditate, control your words, your gestures, do all the disciplinary things, thinking that you are very serious; but I say these are mere superficial observances. A serious mind is one which, being aware of its bondage, drops it, and begins to inquire.

Questioner: What is the means of breaking one's attachment to a conclusion?

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, is there a means? If there is, then you are attached to the means. (*Laughter*). I know, you laugh it away, but that is not merely a clever statement. Sirs, is not freedom implicit in inquiry? And that is why freedom is at the beginning, not at the end. When you say, 'I must go through all this discipline in order to be free', it is like saying, 'I will know sobriety through drunkenness'. Surely, there can be inquiry only when there is freedom. So freedom must be at the beginning, and as long as it is not, though what you do may be socially and conventionally satisfying, it has no meaning. It has a certain value for people who are after a sense of security, but it has not the value of discovery. Though these people get up early and go through all the rigours of discipline, I say they are not serious. Seriousness lies in being aware that the mind is tethered to an experience, or a belief, and breaking away from it—which is what you don't want to do. So is it not important for you to inquire into this? Otherwise you will come here day after day, year after year, and listen

merely to words, which will have very little meaning.

Questioner: You say freedom precedes inquiry, but we wish to inquire into freedom.

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, how can you inquire if your mind is held? This is just ordinary reason, commonsense. If your *guru* says, 'This is the way', and you are held by that, how can you look beyond it? You go to the *guru* in order to inquire—and you get caught in his words, you are mesmerized by his personality, you become involved in all the things which he stands for. Your original impetus is to inquire, but that impetus is based on your desire for some kind of hope, satisfaction, and all the rest of it. So I say, to inquire there must first be freedom. You don't have to search for freedom. I am reversing your whole process of thinking, which is obviously false, even though the sacred books say otherwise.

Questioner: What will come after the inquiry?

KRISHNAMURTI: That is merely an intellectual question, if I may say so. Don't you see? You want to know what will happen 'after', which is theoretical. The mind likes to spin words, to speculate. I say you will find out. It is like a prisoner saying, 'What will it be like after I leave the prison?' To find out he must leave the prison.

Questioner: Sir, we who are sitting in this hall are people of various cults, creeds and beliefs, and we are listening to what you are saying, even though we do not really understand it. What you are saying is new to most of us, we have never heard it before, and while it sounds very nice to the ear, we cannot comprehend it. What is it that makes people sit quietly for an hour and listen earnestly to something which they cannot

grapple with? Is this not in itself a form of inquiry, which means that the mind is not really tethered to a conclusion? If the mind were tethered to a conclusion, there would not be this wanting to find a different way of life, and these people would not come here, or they would just close their ears; yet they come and listen very intently. Does this not indicate a certain freedom to inquire?

KRISHNAMURTI: What is making you listen, sirs? What is making you listen to someone who says things which are entirely contrary to all that you believe and hold? Is it his personality, his reputation, the ballyhoo, the noise that is made around him? Is that what makes you listen? If it is, then your listening has very little meaning. So, what is it that is making you listen? Perhaps it is the fact that you are confronted with something which happens to be true, and in spite of your being tethered, you cannot help listening; yet you will go back to the conditioned state. Is that what is making you listen? Or are you really listening? Do you follow? Are you really listening, or is it that you have got into the habit of sitting quietly when somebody is talking, because you like being lectured to?

These are not vain questions. I am really trying to find out why it is that, when something true is said, there is no immediate response. That is the real question I am asking. You say, or I say, there can be no inquiry without freedom, which is obviously true; it is a fact, regardless of who says it. Now, why does not that fact produce an immediate, trenchant action? Or has that fact a mysterious operation of its own which cannot be immediately expressed? Someone has stated the fact that, for inquiry, there must be freedom, freedom from being tethered, and you listen to that fact. However partially you listen, that fact has taken root in the mind because it has vitality; the seed is going to blossom, not within a certain period, but it is going to blossom, and that may be why it is important to

listen to facts, whether you are listening willingly, consciously, or are only half-listening. But after all, that is the way of propaganda. They keep on repeating, 'Buy such-and-such a soap', and eventually you buy it. Is that what is happening here? If you hear a certain fact being constantly repeated, and you presently act according to that fact, such action is entirely different from the action of the fact itself.

Sirs, we shall have to stop. I won't ask you to think it over, because merely thinking it over has no meaning; but if you would really inquire into this whole problem of seeking and what it is to be serious, then the mind must find out how to inquire, and what inquiry is. Any assumption, any conclusion, any attachment to knowledge or experience, is an impediment to inquiry. As long as the mind is tethered to some conclusion, inquiry is an immense struggle, a process of effort, striving, breaking through; but if the mind sees the truth that there can be inquiry only when there is freedom, then inquiry has quite a different meaning altogether. If one realizes this, one is never a slave to any *guru*, to any formula, to any belief. Then you and I can pool our inquiry, and out of that we can co-operate, act, live. But as long as one's mind is tethered, there is 'your way' and 'my way', 'your opinion' and 'my opinion', 'your path' and 'my path', and all the many divisions and subdivisions which come between man and man.

December 18, 1955

III

TALK IN BANARAS

I think it would be interesting and worth while if we could this evening go into the question of what makes the mind deteriorate. When we are young we are full of zeal, we have so many

enthusiastic and revolutionary ideas, but generally we get caught in some kind of activity and slowly peter out. We see this happening all around us and in ourselves; and is it possible to stop this process of deterioration, which is surely one of our major problems? Whether socialism or capitalism, the left or the right, should organize the world's welfare, now that there is such immense production—I don't think that is the problem. I think the problem is much deeper, and it is this: can the mind be freed so that it remains free all the time, and is therefore not subject to deterioration?

I don't know if you have thought about this problem, or whether you have observed how the vitality, the vigour, the zest of our own minds slowly ebbs away, and the mind gradually becomes merely an instrument of mechanical habits and beliefs, a whole complex of routine and repetition. If we have thought about it at all, I think this must be a problem to most of us. As one grows older, the weight of the past, the burden of things remembered, the hopes, the frustrations, the fears—all this seems to enclose the mind, and there is never anything new out of it, but only a repetition, a sense of anxiety, a constant escape from itself, and ultimately the desire to find some kind of release, some kind of peace, a God that will be completely satisfactory.

Now, if we could go into this matter, I think it might be worth while. Can the mind be freed from this whole process of deterioration and go beyond itself, not mysteriously or by some miracle, not tomorrow or at some future date, but immediately, instantly? To find that out may be the way of meditation. So why is it that our minds deteriorate? Why is it that there is in us nothing original, that all we know is mere repetition, that there is never a constancy of creativity? These are facts, are they not? What causes this deterioration, and can the mind put a stop to it? We shall discuss this presently, and

I hope you will take part in the discussion.

To me it is evident that there must be deterioration as long as there is effort; and one observes that our whole life is based on effort—effort to learn, to acquire, to hold, to be something, or to push aside what we are and become something else. There is always this struggle to be or to become, either conscious or unconscious, either voluntary or compelled by unknown desires; and is not this struggle the major cause of the mind's deterioration?

As I said, we are going to discuss all this after I have talked a little, so please don't just listen to words. We are trying to find out together why the wave of deterioration is always following us. I know there is the immediate problem of food, clothing, and shelter, but I think we must look at this problem from a different angle if we are to resolve it; and even those of us who have enough food, clothing, and shelter, have another problem which is much deeper. One sees that there is in the world both complete tyranny, and relative freedom; and if we were concerned only with the universal distribution of food and other products, then perhaps absolute tyranny might help. But in that process the creative development of man would be destroyed; and if we are concerned with the whole of man, and not merely with the social or economic problem, then I think a far more basic question must inevitably arise. Why is there this process of deterioration, this incapacity to discover the new, not in the scientific realm, but within ourselves? Why is it that we are not creative?

If you observe what is happening, either here, in Europe, or America, I think you will see that most of us are imitating, we are complying with the past, with tradition, and as individuals we have never deeply, fundamentally discovered anything for ourselves. We live like machines, which brings a sense of unhappiness, does it not? I don't

know if you have looked into it at all, but it seems to me that one of the major causes of this conformity is the desire to feel inwardly secure. To be psychologically secure there must be exclusiveness, and to be exclusive there must be effort, the effort to be something; and this may be one of the factors which is preventing the discovery of anything new on the part of each one of us. Can we discuss this? (Pause)

All right, sirs, let us put the problem differently. One can see that meditation is necessary, because through meditation one discovers a great many things. Meditation opens the door to extraordinary experiences, both fanciful and real; and we are always inquiring how to meditate, are we not? Most of us read books which prescribe a system of meditation, or we look to some teacher to tell us how to meditate. Whereas, we are now trying to find out, not how to meditate, but what *is* meditation; and the very inquiry into what is meditation, is meditation. But our minds desire to know *how* to meditate, and therefore we invite deterioration.

If thought can inquire very deeply and expose itself to itself, never correcting but always watching to find out, never condemning but always probing, then that state of mind may be called meditation; and such a mind, because it is free, can discover. For such a mind there is no deterioration, because there is no accumulation. But the mind that says, 'Tell me how to be peaceful, tell me how to get there and I will try to follow it', is obviously imitative, without daring, and therefore it is inviting its own deterioration.

Most of us are concerned with the 'how', which is a means of security, safety. However noble, however exacting, however disciplinary the 'how' may be, and whatever it may promise, it can only lead to conformity. A conforming mind, through its own efforts, enslaves itself to a method, and therefore it loses this extraordinary capacity for discovery; and without the discovery

in yourself of something original, new, uncontaminated, though you may have the most perfect organization to produce and distribute the physical necessities, you will still be like a machine. So this is your problem, is it not? Can the mind, which is so mechanical, habit-ridden, full of the past, free itself from the past and discover the new, call it God or what you will? Can we discuss this? (Pause)

Sirs, is this problem new to you, or is it that you have not thought about these things in this way? Let me again put the problem differently.

You are all well-versed in the *Upanishads*, the *Gita*, the *Bible*, you are familiar with the philosophy of Hinduism, of Christianity, of Communism, and so on. These philosophies, these religions have obviously not solved man's problem. If you say, 'Man's problem is not solved because we have not strictly followed the injunctions of the *Gita*', the obvious answer is that any following of authority, however noble or tyrannical, makes the mind mechanical, unoriginal, like a gramophone record that repeats over and over again; and you cannot be happy in that state.

Now, being aware of that fact, how would you set about discovering the real for yourself? Do you understand, sirs? God, truth, or whatever it is, must be totally new, something outside of time, outside of memory, must it not? It cannot be something remembered from the past, something of which you have been told, or which the mind has conjectured, created. And how will you find it? It can be found, surely, only when the mind is free from the past, when the mind ceases to formulate any image, any symbol. When the mind formulates images, symbols, is that not a factor of real deterioration? And that may be what is happening in India, as well as in the rest of the world.

Am I explaining the problem? Or is it not a problem to you?

Questioner: The mind cannot go beyond its own past experiences.

Questioner: When the mind is conditioned . . .

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, this gentleman has asked a question.

Questioner: Was it a question or a statement?

KRISHNAMURTI: He probably meant it as a question. Unfortunately, most of us are so occupied with the formulation of a question, or with our own way of looking at things, that we never really listen to each other. This gentleman has said that it is not possible for the mind to be free of the past. Is that not our problem as well as his?

Questioner: If he wants to know how to be detached from the past, that is a question and not a statement.

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, please, we are not here verbally to show off or to prove who is right and who is wrong. We are really trying to find out why the mind never discovers anything new. We are not for the moment referring to specialists like the scientists, the physicists, and so on, but to ourselves as common human beings. Why is it that we never discover in ourselves anything new?

Questioner: With regard to the question raised by that gentleman as to whether the mind can do away with the past, I would like to ask, what is meant by the past?

KRISHNAMURTI: The past is experience, memory, knowledge, the influence of tradition, the impression left by insult and praise, by the books you have read, by laughter and the sight of death. All that is the past, which is time.

Questioner: You say that the mind is conditioned by the past. But is the mind so rigidly conditioned by the past that it cannot make further inquiry?

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, what is the mind? Please do not answer this question theoretically or according to what you have read in books. Can you and I here this evening find out what the mind is?

Questioner: The mind is the result of the past.

KRISHNAMURTI: Is your mind the result of the past? What do you mean by the past?

Questioner: Whatever is in my mind at present is all from the past.

KRISHNAMURTI: Can you separate the past from the mind? Please, let us examine the mind, not a theoretical mind, but the mind of each one of us. Your mind is the result of many influences, both collective and individual, is it not? Your mind is the outcome of education, of food, of climate, of many centuries of tradition; it is made up of your beliefs, desires, memories, the things that you have read, and so on. That is the mind, is it not, sir? The conscious mind which operates every day, and the mind which is deeper, hidden, are both the result of the past. As far as one can see, the whole area of the mind is the result of the past. You may believe that there is God, or that there is no God, you may think there is a higher and a lower self, and so on; but all that is the outcome of your education, conditioning, which means that your mind is the result of the past, does it not? And that same mind is trying to find something new; it says, 'I must know what is God, what is truth'. Is not that what you are doing, sirs and ladies? And I say it is impossible, it is a contradiction.

Questioner: I think most people don't bother about God. We are concerned with life's problems.

KRISHNAMURTI: Which means that there is antagonism, bitterness, frustration, wanting power, position, prestige; because somebody else has what you want, you feel jealous, and so on. These are life's problems, are they not? Wanting to be loved, wanting more money, wanting to improve the village through this system or that system, having a belief or an ideal which is in contradiction with everyday existence, and trying to bridge the gap between the fact and the ideal—all this is life.

Questioner: Life is something more also. If I am a teacher, I want to teach better.

KRISHNAMURTI: Which is the same thing. These are all life's problems, and in tackling any one of them you come to the main issue. You say that you want to teach better, to think better, to live a more integrated life, and so on. What do you mean by thinking better? Is it a process of acquiring more information? How do you find out what is better?

Questioner: By thinking deeply.

KRISHNAMURTI: What does it mean to think deeply? And what do you mean by thinking? If you don't know what thinking is, you cannot think deeply. What is thinking? You please tell me what thinking is.

Questioner: Thinking is a process of bringing in more and more associations.

KRISHNAMURTI: I am asking you what thinking is, and if you observe your own minds you will find out how you are reacting to that question—

which is thinking, is it not? Are you following what I am saying?

Questioner: This is too technical.

KRISHNAMURTI: Just watch yourself and you will see. I am asking you a question. What is thinking?

Questioner: Whether you ask what is the mind, or what is thinking, it comes to the same thing.

KRISHNAMURTI: I want to find out what thinking is. Now, what is the process that is set going within you by this question?

Questioner: When we begin to look at thinking, the mind stops. There is no answer.

Questioner: Thinking is so spontaneous that we don't know what it is.

KRISHNAMURTI: I am asking you a question: what is thinking? Now, what does your mind do when this question is put to you? Don't you want to know how your mind operates? What happens when the mind is confronted with a question of this kind? For a moment the mind hesitates, because it has probably never thought about it before; then it looks into the chamber of memory and says, 'Let me see, the *Upanishads* say this, the *Bible* says that, Bertrand Russell says something else. And what do I think?' So you are looking for an answer from the past, are you not?

Questioner: We don't think of Bertrand Russell.

KRISHNAMURTI: Perhaps not; but this is the actual operation of your mind when a question is put to you. If a

question is put to you with which your mind is familiar, there is an immediate answer. If someone asks you where you live, you respond instantly, because you are familiar with that, your association with it is constant. Whereas, if an unfamiliar question is put to you, your mind hesitates, and that hesitation indicates that you are looking for an answer, does it not? And where do you look for an answer? In your memory, obviously. So your thinking is the response of memory. No?

Questioner: Does it mean that a person who has lost his memory cannot think?

KRISHNAMURTI: Complete forgetfulness is called amnesia, and a person in that state has to learn the whole business over again.

Questioner: Is having memory a good thing or a bad thing?

KRISHNAMURTI: If you did not know where you live, what would you do? If you did not know the name of the street by which to go to your house, would that be good or bad?

We are trying to find out, sir, what thinking is. For most of us, thinking is the response of memory, is it not? Because I know where I live, I respond quickly when asked; and when a more subtle question is put to me, I look in my memory to find an answer. But memory is the experience of centuries, so my response must inevitably be conditioned. Surely, this is fairly obvious.

Sir, if you are a Hindu and I ask you whether there is such a thing as reincarnation, your instinctive response is to say that there is, and this response is based on the influence of your parents, your sacred books, and the general environment around you. You respond according to what you have been told; your thinking is the result of influence,

therefore it is obviously conditioned. Now we are asking ourselves, can the mind dissociate itself from the past and find out what is true?

Questioner: You seem to describe the mind as a collection of past experiences, and I think we all agree; but now you are asking if it is possible for the mind to dissociate itself from all that. What does it mean?

KRISHNAMURTI: Are you asking me, or are you asking yourself?

Questioner: I am asking myself as well as you.

KRISHNAMURTI: That is better. You are asking yourself, not me. The mind is the result of time; and can such a mind ever discover anything new, which must be timeless? Do you understand my question, sir? I see that my mind is made up of the past, yet it is the only instrument that can observe and discover. Then what is it to do? There is no other instrument of discovery, yet that instrument is the result of the past—which is a fact, and no amount of discussion or denial will have any influence on that fact. And can such a mind ever discover anything new? Or will the known, which is the past, though I may be unconscious of it, always continue, so there can only be a continuity of the known in different forms? If the mind can never experience the unknown, whatever the unknown may be, then let us modify the known, let us embellish it, polish it up, accumulate more information, but keeping always within the area of the mind, of the known. Do you follow, sir? This assumption that the mind is in a helpless position, that it can never be out of its own area because it is the result of the known, may be the deteriorating factor. Do you follow what I mean? If you accept that, then obviously you must constantly polish the mind, put it in order, discipline it,

stuff it with more information, and so on. Then you have no problem, because you are living within the area of the known. But the moment you begin to inquire into the unknown, you have a problem, have you not, sir?

Questioner: You started by asking what is thinking. It seems to me that thinking is always in relation to something, there is no such thing as pure thinking.

KRISHNAMURTI: Thinking is the response to challenge, is it not? There is no isolated thinking. It is only when there is a challenge that you respond. Even when you think in your bedroom, where there is no outward challenge, thinking is still the response to a challenge within yourself. There is this constant relationship of challenge and response, and because you respond according to your beliefs, your up-bringing, and all the rest of it, your response is always restricted, narrow, petty.

Now, we are trying to find out where thinking ceases, and something new, which is not thinking, takes place.

Questioner: You are asking where thinking ends and meditation begins.

KRISHNAMURTI: All right, sir. Where does thinking end? Wait a minute. I am inquiring into what is thinking, and I say this very inquiry itself is meditation. It is not that there is first the ending of thinking, and then meditation begins. Please go with me, sirs and ladies, step by step. If I can find out what thinking is, then I will never ask how to meditate, because in the very process of finding out what thinking is, there is meditation. But this means that I must give complete attention to the problem, and not merely concentrate on it, which is a form of distraction. I don't know if I am explaining myself.

In trying to find out what thinking is, I must give complete attention, in which

there can be no effort, no friction; because in effort, friction, there is distraction. If I am really intent on finding out what thinking is, that very question brings an attention in which there is no deviation, no conflict, no feeling that I must pay attention.

So, what is thinking? Thinking, I see, is the response of memory, at whatever level, conscious or unconscious; it is always the reaction of that area of the mind which is the known, the past. The mind sees this as a fact. Then the mind asks itself if all thinking is merely verbal, symbolic, a reaction of the past; or is there thinking without words, without the past?

Now, is it possible to find out if there is any activity of the mind which is not contaminated by the past? Do you follow, sirs? I am inquiring, I am not assuming anything. The mind sees that it is the result of the past, and it is asking itself whether it is possible to be free of the past. If the mind answers one way or the other, if it says it is possible, or is not possible, then that assumption is the result of the past, is it not? Please go step by step with me, and you will see. The mind is aware that it is the result of the past; it is asking if it can free itself from the past; and it sees that any assumption that it can, or cannot, is the outcome of the past. So what is the state of the mind which has no association, which does not assume anything?

Questioner: It is no longer the mind, the limited mind that we know.

KRISHNAMURTI: We have not come to that yet. I want to go slowly.

Questioner: The question is, who is it that thinks?

KRISHNAMURTI: We know who thinks, sir. The mind has divided itself as the thinker and the thought, but it is still

the mind, obviously. The whole process of the separation of the thinker from the thought is still within that area of the mind, which is the result of time, of the past; and the mind is now asking itself whether it can be free of the past.

Questioner: Sir, if we who are listening to you doubt the truth of what you are saying, our old conditioning will continue. On the other hand, if we have faith in what you say, then our minds will again be conditioned by that.

KRISHNAMURTI: I am not asking you to have faith. I am just watching the operation of my own mind, and I hope you are doing the same thing. We are watching the operation of the mind and discovering its processes. That is all we are doing, which does not mean that you should or should not have faith. We are trying to find out how our minds operate, which is meditation.

Questioner: How does a scientist discover a new thing?

KRISHNAMURTI: If you and I were scientists we could discuss that question; but we are not scientists, we are ordinary people, and we are trying to find out if the mind can ever discover something new. What is the process of it, sir?

We shall have to stop. May I just go into it a little bit?

I am watching the operation of my mind. That is all. There is challenge and response. The response is invariably according to the culture, the values, the tradition in which the mind has been brought up, and which for the moment we shall call its conditioning. The mind realizes this and is asking itself: is all response the outcome of this conditioning, or is it possible for there to be a response beyond it? I don't say it is, or is not possible. The mind is just asking itself. Any assumption on the part of

the mind that it is possible or impossible, is still a response of the background. That is clear, is it not? So the mind can only say, 'I don't know'. That is the only right answer to this question as to whether the mind can free itself from the past.

Now, when you say, 'I don't know', at what level, at what depth do you say it? Is it merely a verbal statement, or is it the totality of your being which says, 'I don't know'? If your whole being genuinely says, 'I don't know', it means that you are no longer referring to memory to find an answer. Is not the mind then free from the past? And is not this whole process of inquiry, meditation? Meditation is not a process of learning how to meditate; it is the very inquiry into what is meditation. To inquire into what is meditation, the mind must free itself from what it has learnt about meditation; and the freeing of the mind from what it has learnt, is the beginning of meditation.

December 25, 1955

I

TALK IN MADRAS

It must be fairly obvious to each one of us when we look at the world, and especially at the conditions in this country, that there must be some kind of fundamental revolution. I am using that word to convey, not a superficial, patchwork reformation, nor a revolution instigated as a calculated risk according to a particular pattern of thought, but the revolution that can come about only at the highest level, when we begin to understand the whole significance of the mind. Without understanding this fundamental issue, it seems to me that any reformation at any level, however beneficial temporarily, is bound to lead to further misery and chaos.

I think this point must be very clearly understood if there is to be any kind of relationship between the speaker and yourselves; because most of us are concerned with some kind of social reformation. There is an enormous amount of poverty, ignorance, fear, superstition, idolatry; there is the vain repetition of words which is called prayer, and at the same time a vast accumulation of scientific knowledge, as well as the so-called knowledge gathered from sacred books. One has not to go to many countries to see all this; it can be observed as one walks along the streets here, or in Europe, or America. The physical necessities may be plentiful in America, where materialism is rampant and one can buy anything; but when one comes to this country, one sees this ruthless poverty. One sees also the class struggle—and I am not using that term 'class struggle' in the communistic sense, but merely to convey the observation of a fact without interpreting it in any way. One sees the division of religions, the Christian, the Hindu, the Moslem, the Buddhist, with their various sub-divisions, all clamouring to convert, or to show a different way, a different path. The machine has made possible miracles of production, especially in America; but here in India everything is limited, short. In this country, though we mouth the word 'God', though we pray, perform rituals, and all the rest of it, we are just as materialistic as the West, only we have made poverty into a virtue, an inevitable necessity, and tolerate it.

Seeing this extraordinarily complex pattern of wealth and poverty, of sovereign governments, of armies and the latest instruments of mass destruction, one asks oneself what is going to come out of all this chaos, and where it is all going to lead. What is the answer? If one is at all serious, I think one must have asked oneself this question. How are we, as individuals and as groups, to tackle this problem? Being confused, most of us turn to some kind of pattern,

religious or social, we look to some leader to guide us out of this chaos, or we insist on returning to the ancient traditions. We say, 'Let us go back to what the *rishis* have taught us, which is all in the *Upanishads*, in the *Gita*, let us have more prayers, more rituals, more *gurus*, more masters'. This is actually what is happening, is it not?

There is in the world both extraordinary tyranny and relative freedom. Now, looking at this whole chaotic picture—not philosophically, not merely as an observer watching the events go by, but as one whose sympathies are stirred and who has a germ of compassion, which I am sure most of us have—, how do you respond to it all? What is your responsibility to society? Or are you merely caught in the wheels of society, following the traditional pattern set by a particular culture, western or eastern, and are therefore blind to the whole issue? And if you do open your eyes, are you merely concerned with social reform, political action, economic adjustment? Does the solution to this enormously complex problem lie anywhere there, or does it lie in a totally different direction? Is the problem merely economic and social? Or is there chaos and the constant threat of war because most of us are not concerned at all with the deeper issues of life, with the total development of man? Is it our education that is at fault? Superficially we are educated to have certain kinds of technique, which brings its own culture, and we seem to be satisfied with that.

Now, seeing this state of things—of which I am sure you are very much aware, unless you are insensitive, or are trying to block it off—, what is your answer? Please do not answer theoretically, according to the communist, the capitalist, the Hindu, or some other pattern, which is merely an imposition and therefore not true, but instead, strip the mind of all its immediate reactions, the so-called educated reactions, and find out what is your reaction as

individuals. How would you solve this problem?

If you ask the communist this question, he has a very definite answer, and so has the Catholic, or the orthodox Hindu, or Moslem; but their answers are obviously conditioned. They have been educated to think along certain lines, narrow or wide, by a society or culture which is not at all concerned with the total development of the mind; and because they are responding from their conditioned thinking, their answers are inevitably in contradiction, and must therefore always create enmity, which I think is again fairly obvious. If you are a Hindu, a Christian, or what you will, your response is bound to be according to your conditioned background, the culture in which you have been brought up. The problem is beyond all cultures, beyond any particular pattern, yet we are seeking an answer in terms of a particular pattern, and hence there is mounting confusion, greater misery. So unless there is a fundamental breaking away from all conditioning, a total cleavage, we shall obviously create more chaos, however well-intentioned or so-called religious we may be.

It seems to me that the problem lies at a different level altogether, and in understanding it, I think we shall bring about an action entirely different from that of the socialistic, the capitalistic, or the communistic pattern. To me, the problem is to understand the ways of the mind; because, unless one is able to observe and understand the process of thought in oneself, there is no freedom, and hence one cannot go very far. With most of us, the mind is not free, it is consciously or unconsciously tethered to some form of knowledge, to innumerable beliefs, experiences, dogmas; and how can such a mind be capable of discovery, of searching out something new?

To every challenge there must obviously be a new response, because today the problem is entirely different from what it was yesterday. Any problem is

always new, it is undergoing transformation all the time. Each challenge demands a new response, and there can be no new response if the mind is not free. So freedom is at the beginning, not just at the end. Revolution must begin, surely, not at the social, cultural, or economic level, but at the highest level; and the discovery of the highest level is the problem—the *discovery* of it, not the acceptance of what is said to be the highest level. I don't know if I am explaining myself clearly on this point. One can be told what is the highest level by some *guru*, some clever individual, and one can repeat what one has heard, but that process is not discovery, it is merely the acceptance of authority; and most of us accept authority because we are lazy. It has all been thought out, and we merely repeat it like a gramophone record.

Now, I see the necessity of discovery, because it is obvious that we have to create a totally different kind of culture, a culture not based on authority, but on the discovery by each individual of what is true; and that discovery demands complete freedom. If a mind is held, however long its tether, it can only function within a fixed radius, and therefore it is not free. So what is important is to discover the highest level at which revolution can take place, and that demands great clarity of thought, it demands a good mind—not a phoney mind which is repetitive, but a mind that is capable of hard thinking, of reasoning to the end, clearly, logically, sanely. One must have such a mind, and only then is it possible to go beyond.

So revolution, it seems to me, can take place only at the highest level, which must be discovered; and you can discover it only through self-knowledge, not through the knowledge gathered from your ancient books, or from the books of modern analysts. You must discover it in relationship, *discover* it, and not merely repeat something that you have read or heard. Then you

will find that the mind becomes extraordinarily clear. After all, the mind is the only instrument we have. If that mind is clogged, petty, fearful, as most of our minds are, its belief in God, its worship, its search for truth, has no meaning at all. It is only the mind that is capable of clear perception, and therefore of being very quiet, that can discover whether there is truth or not; and it is only such a mind that can bring about revolution at the highest level. Only the religious mind is truly revolutionary; and the religious mind is not the mind that repeats, that goes to church, or to the temple, that does *puja* every morning, that follows some kind of *guru*, or worships an idol. Such a mind is not religious, it is really a silly, limited mind; therefore it can never freely respond to challenge.

This self-knowledge is not to be learnt from another. I cannot tell you what it is. But one can see how the mind operates, not just the mind that is active every day, but the totality of the mind, the mind that is conscious as well as hidden. All the many layers of the mind have to be perceived, investigated—which does not mean introspection. Self-analysis does not reveal the totality of the mind, because there is always the division between the analyzer and the analyzed. But if you can observe the operation of your own mind without any sense of judgment, evaluation, without condemnation or comparison—just observe it as you would observe a star, dispassionately, quietly, without any sense of anxiety—, then you will see that self-knowledge is not a matter of time, that it is not a process of delving into the unconscious to remove all the motives, or to understand the various impulses and compulsions. What creates time is comparison, surely; and because our minds are the result of time, they are always thinking in terms of the 'more', which we call progress.

So, being the result of time, the mind is always thinking in terms of growth, of achievement; and can the mind free

itself from the 'more', which is really to dissociate itself completely from society? Society insists on the 'more'. After all, our culture is based on envy and acquisitiveness, is it not? Our acquisitiveness is not only in material things, but also in the realm of so-called spirituality, where we want to have more virtue, to be nearer the master, the *guru*. So the whole structure of our thinking is based on the 'more'; and when one completely understands the demand for the 'more', with all its results, there is surely a complete dissociation from society; and only the individual who is completely dissociated from society can act upon society. The man who puts on a loin-cloth, or a *sanyasi's* robe, who merely becomes a monk, is not dissociated from society; he is still part of society, only his demand for the 'more' is at another level. He is still conditioned by, and therefore caught within, the limits of a particular culture.

I think this is the real issue, and not how to produce more things and distribute what is produced. They now have the machines and the techniques to produce all that is required by man, and soon there will probably be an equitable distribution of the physical necessities, and a cessation of the class struggle; but the basic problem will still remain. The basic problem is that man is not creative, he has not discovered for himself this extraordinary source of creativity which is not an invention of the mind; and it is only when one discovers this timeless creativity that there is bliss.

Question: I have come here to learn and to be instructed. Can you teach me?

KRISHNAMURTI: It is really quite an interesting question, if we can go into it. What do we mean by learning? We learn a technique, we learn to be efficient in earning a livelihood, or in performing some physical or mental task. We learn to calculate, to read, to

speak a language, to build a bridge, and so on. Learning is finding out how to do things, and developing the capacity to do them. Apart from that, is there any other kind of learning? Please do think this out with me.

When we talk about learning, we mean accumulation, do we not? And when there is any form of accumulation, can the mind learn? Learning is a necessity only in order to have capacity. I could not communicate if I did not speak a language; and to speak a language I have to learn it, I have to store up in my mind the words and the meaning of those words, which is the cultivation of memory. Similarly, one learns how to build a road, to work a machine, to drive a motorcar, and so on.

Now, the questioner does not mean that; he is not here to find out how to drive a motorcar, or anything of that sort. He wants to be instructed, to learn how to discover that which may be called truth or God, does he not? When you go to a *guru*, to a religious teacher, in order to learn, what is it you are learning? He can only teach you a system, a pattern of what to think. And that is what you want from me. You want to learn a new pattern of behaviour, conduct, or a new way of living, which is again the cultivation of memory in another form; and if you observe this process very clearly and closely, you will see that it actually prevents you from learning. It is really very simple.

You are all Hindus, or whatever it is you are, and when something new is put before you, what happens? Either you translate the new in terms of the old, and therefore it is no longer the new, or you reject it—and that is what is actually happening. So a mind that is accumulating, thinking in patterns, a mind that is full of so-called knowledge, that is out to learn a new way of thought or behaviour—surely, such a mind can never learn.

And what is there to learn? Please follow this. What is there to learn?

Are you going to learn about reincarnation, about God, about what truth is? When you say, 'Instruct me, teach me, I am here to learn', what does it all mean? Is it possible to teach? Teach what? How to be aware? You know very well how to be aware. When you are interested, you are aware completely. When you want to make money as a lawyer, you are jolly well aware at the time. When you want to do something with deep, vital interest, your complete attention is there.

Attention is not something to be taught. You can be taught how to concentrate, but attention is not concentration. You see, the mind is always thinking in patterns: how to meditate, how to build a bridge, how to play cards, how to read faster, how to drive a motorcar, how to walk properly, or to have the right kind of diet. Similarly, you want to learn what is the way to God, to truth, you want somebody to show you the path which leads to that extraordinary state. Obviously, there is no path to that state, because that state is not static, and any man who says there is a path to it, is deceiving you. A path can exist only to that which is static, dead. There are not many paths to truth, nor is there only one path; there are no paths at all, and that is the beauty of it. But the mind rejects this fact because it wants to be secure, and it thinks of truth as the ultimate security; so it seeks a path by which to arrive at that security.

Now, if you see this whole process, then what is there to learn? And can you be free through learning? Please think it out with me, don't accept or reject it. This is your problem. Can a mind that is learning, accumulating, storing up, ever be free? And if the mind is never free, how can it find out, discover? And surely it is essential to discover; because to discover, to find out, is the creative potential in man. So the mind must be free of all authority—the poisonous authority of so-called religion and the religious leaders—, for

only then is it capable of finding out what is truth, what is God, what is bliss.

Sirs, if you are really paying attention to what is being said, and are not comparing it with what you have learnt, or worrying about how it will affect your commitments, your vested interests, your position in society, and all the rest of the silly nonsense, then you will see that there is freedom and discovery immediately.

Learning will not bring truth nearer. It is only the mind that is on a journey of everlasting discovery, that is no longer accumulating, that is dead to everything it accumulated yesterday and is therefore fresh, innocent, free—it is only such a mind that can find out what is true and bring about a revolution in this world. It is only such a mind that is capable of love and compassion—not the mind that is *practising* love and compassion, cultivating virtue according to a pattern, which is all self-concern.

I am afraid it is too late to answer another question.

If we understand what it is to pay attention then perhaps this deep revolution will take place in spite of us. If each one of us can be purely attentive without wanting to bring about a result, or to transform ourselves, then we shall see that the mind is not a thing of time. Time comes into being only when there is comparison; and the mind that is comparing is not attentive. Have you ever noticed how difficult it is to watch something, just to observe a quality, a person, an idea, a feeling, without any sense of denying, condemning, or justifying it? When the mind is capable of so observing, you will find that reaction has no meaning at all, and in that state of complete attention, the whole content of consciousness can be wiped away.

After all, the totality of our consciousness is the result of many influences: the influence of climate, of diet, of education, of race and religion, of what we read, of society, and the influence of

our own intentions and desires. I hope you are listening to me with attention, not merely with memory, and are actually experiencing the fact that your consciousness is the result of many influences. These influences are man-made; and can the consciousness which is conditioned by them find something beyond itself, however much it may try? Obviously it cannot. It can only project its own state in a different form. So consciousness is conditioned, and anything that springs from that consciousness can never be free; and yet it is only the free mind that can discover.

Now, when you are aware that the process of thinking at any level, however deep or shallow, is conditioned, you realize that thinking is not the liberating factor; but you must think very clearly to see the limitation of thinking. Any thought springing from the conditioned mind is still conditioned. When the conditioned mind thinks about God, its God is itself. If the mind is totally aware of this and gives complete attention to it, then you will see there is freedom. Then the mind is no longer the plaything of society, it is no longer put together by man, and only then is it capable of experiencing something that is beyond itself.

January 11, 1956

II

TALK IN MADRAS

If one observes the events of every day, I think it is fairly apparent that, in the very attempt to solve the many problems with which we are beset, we only produce more problems; and it seems to me that as long as we do not understand the processes of thought, and are therefore unable to cleanse the mind, our problems will inevitably soar and multiply. Though each one may express it differently, every intelligent person is aware that the mind must be

cleansed; and putting it very simply the implication is that, until the instrument with which man acts, which is the mind, is clear, dispassionate, free of the self with its innumerable prejudices and fears, both conscious and unconscious—until the mind is purged of all that, our problems will increase. We all know this, and every religion that is worth its salt asserts it in different ways; yet why is it that we never seem able to cleanse our minds? Is it that there are not enough systems, or that the true system has yet to be invented and applied? Or is it that no method or system can ever bring about this purification? Surely, all systems and methods breed tradition, which brings mediocrity of mind; and a mediocre mind, facing a great problem, will inevitably translate that problem in terms of its own conditioning.

That is, to tackle any main issue in human affairs we see the necessity of a mind that is clear, purged of all its prejudices, and in order to cleanse the mind we say we must have a system, a method, a practice; but if one is at all alert one sees that in the very practising of a system the mind gets caught in the system, and therefore it is not free, it is not purged, it is not cleansed. Being caught in a system, the mind translates or responds to the challenge according to that conditioning. This is again fairly obvious if you go into it.

We have many problems at all levels of our existence, and to respond to these problems the mind must be fresh, eager, alert. In order to produce that clear, fresh, innocent mind, we say the practice of a system is necessary; but we see that, in the very practice of a system, the mind gets warped, limited, twisted. So it is very clear that systems do not free the mind, and I think this fact must be thoroughly understood before we can go further into what I want to discuss this evening.

Most of us think that a method, a system, a practice, is going to free the mind, or help the mind to think clearly.

But does a system of any kind help the mind to think very clearly, without bias, without the center of the 'me', the self? Does not the practice of a system encourage the self? Though the system is supposed to help you to get rid of the self, the 'me', the ego, or whatever term one may use for that self-centered activity of the mind, does not the very practice of a system accentuate self-centeredness, only along a different line?

So the mind can never be made free by a system. Yet most minds are caught in a system, which is the way of tradition, and it invariably breeds mediocrity. That is what has happened to almost all of us, is it not? Functioning in habits, in tradition, ancient or modern, which we call knowledge, the mind is confronted with an immense problem, a problem which is always changing. Whether it is personal or impersonal, collective or individual, no problem is static. But the mind is static, because it is caught in a groove of tradition, of habits, it is addicted to a certain way of thinking; so there is always a contradiction between the static condition of the mind, and the problem which is constantly changing, moving. Such a mind is incapable of meeting and resolving the problem—which I think is fairly obvious.

After all, you are meeting problems as a Hindu, that is, with the tradition of Hindu culture, just as the Catholic or the communist meets any issue according to his particular conditioning. Yet most of us agree that the mind must be cleansed, purified, in order to meet life, to find God, truth, or what you will.

Now, desiring to meet that challenge, to discover that new thing, we say the mind must be purified through the practice of a system; and yet when we look at it very closely, we see that a system cripples the mind, it does not set the mind free. So what is one to do? This is a problem we are all facing, is it not? The challenge, which is the world as it is today, is totally new, with new demands, and we cannot possibly

respond to the new with the deteriorating traditions, ideas, memories and knowledge of the old. One sees that in the very practice of a method, the mind is crippled, that in the very process of cultivating virtue, the self becomes strengthened. There must be virtue, because virtue brings order; yet virtue that is cultivated, practised day after day, ceases to be virtue. Seeing this, what is the mind to do?

One can see very well that to meet the challenge, to meet this extraordinary world with its multiplying sorrows, with its vast contradictions and frustrations, the mind must be made new, fresh, pure, innocent; and how is this state of the mind to be brought about? Can time do it? That is, by pursuing the ideal of purity, innocence, clarity, can the mind which is dull, stupid, mediocre, achieve that other state through time? Can what *is* be transformed into what *should* be through the pursuit of the ideal? When the mind says, 'I am here, and it will take time to reach the ideal state, which is over there', what has the mind done? It has invented the ideal apart from the fact, and then time is necessary to bridge the distance between them—at least that is what we say. So we have convenient theories concerning the inevitability of time: evolution, development through growth, and so on. But if you look very closely into the notion that time is a means of achieving the ideal, you will find that it is born of an extremely lazy and subtle attitude of postponement.

From childhood we are raised on this concept of the ideal, the example, the ultimate perfection, for the achievement of which we say time is necessary. But will time dissolve the self-centered activity of the 'me', of the self, which is the cause of all mischief, of all misery? Time implies practice, progress towards something which *should* be; but that something is the projection of a mind caught in its own misery, in its own conditioning. So the ideal, the what *should* be, is the outcome of a condi-

tioned mind, it is the projection of a mind which is in sorrow, which is ignorant, which is full of self-centered activity; therefore the ideal contains the seed of the present; and if you look into it very carefully, consider it deeply, you will see that time does not bring about the purgation of the self. Then what is the mind to do?

Do you understand? No system will solve this problem. Even if you were to practise a system for a thousand years, the self would remain, because the very practice of a system strengthens the self. Nor will the ideal ever solve this problem, because the ideal demands time in which to progress from what *is* which is the fact, to what *should* be; and this pursuit of what *should* be interferes with the understanding of what *is*. The what *is* can be understood only when the mind is completely free from the ideal, from the idea of progress through time. Yet these are the only two means you have, are they not? You use the ideal as a lever to get rid of what *is*, or you practise a system, which inevitably breeds mediocrity; and the mediocre mind cannot possibly respond to a challenge that is extraordinarily dynamic, that demands your complete attention. So what is the mind to do?

I don't know if you have thought of this matter at all. We have problems at every level of our existence, economic, social, emotional, intellectual, and we have always approached these problems with a traditional or idealistic point of view. We meet facts with theories; and one can see very well that a mind which is caught in formulations, in conclusions, which spins a theory about a fact, cannot possibly understand the fact. There is always conflict between the fact and the theory; and our meditation, our sacrifice, our practice, which is the cultivation of virtue, can never solve the problem, because to cultivate virtue is to strengthen the 'me'. The 'me' becomes respectable, that is all. Seeing this, what is the mind to do?

Perhaps this evening we should experiment with something. So far you have followed what I have said, which is fairly clear, and I don't think you will disagree. There is nothing with which to agree or disagree, because these are facts. If you disagree, you are merely denying a fact; and however much you may deny a fact, the fact exists. The difficulty is that most of us are caught in tradition—tradition as inherited or acquired knowledge, experience—and with such a mind we are approaching a fact, denying or translating it according to our conditioning. That is what is actually taking place within each one of us, at different levels and with different degrees of intensity.

As I was saying, can we try something this evening, which is to listen, not with memory, not with tradition, not with the intention of getting something through listening, but with complete attention? If one is capable of listening in that way, there is immediate transformation—whether for a long or a short time, is unimportant. The duration is unimportant, but what is important is the capacity to listen with complete attention. If the mind can remove all the traditions, the opinions, the evaluations, the comparisons, and just listen to what is being said, out of that complete attention you will find that you will be able to tackle any problem; because in that attention there is no problem. The problem is created by inattention. Attention is the good, but the good cannot be cultivated by the mind—the mind that is conditioned by tradition, by environment, by every kind of influence. What matters is to have the capacity of attention without interpretation or evaluation; but you cannot possibly *practise* this attention. If you do, you reduce it again to mediocrity, it becomes mere tradition. But if the mind can face the problem with complete attention, then you will find that the problem has ceased, because then the mind is a totally different entity, it is no longer the product of

time; and such a mind is capable of receiving that which is eternal.

The difficulty with most of us is that we never give our complete attention to anything, even when we are interested. When we are interested in something, it absorbs us, as the toy absorbs the child; and absorption is not attention. But if you can listen completely without interpretation, without comparison, without evaluation, which is to give your whole attention, then all tradition is transcended and the mind is extraordinarily clear, innocent, pure; and such a mind is capable of resolving the problems of life.

Question: Gandhiji had recourse to fasting as a means of changing the hearts of others. His example is being followed by some leaders in India who look upon fasting as a means of purifying themselves and also the society around them. Can self-invited suffering be purifying, and is there vicarious purification?

KRISHNAMURTI: Without accepting or denying anything, let us investigate the matter. It is said that suffering is necessary as a means of purifying the mind. Whole philosophies and religions are built on this idea, that someone suffers for you and purifies you. Can that be done? And what do we mean by suffering? There is the suffering caused by starvation, decay, disease, physical deterioration. A society based on acquisitiveness and envy must inevitably create physical suffering: those who have, and those who have not. That is all very clear. Then there is psychological suffering. If I love you, and you don't love me, I suffer. If I am ambitious, if I want to fulfil myself through having a prominent position, and something happens which prevents me, I am frustrated and I suffer. We say suffering is an inevitable process, and we accept it; we never question it, we never ask if it is necessary to suffer psychologically.

And can I suffer for the good of another? Can I change society through my example? When there is an example, what happens? Authority is established; the following of authority breeds fear; and fear breeds the mediocrity of a shallow mind. We are brought up on this idea that the example, the hero, the saint, the leader, the *guru*, is necessary; so we become followers without any initiative, gramophone records repeating the same old pattern. When we merely follow, we lose all sense of individuality, the fullness of understanding as individuals, and obviously that does not solve our problems.

Besides, if you must fast, why must you fast in public? Why this ballyhoo, this noise, this publicity, this beating of the drum? Because you want to impress people, and people are easily impressed. And then what? Have they changed? Is your intention in fasting to impress people, or to discover your own state of mind? If you are trying to impress people, then it has very little meaning, it is merely political, and therein lies exploitation.

But if your intention is to bring about self-purification and understanding, then is fasting necessary? What is necessary is an acuteness, a clarity of mind, not at certain periods of the year, but at every moment, which is to be fully aware in your relationships; and it is this awareness that reveals to you what you are. A heavy stomach obviously makes a dull mind; but a dull mind is also a mind which practises a system in order to be clear. The mind is obviously made dull through the practice of virtue; and yet we think suffering, fasting, examples, are necessary to bring a change in society. Surely, example breeds authority, however noble, stupid, or historical it may be; and when there is the tyranny of example, the mind is merely conforming to a pattern. The pattern may be wide or narrow, but it is still a pattern, a frame, and the mind that follows a pattern is inevitably very shallow.

Conformity is obviously a curse. Through conformity can the mind be free? Must the mind be made slavish in order to be free, or must freedom exist from the very beginning? Freedom is not a thing to be gained as a reward at the end of life, it is not the goal of life, because a mind that is incapable of being free now can never discover what is true.

Society is not changed by example. Society may reform itself, it may bring about certain changes through political or economic revolution, but only the religious man can create a fundamental transformation in society; and the religious man is not he who practises starvation as an example to impress society. The religious man is not concerned with society at all, because society is based on acquisitiveness, envy, greed, ambition, fear. That is, mere reformation of the pattern of society only alters the surface, it brings about a more respectable form of ambition. Whereas, the truly religious man is totally outside of society, because he is not ambitious, he has no envy, he is not following any ritual, dogma or belief; and it is only such a man who can fundamentally transform society, not the reformer. The man who sets out to be an example merely breeds conflict, strengthens fear, and brings about various forms of tyranny.

It is very strange how we worship examples, idols. We don't want that which is pure, true in itself; we want interpreters, examples, masters, *gurus*, as a medium through which to attain something—which is all sheer nonsense and is used to exploit people. If each one of us could think clearly from the very beginning, or re-educate ourselves to think clearly, then all these examples, masters, *gurus*, systems, would be absolutely unnecessary, which they are anyhow.

You see, the world is unfortunately too much for most of us; our circumstances are too heavy, our families, our country, our leaders, our jobs, pin us

down, hold us on the wheel, and we hope vaguely somehow to find happiness. But this happiness does not come vaguely, it does not come if you are pinned down by society, if you are a slave to environment. It comes only when there is freedom of the mind—which is not freedom of thought. Thought is never free; but the mind can be free, and that freedom comes, not through going into the many layers of the unconscious, analyzing the memory of incidents and experiences, but only when there is complete attention. In the process of self-analysis there must always be the analyzer; but the analyzer is part of the analyzed, as the thinker is part of the thought, and if you don't understand the central issue, you will only increase the problems and bring about further misery.

The mind cannot be made clear, pure, innocent, through any method, through any discipline, through the practice of any virtue. Virtue is essential, but a cultivated virtue is not virtue. Suffering obviously has to be understood. As long as there is the self, the 'me', the ego, there must be suffering. Man avoids that suffering, but in the very avoidance of it he strengthens the ego, and all his social activities, his reforms, only create further mischief, further sorrow. Again, this is obvious if you are at all thoughtful.

So, there must be an action totally dissociated from society, a way of thinking that is not contaminated by society, and only then is there a possibility of real revolution—which is not this superficial revolution at merely one level, economic, social, or any other. A total revolution must take place in man himself, and it is only such a mind that can resolve the mounting problems of society.

Now, you have listened to all this, either agreeing or disagreeing; but as I said, there is nothing with which to agree or disagree. These are facts, and knowing these facts, what are you going to do? Surely, that is very important to

find out. Will you return to the society of which you are a prisoner, or have you listened with complete attention? If you listen with complete attention, then that very attention brings its own action, you don't have to do anything. It is like love. Love, and it will act; but without love, do what you will—practise, discipline, reform—, the heart can never be clear. And that is what is happening in the world. We have examples, disciplines, marvellous techniques, yet our hearts are empty because they are filled with the things of the mind; and when our hearts are empty, our solutions to the many problems are also empty. Only the mind that is capable of complete attention knows how to love, because that attention is the absence of the self.

January 15, 1956

III

TALK IN MADRAS

One of our great problems, I should think, is what to do, what kind of action to take in this civilization which is so confused, so contradictory, so demanding. Most of us are educated for one thing, and really want to do something else. The governments want efficient soldiers and bureaucrats, and parents desire that their children should fit into society and earn a livelihood, and that is more or less the pattern followed throughout the world. The individual's occupation is very largely determined by his education and the demands of the society about him.

If you don't mind, I am going to discuss a rather complicated problem this evening, and if you will be good enough to pay a little attention I think you will find that an action comes into being which is not cultivated or shaped by a particular culture; and that action

may be the solution to the complicated problem of our existence.

Naturally we are all concerned with action, with what to do, and the 'what to do' is generally dictated by the world about us. That is, we know that we have to earn a livelihood in some capacity, either as an engineer, a scientist, a lawyer, a clerk, or what you will; and our superficial culture, our education, is restricted to that. Our minds are occupied most of the day with how to earn a livelihood, how to conform to the pattern of a particular society. Our so-called education is limited to the cultivation of skills and the memorizing of a series of facts which will help us to pass some examination and get a particular job; so our action settles at that level, it is shaped according to the necessities of a particular society, a society that is preparing for war. Industrialization demands more scientists, more physicists, more engineers, so this particular layer of the mind is cultivated; and that is what society is chiefly concerned with.

Actually, if you examine it, that is what most of us are concerned with: to adapt ourselves to the demands of society. So there is a contradiction in our life between the so-called educated layer of the mind, and the deep, unconscious occupation, a contradiction of which very few of us are aware; and if we *are* aware of this contradiction, we are merely seeking some kind of satisfaction, some kind of easy solution for the misery of having to earn a livelihood in a particular profession while inwardly wanting to be or to do something else. This is what is actually happening in our life, whether we are aware of it or not. Any action born of the superficial, educated layer of the mind is obviously an incomplete action, and such a partial action is always in contradiction with the total action of man. I think this is fairly clear.

That is, one is educated as a clerk, as a lawyer, or for some other profession, and society is concerned only with that.

The government and industry demand scientists, physicists, engineers, to prepare for war, to increase production, and so on. So one is educated for a profession, but the totality of one's being is undiscovered, unrevealed, and hence man is always in conflict within himself. I think this is very clear if we observe the social and political activities, and the religious pursuits of man. Most of us do something in daily life which is contradictory to everything that we feel we really want to do. We have responsibilities which bind us and from which we want to escape, and the escape takes the form of speculation, theories about God, religious rites, and so on. There are innumerable forms of escape, including drink, but none of them resolve this inner conflict. So what is one to do?

I do not know if you have ever put that question to yourself. Any action born of this inner contradiction is bound to create more mischief and misery. That is what the politicians are doing in the world. However wise a politician may be, he must inevitably create mischief unless he understands the total occupation of the mind, and brings about an action out of the comprehension of that totality. And this is what I want to discuss: whether an action can come into being which is not the action of mere influence and motive.

Please follow this a little bit. Action born of influence is restricted. Our minds are the result of innumerable and contradictory influences, and any action born of that contradictory state must also be contradictory; and a culture, a society which is based on this contradiction, must create endless conflict and misery. This again is fairly obvious, it is an historical fact whether you like it or not. We can see that while the mind is occupied on the surface with daily living, below that there are innumerable motives of satisfaction, of greed, of envy, the compulsions of passion, fear, and so on, with which the mind is also occupied, though one may not be

conscious of it. And can the mind go still below that?

To put it differently, with what is the mind occupied? Please, not my mind, but *your* mind. Do you know what your mind is occupied with? It is obviously occupied during the day, when you are busy at the office, with the routine of your work. Below that superficial occupation of the mind there is another kind of occupation going on, which may be self-protection, security, ambition, and so on, and which is generally in contradiction with the other occupation.

To make this talk worth while and significant, may I suggest that you listen to observe and discover how your own mind is occupied. I want to go into the problem of occupation, because I feel if we can understand this whole question of the mind's occupation, out of that understanding an action will come which is true action, an action which is not born of will, of discipline, and is therefore not contradictory. Am I making myself clear?

That is, unless you understand the totality of your occupation, there cannot be an integrated action. Your mind is superficially occupied during the day with the pursuit of your job and similar activities, but it is also occupied at other levels, in other directions. So there is a contradiction between these two layers of the mind, and we try to overcome the contradiction through discipline, through conformity, through various forms of adjustment based on fear; therefore action always remains contradictory, which is what is happening with all of us. What to do is not the problem at all, because when you ask what to do, the answer is inevitably according to the layers of your occupation, and will only create further contradiction.

Now, what is your mind occupied with? Please follow this. Do you know what your mind is occupied with every day? You know very well that it is occupied with daily activities. Below that, what else is it occupied with? Are

you aware of that deeper occupation? If you are, then you will see that it is in contradiction with the daily pursuits; and either the mind manages somehow to conform, to adjust itself to the daily pursuits, or the contradiction is so total that there is a perpetual conflict going on, which leads to all kinds of diseases.

Now, sirs, from where should action take place? I want to do things in the world, I have to earn a livelihood, and I must work hard; or I want to paint, to write, to think, or be a religious entity. I want to work in some way, and there must be action. From what source, from what centre, should this action spring? That is the problem. I see that action springing from any layer of occupation is bound to create contradiction, misery. There is no difference between the action of a housewife, the action of a lawyer, and the action of the mind which is pursuing God. Socially they may be different, but in reality there is no difference, because the housewife, the lawyer, and the man who pursues God, are all occupied. One occupation may be socially better than another, but fundamentally all occupation is more or less the same, there is no 'better' occupation.

So, from where should action take place? From what centre will action not be contradictory, not lead to mischief, misery, and corruption? Can there be action from a true source, which is not the action of occupation? Am I making my point clear? Probably not. As I said, it is a very complex problem, and I hope I am not making it too complicated.

Let me put the issue differently. Your minds are occupied, are they not? That is fairly obvious. Now, why is the mind occupied? And what would happen if the mind were *not* occupied? What would happen to a woman if she were not occupied with the kitchen, or to a man if he were not occupied with business? What would happen to you if your mind were not occupied with

these things? The immediate response is to say with what one would be occupied if one were not occupied with one's present activities—which indicates the demand for occupation. A mind which is not occupied feels lost, so the mind is always seeking occupation. Its occupation is invariably contradictory, which creates mischief; and after creating the mischief, we are concerned with how to remove the mischief, we are never concerned with the occupation of the mind. But if we can understand the occupation of the mind at different levels, then we shall discover the action which comes when the mind is not occupied, and which does not create mischief.

Have you ever tried to find out why the mind is occupied? Try it now, sirs, if only for the fun of it. But first you must be aware that your mind *is* occupied—which is obvious. You are occupied with your business, with your promotion or failure, with how your wife quarrels with you, or you quarrel with her, and so on; and there is the occupation of a *sannyasi*, of the so-called religious man who is always reading, muttering words, chanting, who is caught in the repetition of rituals, who keeps busy disciplining himself, conforming to the pattern of an ideal. All that is occupation.

We are all occupied, are we not? Why? Why is the mind occupied? Is it the nature of the mind to be occupied? If it is the nature of the mind to be occupied, whether with the high or with the low, which are relative, then such a mind can never find true action. The mind can observe, attend, discover, not when it is constantly busy, but only when it is capable of not being occupied. As long as the mind is occupied, any action born of that occupation must be restrictive, limiting, confusing. Try it and you will see how extraordinarily subtle and difficult it is to have a mind which is not everlastingly full; yet if there is the urgency to find out what is right action in this mad, confused, and

suffering world, you have to come to this point.

Our problem is, then, from what source, from what centre must action arise, if it is not to be contradictory and confusing? The social reformer does not ask this question, because he wants to act, to reform—and in the very process of reformation he is creating mischief. All politicians and religious leaders are doing this. No amount of reading scriptures, of conforming, adjusting to society, has ever solved our problems; on the contrary, they are multiplying. Seeing all this, we have to understand why this confused and sorrowful state has come into being. It has come into being because we all want immediate action; and immediate action can be found only in the superficial layers of our consciousness, it comes out of occupation, out of the so-called educated mind.

Now, is there an action which is not the result of effort, which is not the action of will? The action of will is the action of desire; and desire, whether educated or uneducated, restrained or free, is limited to the contradictory layers of consciousness. Have you not noticed, sirs, that when you want to do one particular thing, immediately there is a contradiction in the form of restrictive fears, demands, examples, a sense of discipline which says, 'Don't do that'? And so you are caught in conflict. Right through life we are caught in this way; from childhood till we die there is this everlasting contradiction and conformity. Seeing this, can the mind discover an action which is not contradictory, which is not mere conformity, which is not the product of influence? I think that is the fundamental issue, the right question; and one can find such action only when one is aware of and understands the total occupation of the mind.

Do you know what your mind is occupied with? Go layer by layer, and you will discover that there is no space anywhere in the mind which is not

occupied. And when you do inquire into the unconscious to discover what its occupation is, even then the superficial mind, which is examining the unconscious, has its own occupation. So what is one to do? One wants to find out the total occupation of the mind, because one sees that without being aware of the total occupation of the mind, any action is bound to create contradiction and therefore greater misery.

Now, what is the mind, your mind, occupied with? And if it were not occupied, what would happen? Would you not be frightened to discover that your mind is not occupied at all? Therefore there would be an immediate urge to be occupied with something. Try it, and you will find out that there is never a moment when the mind is not occupied; and if you do experience a rare moment when the mind is not occupied, which is an extraordinary state, then how to get back to or to retain that state becomes your new occupation.

So, I am suggesting that true action can come only when the mind has understood the totality of its occupation, conscious as well as unconscious, and knows the moment of not being occupied. You will find that action from those moments when the mind is not occupied is the only integrated action. When it is not occupied, the mind is uncontaminated by society, it is not the product of innumerable influences, it is neither Hindu nor Christian, neither communist nor capitalist; therefore it is itself a totality of action which you do not have to be occupied with, or think about.

Now, if you have been good enough to listen to all this attentively, if you have not been asleep, but have listened with complete attention, then you will have experienced immediately the state of not being occupied. As one speaks, or listens, one is aware of the various layers of occupation, and of how contradictory they are; and being aware of the total contradictory nature of

consciousness, the mind discovers a state in which it is not occupied. This brings a totally different sense of action. Then you have to do nothing, for the mind itself will act.

Question: There is deep discontent in me, and I am in search of something to allay this discontent. Teachers like Shankara and Ramanuja have recommended surrender to God. They have also recommended the cultivation of virtue, and following the example of our teachers. You seem to consider this futile. Will you kindly explain.

KRISHNAMURTI: Why are we discontented, and what is wrong with discontent? Obviously we are discontented because, to put it very simply, we want to be something. If I am a good painter, I paint in order to be better known; if I write a poem, I am dissatisfied because it is not good enough, so I struggle to improve. If I am a so-called religious person, there too I want to be something. I follow the example of the various saints, and I want to have as good a reputation as they have. From childhood I have been told I must be as good as or better than somebody else. I have been brought up in comparison, competition, ambition, so my whole life is burdened with discontent. After all, discontent is envy; and our culture, religious and social, is based on envy. We are encouraged to be something for the sake of God. On the one hand, discontent is stimulated, and on the other, we try to find ways and means to overcome that discontent. Being discontented economically, socially, we turn to religious examples to find satisfaction; we meditate, practise disciplines, in order to have no discontentment and to be at peace. This is what is happening with all of you, and I say it is a futile business, it has no meaning at all. To follow, to imitate, to have authority in religious matters, is evil, just as it is

evil to have tyranny in government, because then the individual is completely lost.

At present you are not individuals, you are merely imitative machines, the product of a particular culture, of a particular education. You are the collective, not the individual—which is again fairly obvious. You are all Hindus or Christians, this or that, with certain dogmas, beliefs, which means that you are the product of the mass; therefore you are not individuals. You must be totally discontented to find out; but society does not want you to be discontented, because then you would be vital, you would begin to inquire, to search, to discover, and therefore you would be dangerous.

Unfortunately, discontent with most of you is based on the demand for satisfaction, and the moment you are satisfied, your discontent goes. Then you wither and decay. Have you not observed how people who are discontented when they are young, lose their discontent the moment they have a good job? Give the communist a good job, and it is all over. It is the same with religious people. Don't laugh, it is the same with you. You want to find the right master, *guru*, the right discipline—which is a cage that will smother you, destroy you; and this destruction is called the search for truth. That is, you want to be permanently satisfied so that you will have no disturbance, no discontent, no sense of inquiry. That is what has actually happened; and the more ancient the culture, the more destructive it is, because tradition invariably breeds mediocrity.

So we see that discontent, as we know it now, is merely the desire to find permanent satisfaction. And is there such a thing as permanent satisfaction, a permanent state of peace? Or is there only a state in which nothing is permanent? Only the mind that is totally impermanent, that is totally uncertain, can discover what is true; because truth is not static. Truth is always new, and

it can be understood only by a mind which is dying to all accumulation, to all experience, and is therefore fresh, young, innocent.

Now, is there a discontent which has no object, no motive? Do you understand? A mind whose discontent has a motive will find a conclusion that will satisfy it and destroy its discontent; and such a mind decays, withers. All our discontent is based on a motive, is it not? But now we are asking quite a different question. Is there a discontent which has no motive, which is not the product of a cause? Must you not inquire into this and find out? Surely, such a discontent is necessary—or let us use a different word, it does not matter; let us call it a movement which has no cause, no motive. I think there is such a movement, and it is not mere speculation, or a hopeful idea. When the mind understands the discontent that has a motive, the discontent that is born of the demand for satisfaction, for permanency—when the truth of that discontent is really seen—then the other is. But the other cannot be understood or experienced if there is discontent with a motive, and at present all our discontent has a motive: I cannot get what I want, my wife does not love me, I am no good as I am so I must be different, and so on. There is this endless multiplication of cause and effect, out of which comes the thing we call discontent.

Now, if the mind is aware of that whole process and understands it totally, sees the truth of it, then you will find there is a movement which has no motive at all. It is a movement, an action, it is not static, and it may be called God, truth, or what you will. In that movement there is enormous beauty, and that movement may be called love; because after all, love is without motive. If I love you and want something from you, it is not love—though I may call it by that name—, because there is a motive behind it. Social or religious activity based on a

motive, though it is called service, is not service at all; it is self-fulfillment.

So, can one find out what it is to love without motive? It must be discovered, it cannot be practised. If you say, 'How am I to get that love?', you are asking a question which has no meaning, because in wanting to get it you have a motive. When you use a method in order to get that love, the method only strengthens the motive, which is the 'you'. Then *you* are important, not love.

If you will go into this very deeply—which is quite hard work, and which in itself is meditation—I think you will find that there is a movement without motive, a movement which has no cause; and it is such a movement that brings peace to the world, not your discontented movement with a cause. The man in whom there is this movement without a cause, is a religious man; he is a man who loves, therefore he can do what he will. But the politician, the social reformer, the man who cultivates virtue in order to be happy, or to know God, whose efforts are the result of a motive at whatever level—the activities of such a man only breed hatred, antagonism, and misery.

That is why it is very important for each one of us to find out for ourselves, and not follow Shankara, Ramanuja, Buddha, or Christ. To find out for ourselves, to discover something, we must be free; and we are not free if we merely quote Shankara, or some other authority. If we follow we shall never find. So freedom is at the beginning, not at the end. Liberation is now, not in the future. Liberation means freedom from authority, from ambition, from greed, from envy, and from this smothering of real discontent by the discontent which has a motive and demands an end.

It is essential for a revolution to take place which is not within the pattern of society, but within each one of us, so that we become total individuals, and not little Shankaras, little Buddhas,

little Christs. We must undertake the journey by ourselves, completely alone, without support, without influence, without encouragement or discouragement; because that way there is no motive. The journey itself is the motive, and only those who undertake that journey will bring something new, something uncorrupted to this world—not the social reformers, the do-gooders, not the masters and their pupils, nor the preachers of brotherhood. Such people will never bring peace to the world. They are mischief-makers. The man of peace is the man who puts aside all authority, who understands the ways of ambition, of envy, who cuts himself off totally from the structure of this acquisitive society, and from all the things that are involved in tradition. Only then is the mind fresh; and you need a fresh mind to find God, truth, or what you will, not a mind that is put together by culture, by influence.

January 18, 1956

IV

TALK IN MADRAS

It seems to me that one of the most difficult things for us to do is to find out for ourselves what it is that we are seeking, whether collectively or individually. Some of us may want to improve society, to bring about an economic equality of opportunity for all according to the socialist, the communist, or some other pattern, hoping thereby to foster the well-being of man. Or perhaps we are trying to find out, as individuals, what this life means, why we suffer, why we have only rare moments of joy. There is the inevitable end, which we call death, and the fear of complete annihilation; so our minds are always hoping to find a remedy, an economic or religious system that will, for the time being at least, solve our

many difficult problems. Others are trying to find a better way of bringing up or educating their children, so that the human being will not have to go through all this battle of competition, comparison, the struggle of greed, envy, and lustful desires.

So it seems to me very important to find out what it is we are after, individually as well as collectively. When you sit here and listen, what is it that you are listening to? And what is the motive, the intention, the compelling urge, that is not only making you listen now, but which drives you everlastingly to seek, to strive? Is the search individual, or is it collective?

That is, we all want something, we are all groping after some end. Some of us think we have found an economic system which would solve the problems of the world if people would only listen and could be organized. Others are not concerned with the many, but are individually seeking to bring about a better world through understanding themselves, or through the realization of God, truth, or what you will.

So it is important, is it not, to be conscious of what we are seeking, and why we seek? Until we deliberately make ourselves conscious of what the mind is striving after, why we join various organizations, follow a particular *guru*, or live according to some pattern which promises a well-ordered society—until we are aware of the significance of that whole process, I think what we struggle after, and what we find, will have very little meaning.

Most of us want a well-organized society which is not based on the values of ambition, on acquisitiveness, greed and envy. Any intelligent man wants to bring about a society of that kind; and he also wants to find out if there is something more than physical survival, something beyond the action and reaction of the mind—call it love, God, truth, or what you will. I think the majority of us want a sane, orderly, and balanced world, where poverty and

degradation are non-existent, and where there are not the wealthy few, or the few who become extraordinarily powerful and tyrannical in the name of the proletariat, and all the rest of it. We want to bring about a different world. Surely, that is what the intelligent, the sensitive, the people who have sympathy, want and are struggling to create. And we also feel that life is not merely a matter of production and consumption, do we not? Life must be something more vital, more significant, more worth while.

Now, this is what most of us want, and where shall we begin? If I feel this is essential for human beings everywhere, at what end shall I work? Shall I dedicate my life, my energies, my activities, to bringing about a sane, orderly and balanced world, a world in which there will be no tyranny, no poverty, a world in which the few will not direct the lives of the many through violence, through concentration camps, and so on? Shall I begin by being concerned with the improvement of the world and the economic welfare of man? Or shall I start at the psychological end, which eventually dominates the other? Even if we were to create a well-organized and equitable world, would not the man who is seeking power, whose psychological urge is to have position, prestige, again bring about chaos and misery? So, where shall we begin? Shall we lay emphasis on the psychological, or on the physical, the economic?

This is a problem with which we are all confronted; I am not foisting it on you. Obviously there must be some kind of revolution. Shall the revolution be economic or religious? That is really the question. Considering the extraordinary state of the world—the violence, the misery, the confusion, the clamour of the various experts—, is it not your problem, if you are at all earnest, actively inquiring, to discover for yourself whether you as an individual can contribute to a fundamental revolution?

If the revolution is merely economic, I do not think it will have much significance. I feel the revolution should be religious, that is, psychological. To me, the primary thing is to have the capacity to bring about a different way of thinking, a total revolution of the mind; because, after all, it is the mind that we are concerned with, for the mind can use any system to gain profit for itself. Whatever legislation, whatever sanctions you may introduce, the mind will continue to work for its own benefit. We have seen this historically, revolution after revolution.

So, for those of us who feel it is imperative that the mind should undergo a revolution, how is this religious revolution to take place? By religious I do not mean the dogmatic, the traditional, the acceptance of this or that doctrine, belief; to me, these things are not religious. The people who practise certain forms of ceremony, who wear the sacred thread, who put whatever it is on their foreheads, or meditate for a certain number of hours each day, are not religious at all. They are merely accepting authority, and following it without thought. Religion, surely, is something entirely different.

Now, how is this revolution in the mind to take place? I think it can take place only when we understand the totality of consciousness, which is a very complicated affair, as almost everything else in life is. If the mind can understand entirely its own workings, then there is a possibility of its ridding itself of the collective and bringing about this inward revolution.

At present you are not an individual, are you? You may have a separate house, a distinctive name, a bank account of your own, and certain qualities, idiosyncrasies, capacities; but is that what makes individuality? Or does individuality come into being only when we understand the collective process of the mind? The mind, after all, is the result of the collective; it is shaped by society and is the outcome of

innumerable conditionings. Whether you are a Hindu, a Moslem, a Christian, or a communist, you are the result of conditioning, of education, of social, economic, and religious influences which make you think in a certain way. So you are the product of the collective; and can the mind free itself from the collective? Surely, it is only then that there is a possibility of thinking totally anew, and not in terms of any religion or ism, whether of the West or of the East. Our problems demand a response which is not traditional, which is not according to some pattern or system of thought. So the question is, can the mind free itself from the past, from all the influences it has inherited, and discover something totally new, something not experienced before, which may be called reality, God, or what you will? Am I making this clear?

We have an extraordinary series of challenges to face, have we not? The challenge is always new; and as long as the mind is conditioned by belief, caught in tradition, shaped according to a certain pattern, can it respond adequately to the new? Obviously it cannot. And yet most of us are in that position. The politicians, the experts, the so-called religious people, are all responding from a conditioned background, which means that their response is always inadequate, and therefore it creates more and more problems. We accept these problems as inevitable, as part of the process of living, and put up with them; but perhaps there is a different way of tackling this whole issue.

That is, can the mind uncondition itself? Please listen. Don't say 'yes' or 'no', but let us find out together whether the totality of the mind, not only the conscious mind that is occupied with everyday events, but also the deeper layers of the mind, the mind which is conditioned to think in terms of the tradition in which it has been brought up—whether this total mind can free itself from all conditioning. And is that freedom a matter of time,

or is it immediate? A conditioned mind may assert that the unconditioning of itself must be done gradually, over a period of time; but that very assertion may be another response of its conditioning.

Please follow the process of your own mind, not just what I am saying. To laugh this off, or to accept, or deny it, would obviously be absurd, because this question must continue to arise. Most of us have accepted as part of our conditioning the idea that the unconditioning of the mind is a gradual process extending over several lives and demanding the practice of discipline, and so on. Now, that may be the most erroneous way of thinking, and the unconditioning of the mind may be, on the contrary, an immediate thing. I think it is immediate—which is not a matter of opinion. If you examine the whole process of your mind, you will see that the mind is the result of time, of accumulative experience, knowledge, and that its response is always from this background; so when you assert that the unconditioning of the mind can only be done gradually, and is a matter of time, you are merely responding according to your conditioning. Whereas, if you don't respond at all, but merely listen because you don't know—you actually don't know whether the mind can be unconditioned immediately or not—, then there is a possibility of discovering the truth of the matter.

There are those who say that the mind can never be unconditioned, therefore let us condition it better. Formerly it was conditioned to worship God, which is a fantasy, a myth, an unreality, and now we shall condition it in a better way, which is to worship the State—the State being the few, the experts of this or that ideology. For such people, the problem is very simple. They assert that the mind cannot be unconditioned, and therefore they are only concerned with bettering its conditioning; but their assertion is again mere dogmatism, and there is no inquiry to find out what is

true. Surely, to find out what is true, the mind cannot assert anything, it can neither accept nor reject.

Now, what is the state of the mind—and I hope you are in that state—which neither accepts nor rejects? Surely, your mind is then free to inquire; and when the mind is free to inquire, is it not already unconditioned? When the mind is inquiring, not superficially, inquisitively, curiously, but with persistency, with its total capacity to find out, such a mind is obviously free from all religious and political dogmas, it does not belong to any religion, it is not caught in the net of any belief or ideology, it has no authority. Where there is inquiry, there can be no authority. It is only the mind that is free to inquire, to discover—it is only such a mind that can bring about the religious revolution which is so essential. A free mind is truly religious, because it is fresh, innocent, new; and then, perhaps, that very mind itself is the real.

Question: You say the way of tradition invariably breeds mediocrity. But will one not feel lost without tradition?

KRISHNAMURTI: What do we mean by tradition? It is the handing down, either in writing or through verbal expression, of a belief, of a custom, of experience, of knowledge, whether scientific, musical, artistic, religious, or moral. Surely, that is what we mean by tradition. And when I vainly repeat the traditions which have been handed down, that repetition makes my mind dull, mediocre. Knowledge is necessary in certain occupations. To build a bridge, to split the atom, to run a motor, to produce the many things that are necessary in modern life, knowledge is necessary; but the moment that knowledge becomes traditional, the mind ceases to create and merely functions mechanically. There are machines which can calculate faster than man; and if religiously, and in other ways, we merely

accept tradition, obviously we are just like machines. Tradition gives us a certain security in society, and we are afraid to step out of that groove. We are afraid of what the neighbours might say; we have a daughter to marry off, and therefore we have to be careful. Our minds function traditionally, so we become mediocre and perpetuate misery, which is fairly obvious. Verbally we acknowledge this fact, but inwardly, and in action we do not, because we all want to be secure. And security is a very strange thing. The moment we seek to be secure, invariably we create circumstances and values that bring about insecurity—which is exactly what is happening in the world at the present time. All of us are seeking security in every direction, economic, social, national, and yet that very desire to be secure is creating chaos and bringing about insecurity.

So, the mind functions in the groove of tradition because it hopes to be secure; and a mind that is seeking security is never free to discover. You cannot put away tradition; but if you understand the whole process, the psychological implications of it, you will find that tradition no longer has any meaning, and then you don't have to put it away, it drops off like a withered leaf. Then life has quite a different significance.

Question: There are various systems of meditation for the realization of one's divinity, but you don't seem to believe in any of them. What do you think is meditation?

KRISHNAMURTI: It does not matter very much what one thinks meditation is, because thought is always conditioned; and surely it is very important to find out that thought is conditioned. There is no free thinking, because thought is the response of memory; and if you had no memory, you would be unable to think. The reaction of memory, which is conditioned, is what

we call thinking; so it is not a matter of what we think about meditation, but of finding out what meditation is.

A mind that is incapable of complete attention—not concentration, but complete attention—can never discover anything new. So meditation is necessary; but most of us are concerned with the system, the method, the practice, the posture, the manner of breathing, and all the rest of it. We are concerned, not with the discovery of what is meditation, but with how to meditate, and I think there is a vast difference between the two. To me, meditation is the very process of discovering what *is* meditation; it is not the following of a system, however ancient, and regardless of who has taught it to you. When the mind follows a particular system or discipline, however beneficial, however productive of a desired result, it is conditioned by that system—which is obvious; therefore it can never be free to discover what is real. So we are trying to find out what is meditation, not how to meditate; and if you will listen to this, not merely verbally, but actually, you will discover for yourself what it is.

Do you know what meditation is? You can know only in terms of a system, because you want a result out of meditation. You want to be happy, to achieve this or that state, so your meditation is already premeditated. Please don't laugh it away, but watch it. Your meditation is merely repetition, because you want a result which is already established in your mind: to be happy, to be good, to discover God, truth, peace, or what you will. You have projected what you desire, and have found a method to attain it—and that is what you call meditation. After all, that projection is the result, the opposite, of what you have, of what you are. Being violent, you want peace, so you find a system, a method to achieve it; but in the very process of achieving that peace, you condition your mind so that it is incapable of discovering what is peace. The mind has only projected

the idea of peace out of its own violence.

Most of us think that learning to concentrate is meditation; but is it? Every child concentrates when you give him a new toy. When you do your job, if you are at all interested in it, you are concentrating, or you concentrate because your livelihood depends on it. But nothing very vital depends on your so-called meditation, so you have to force yourself to concentrate; your mind wanders off, and you keep struggling to bring it back again—which is obviously not meditation. That is merely learning a trick, how to concentrate on something in which you are not vitally interested. And one can see that a virtue that is practised is no longer virtue. Virtue is something that has no motive. Goodness has no incentive; if it has an incentive, it is no longer good. If I am good because I am rewarded for it, surely it ceases to be good; and to be free of reward, incentive, my mind has to undergo a complete revolution through the right kind of education. All this is meditation; it helps the mind to discover what is meditation.

Surely, meditation cannot come into being without self-knowledge; and self-knowledge is to see how the mind seeks incentives, how it uses systems, and disciplines itself in order to achieve what it is after, what it hopes to gain. To be aware of all this is meditation, and not merely trying to produce stillness of mind. Stillness of mind can be produced very easily by taking a drug, or by repeating certain phrases; but in that state, the mind is not still. The mind can be still only when there is the understanding of what is meditation. A still mind is not asleep, it is extraordinarily alert; but a mind that is *made* still, is stagnant, and a stagnant mind can never understand what is beyond itself. The mind can discover or experience something beyond itself only when it understands the total process of itself; and that understanding requires com-

plete attention, being fully awake to the significance of its own activities. You don't have to practise a system of discipline. For the mind to watch itself without distortion, is in itself an astonishing discipline. Not to distort what it sees, the mind must be free of all comparison, judgment, condemnation, not eventually, but free at the very beginning; and that requires a great deal of attention. Then you will find that the mind becomes totally quiet without being urged, not just at the superficial level, but deep down. At rare moments one may have an experience of stillness; but that very experience becomes a hindrance, because it becomes a memory, a dead thing.

So, for the mind to be still, one must die to every experience; and when the mind is really still, then in that very stillness there is something which cannot be put into words, because there is no possibility of recognition. Anything that is recognizable has already been known; and when the mind is still, there is a total freedom from the known.

January 29, 1956

V

TALK IN MADRAS

It seems to me that one of the most difficult and arduous things in life is to look at something as a whole, to have a feeling for the totality of things; and I think it is very important to understand why the mind so invariably breaks up the immediate action into patterns, into details, why it is seemingly incapable of grasping the total significance of existence at one glance. I don't know if you have thought about it at all from this point of view. Most of us approach all the complexities, the problems, the miseries and struggles of life, with a detailed outlook, with a mind that is very small, a mind that is conditioned,

shaped by the culture, the society in which we live. We never seem able to grasp immediately the full significance of anything. Instead of seeing the whole tree at once, it is as if we looked at only one leaf, and from there gradually began to see the whole tree. So I think it is important to find out why the mind is apparently not capable of seeing the truth of something immediately, and letting that truth operate, instead of itself operating on the truth. After all, reality, God, or what you will, is not to be approached little by little, it cannot be put together piece by piece, as a wheel is; it must be seen immediately, or one does not see it at all.

Most of us have been trained, I think, to approach this problem through the accumulation of knowledge, through analysis, or the cultivation of virtue. If one observes the everyday activities of one's own mind, all the ways of its operation, one sees how it is always gathering, learning, acquiring, putting things together little by little, hoping thereby to capture something which is beyond this process of accumulation; and this may be the gravest mistake.

What is it that most of us are seeking? Whether we are Hindus, Christians, or what you will, we are trying to find something beyond the mere process of the mind, are we not? It is this search that we call religion. We practise various disciplines, we meditate according to certain systems, always in the hope of coming upon that which is not merely the result of a cultivated mind. But surely, to understand or to experience what is beyond the mind, there must be, not a carefully-nurtured letting go of the self, of the 'me' and the 'mine', but the complete abandonment of it without cultivation. I don't know if I am making myself clear on this point. Though we see it is important that the self, the 'me', the ego, should go, yet all our activities, our thoughts, our practices, our religious disciplines, are actually encouraging the self. And seeing the futility of the analyzer and

the analyzed, perceiving that the various forms of substitution, the various disciplines, are only strengthening the 'me' in a subtle way and are therefore an impediment, can the mind abandon the whole of that process?

To put it differently, our minds are conditioned, are they not? The culture, the society in which we are brought up, and various other influences, shape our minds from childhood as Hindus, as communists, and so on. And can the totality of the mind, the unconscious as well as the conscious, be unconditioned, not by degrees, not little by little, but immediately? Surely, that is one of our problems. Our minds are shaped, conditioned, held within a frame; and however much the mind may try to break the frame in which it is held, that very effort is the outcome of its conditioning, because the thinker is not separate from the thought; the maker of the effort to escape from the prison of the self, is also part of the self, is he not? And when we see that, when we realize the truth of it, can the mind abandon completely this conditioned way of thinking?

I think we should consider here the problem of what it means to listen to something. When we listen to what is being said, how do we listen? If we listen with the intention, the desire to find something, to discover, to learn, then obviously there is no listening at all, because we are concerned with acquiring. Listening then becomes merely a superficial hearing without much significance. But if we can listen with that attention which has no object of attainment, then I think something revolutionary, the unexpected, the unpremeditated, takes place.

You know, sirs, as I was saying the other day, all of us are in search of something; and most of us don't know what it is we are really seeking. To seek, to inquire, there must first be freedom; but we are obviously not free, therefore our search has no meaning at all. Our search is only for greater

comfort, greater security, and so we are prisoners of our own desire. What we seek is the fulfillment of our own longing, and so our search is no longer true search. If we observe ourselves we will see that there is this constant desire to find some peace, to have a permanent state of comfort, complete security; and this desire makes us prisoners at the very beginning.

So it seems to me that what is important is not whether there is a reality, God, this or that, but to understand the process of one's own mind. Without self-knowledge, without knowing oneself, all search is obviously vain. And is it very difficult to know oneself? The self is made up of one's desires, greeds, ambitions, motives, envies, and the beliefs that the mind clings to; and to know that whole process, the conscious as well as the unconscious, is surely essential before one can discover anything new. And yet we are not concerned with that. We are not concerned with self-knowledge, with knowing the ways of our own minds. On the contrary, we are always escaping from that, and imposing on the mind certain patterns according to which we try to live.

Surely the beginning of wisdom is self-knowledge. Without knowing oneself, which is a very complex entity, all thinking has very little meaning. If the mind does not know its own prejudices, vanities, fears, ambitions, greeds, how can it be capable of discovering what is true? All it can do is to speculate about what is true, have beliefs, dogmas, put restrictions on itself, think mechanically, follow tradition, and thereby create more and more problems. So what is important is to understand the ways of the self; and to understand the self is not to alter it, not to deny or control it, but to observe it. If I want to understand something, I cannot condemn it, can I? If I want to understand a child, I must neither condemn nor compare him with another child; I must study, watch him, be aware of all his ways.

Similarly, if I want to understand the total process of my mind, I must be observant, watchful, passively aware of the way I talk, of my gestures, of the underlying motives; and that is not possible if I condemn or compare. I think that to understand the totality of one's own mind is really the most important thing in life; and one can watch the operations of the mind only in relationship, because nothing exists in isolation. We exist only in relationship; and relationship is the mirror in which to observe the mind's activities.

So, the mind is conditioned, it is the result of the past, all our thinking is the process of the past; and the problem is, can such a mind comprehend that which is timeless, beyond itself? As I was pointing out the other day, what is necessary is a religious revolution; and a religious revolution can come about only when each one of us frees himself from all dogmas, beliefs, and rituals. Surely, it is only then that the mind is capable of understanding itself, and thereby coming to that state in which there is no thinking—thinking being the movement of the past.

We now try to solve our problems through thought—and it is thought that has created the problems, because thought is the result, the process of the past. All thinking is conditioned. If you observe, you will see that there is no free thinking, because thinking is the movement of the past, it is the reaction of memory; and we have used thought as a means of discovering what is true. But what is true can be discovered only when the mind is completely still, not *made* still, not disciplined, coerced. Stillness comes into being only when through self-knowledge the totality of the mind is understood. Self-knowledge comes through awareness, through watchfulness of thought, in which there is no entity who is observing thought. The observer of thought arises only when there is condemnation, when there is a desire to direct thought. After all, the thinker is part of thought,

is he not? There is no thinker if there is no thought; but we have divided the thinker from the thought for reasons of our own security. We have created this division out of our desire to have a permanent entity, which we call the spiritual; but if you observe very closely, you will see that there is no permanency at all. There is only thinking, and thinking is a movement of the past, of experience, of knowledge.

Now, as long as there is the thinker separate from thought, there must be conflict, the process of duality, there must be this gap between action and idea. But cannot the mind actually experience that extraordinary state when there is only thinking, and not the thinker, when there is only an awareness in which there is no condemnation or comparison? The condemnatory and comparative process is the way of the thinker separate from thought. There is only thinking, and thinking is impermanent. Realizing the impermanency of thinking, the mind creates the permanent as the *Atman*, the higher self, and all the rest of it; but it is still the process of thinking. Thinking is conditioned, it is the result of the past, of accumulated experience, knowledge, so it can never lead to the unknown, the timeless. After all, the self, the 'me', is nothing but a bundle of memories; and even though you give it a spiritual quality, a permanent value, it is still within the area of thought, and therefore impermanent.

The difficulty for most people is to let go of this 'permanent' quality of the mind, which is its own invention. Most of us want permanency in one form or another, and so the mind has given a quality of permanency to what it calls reality, God. Surely, there is nothing permanent. Reality is not continuous, not permanent, but something to be discovered from moment to moment. When the mind has a momentary experience of something real, it desires to make that reality permanent, and the permanent becomes the past, it is held within

the field of time; but the new can exist only when the past is dead. That is why one must die to every experience. It is only when the mind is simple, fresh, innocent, unburdened with knowledge, that it is capable of immediate perception.

Every form of experience becomes the means of further recognition, does it not? Having met you yesterday, I recognize you today. The mind is a process of recognition, and with that process of recognition we try to experience the real; but the real cannot be so experienced, for it cannot be recognized. If you can recognize it, it is out of the past, it is held in memory, it has already been known; therefore it is not the real. So the mind must be in that state when there is no experiencer at all, which means that the process of recognition must cease. You will find that this is not as fantastic as it sounds. When you see a beautiful sunset, what happens? There is an immediate reaction to that beauty, and then you begin to compare; the sunset which you saw a week ago was much more beautiful. So you have established a connection, the new experience is already related to the past. This process of comparison is the action of recognition which prevents the mind from constantly experiencing something new.

After all, the mind is the result of the known, and it is always trying to capture the unknown in terms of the known. The coming into being of the unknown is possible only when there is freedom from the known. The known is the 'me', and whether you place it at the highest or the lowest level, it is still the 'me', which is accumulated experience, the process of recognition. The 'me' is incapable of seeing the totality of this extraordinary thing that we call life, and that is why we have broken up the world as Christian and Hindu, Buddhist and Moslem, and why we are breaking up India into little linguistic pieces. All that is the process of the petty mind held within the field of the known.

There must be freedom from the known for the unknown to be. That is

a fact, it is obviously so; because reality, God, or what you will, cannot be known, cannot be recognized. Knowledge, recognition, is the result of the past, and a mind that is looking for the unknown through the known, can never find it. It is only when the mind is free from the known that the other is.

Now, when you listen to that statement, which is an obvious fact, what happens? If you give your whole attention to it, you do not ask how to be free from the known. The mind can never make itself free from the known; if it does, it merely creates another known. But if you give your whole attention to that fact, then you will see that the very fact itself begins to operate, just like the life in the seed begins to push up through the soil. Then the mind has to do nothing. If the mind operates on the fact, it can only operate in detail, putting many little parts together to find the whole; but the putting together of many parts does not make the whole. The whole must be perceived instantaneously. That is why it is important to understand the ways of the mind, not through books, not through reading the *Gita* or the *Upanishads*, but by watching yourself in relationship with your wife, with your children, with your neighbour, with your boss, by observing the way you talk to your servant, to the bus-man. Then you will begin to discover to what depths the mind is conditioned; and in that very discovery of the mind's conditioning, there is freedom. What is important is to discover, not merely to repeat. Through this constant discovery of the ways of the self, the mind becomes very quiet without suppression, without restriction, without being put in a frame; and for such a mind, because it is free from the known, there is a possibility of the coming into being of the unknown.

Question: In India we have been told for centuries to be spiritual, and our daily life is an endless round of rituals and ceremonies.

Is this spirituality? If not, then what is it to be spiritual?

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, let us find out what it means to be spiritual—not the definition of that word, which you can look up in a dictionary, but as we are sitting here together let us really experience that state, if there is such a state at all.

A mind which is crippled by authority, whether it be the authority of a book, of a *guru*, of a belief, or of an experience, is obviously incapable of discovering what is true, is it not? And can the mind be free from all authority? That is, can the mind stop seeking security in authority? Surely, only a mind that is not afraid of being insecure, uncertain, is capable of finding out what it is to be spiritual. The man who merely accepts a belief, a dogma, who performs rituals and ceremonies, is not capable of discovering what is true, or what it is to be spiritual, because his mind is held within the pattern of tradition, of fear, of greed.

Now, can the mind which has been held in ceremonies, drop them immediately? Surely that is the only test, because in dropping them, you will discover all the implications involved; the fears, the antagonisms, the quarrels, all the things which the mind has been unwilling to face, will come out. But we never do that. We merely talk about being spiritual. We read the *Upanishads*, the *Gita*, repeat some *mantras*, play around with ceremonies, and call this religion.

Surely, that which is spiritual must be timeless. But the mind is the result of time, of innumerable influences, ideas, impositions; it is the product of the past, which is time. And can such a mind ever perceive that which is timeless? Obviously not. It can speculate, it can vainly grope after, or repeat, some experiences which others may have had; but being the result of the past, the mind can never find that which is beyond time. So all that the mind

can do is to be completely quiet, without any movement of thought, and only then is there a possibility of the coming into being of that state which is timeless; then the mind itself is timeless.

So ceremonies are not spiritual, nor are dogmas, nor beliefs, nor the practising of a particular system of meditation; for all these things are the outcome of a mind which is seeking security. The state of spirituality can be experienced only by a mind that has no motive, a mind that is no longer seeking; for all search is based on motive. The mind that is capable of not asking, of not seeking, of being completely nothing—only such a mind can understand that which is timeless.

Question: I have attended the recent morning discussions. Do you want us not to think at all? And if we have to think, how are we to think?

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, not to think at all would be a state of amnesia, a state of idiocy. If you did not know where you lived, if you could not remember the way to your home, something would be wrong, would it not? We have to think. We have to think clearly, sanely, purposefully and directly. The mind is the only instrument we possess, and we have to think in order to learn a technique, which will enable us to get a job and earn a livelihood; but beyond that, our thinking becomes ambition, greed, envy, and our society is built on these things. In our education we are everlastingly concerned with helping those who are being educated to fit into society; so our thinking, and the thinking of the generation to come, is concerned with fitting into a society which is based on greed, envy, and acquisitiveness. But the function of education, surely, is not to help the young to conform to this rotten society, but to be free of its influences, so that they may create a new society, a different world.

Thinking is essential; but when the mind is occupied with greed, with envy, with the whole process of the 'me', then thinking is obviously corrupt, and any society based on that thinking inevitably degenerates. Thinking in which the self is cultivated as virtue, as respectability, as conformity, becomes an impediment to the discovery of what is real. That is why it is important that a revolution should take place in the mind, a religious revolution; and that can come about only when you and I no longer belong to society. This does not mean putting on a loin-cloth and having little or no shelter, it means cutting oneself away completely, inwardly, from all acquisitiveness. It means not being greedy, not being ambitious, not pursuing power, so that there is no 'me' becoming something, either worldly or spiritual. The only revolution is this religious revolution, which has nothing to do with any church, with any organization, with any dogma or belief. It must take place in each one of us, and only then is there a possibility of creating a new world.

February 1, 1956

I

TALK IN MADANAPALLE

When we are confronted with so many problems, when the world is at war or preparing for war, when there is so much production and at the same time starvation, I think the most important thing in all this human struggle is to understand the mind. Surely, the mind is the only instrument which can find the right answer to the many problems that exist, yet we very rarely give thought to or examine the process of the mind. We think that ready-made answers, or certain patterns of thinking, will solve our problems. As Hindus we have a certain way of thinking which we

hope will resolve our complex problems; and if we are communists, Christians, or Buddhists, we have other ready-made answers. Very few of us give real consideration to the process of thinking, to the ways of the mind itself; and it seems to me that the solution lies *there*, not in approaching the problem with a mind that is already shaped or conditioned.

So, this evening I would like, if I may, to consider this question of what is the mind; because it is obvious that, without going very deeply into this whole problem, without understanding the composition and state of the mind, mere speculative thinking, or identification with a particular belief, is utterly futile. And in trying to understand the process of the mind, I think it is important to listen rightly. Most of us listen with a mind already made up, or burdened with preconceptions, or we listen to find an opposing argument, and very few listen intently, with freedom; but it is only when we are inquiring freely, not tethered to any particular belief, that the mind can find, the truth of any problem. So this talk will be of significance only if we can listen rightly, which is quite arduous, and not merely treat it as a lecture to be casually listened to of an evening and set aside.

As I was saying, unless we understand the ways of the mind, we cannot possibly understand the complex problem of living. Now, what is the mind? We are trying to find out, not merely assert or accept. And to find out, you have to observe your own mind in operation as you are listening to the description of what the mind is. That is, though I am talking, describing the mind, be aware of the process of your own thinking, and thereby find out for yourself what the mind is.

Let us be very clear why it is important to understand the mind. The mind is the only instrument we have, the instrument of perception, of understanding, of thought; and without

clarification of the mind, our endeavour to find out what is reality, truth, God, or what you will, can have very little significance. So we are trying to inquire into the actual process of the mind, we are not merely accepting or rejecting what is said.

Surely, the mind is the conscious as well as the unconscious, it is a totality which includes both the open and the hidden processes of thought. Most of us are occupied exclusively with the conscious, with the everyday events, ambitions, struggles, greeds, and we are completely unaware of the content of the unconscious, that is, of the mind which lies below the daily activities of the conscious mind; and until we understand the totality, including what is in the unconscious, mere occupation with the conscious will have very little meaning.

We know that the conscious mind is occupied with daily events, with a job, earning a livelihood, with its reactions and constant adjustments to immediate problems. It is the conscious mind that is educated in a certain technique, that accumulates knowledge and so-called culture. Below that superficial mind there are the many layers of the unconscious, in which are rooted the racial, cultural and social urges, the religious beliefs and traditions, the instinctive responses based on the values of the particular society in which we have been brought up. Without going into many details, that is the totality of the mind, is it not? So, the totality of the mind is conditioned, shaped, limited by many influences—by our diet, by the climate and the culture in which we live, by social and economic values.

Now, with that conditioned mind, with which we are dissatisfied, we are trying to find something beyond the mind. We see that the mind is very small, confused, contradictory, and with that mind we are trying to understand the unknowable. After all, our minds are the result of time, time being the known, the past, the accumulation of

knowledge; and with this instrument, which is still within the field of time, the so-called religious people are trying to find something which is beyond time. So the question inevitably arises, can the conditioned mind understand or experience that which is not of its own fabrication? That is one of our great problems, is it not? And surely we shall never be able to solve our problems as long as we are thinking as Hindus, Christians, or communists, because it is by thinking in these very terms that we have created the problems. It is only when the mind is free from all traditions, values, beliefs, superstitions, acceptances, that there is a possibility of solving our many human problems.

The question is, then, can the mind which has been brought up, educated in a certain pattern, free itself from that pattern? That is, can the mind let go of the beliefs, traditions, and values which are based on authority, on mere acceptance? Can all this be set aside so that the mind is free to investigate, to find out? That is our problem, is it not? Which means, really, is it possible for the mind to free itself from the securities to which it is tethered? Because, after all, what most of us are seeking, outwardly or inwardly, is some form of security. If I have the outward security of position, prestige, money, temporarily I may be satisfied; but a time comes when I begin to demand an inward security, I take psychological refuge in belief, in dogma, in tradition, in a certain patterned way of thinking. And can the mind which is seeking security, which demands to be safe, undisturbed, ever find reality, God, or whatever name you like to give it? Obviously not. The mind that desires to be secure will find what it is seeking, but not that which is true.

So, can the mind free itself from this urge to be secure? And surely, a mind which demands security inwardly, psychologically, will invariably create outward insecurity in the social structure. Nationalism, for example, is an idea to

which the mind clings as a means of psychological security; and this worship of nationalism must inevitably create insecurity outwardly—which is precisely what is happening in the world.

Now, if you observe it very closely, you will see that the mind is constantly trying to find something permanent which it calls peace, reality, or what you will. And is there anything permanent? Yet the mind creates values which it assumes to be permanent, and then believes in them; it establishes certain habits of thought which become permanent, and such a mind is never free to inquire. I think it is important to understand the significance of this, because, after all, freedom is at the beginning, not at the end. It is only the free mind that can inquire, not a tethered mind, not a mind that is held by belief, dogma, tradition; yet all our education is based on these things, not only at school, but as we go through life, which is also part of education. We never inquire into the possibility of having freedom first, because inquiry of such a nature demands a thinking process which does not start with an assumption, or with accumulated experience, either its own or that of others.

So it seems to me that to find reality, the unknowable, which is not to be premeditated, or speculated upon, the mind must be free from everything it has known, it must die to all its many yesterdays. Only then is the mind innocent, and therefore able to find out what is real.

There are some questions here, and I wonder why we ask questions. Is it with the intention of receiving an answer? And is there an answer, or only a probing into the problem without looking for an answer? If I am looking for an answer, then my mind is entirely concentrated on the discovery of the answer, and not on the understanding of the problem. Most of us are concerned with the solution, with the answer, so we give divided attention to the problem; therefore the problem

is never understood, and so there is no answer. To inquire into the problem requires a mind that is not looking for an answer, but one that is capable of investigating without judging or condemning. Can we look at anything without comparing, judging, condemning? If you will experiment with it, you will see how extraordinarily difficult it is, because the whole process of our thinking is based on comparison, judgment, condemnation. But if we can inquire into the problem and not wait for an answer, then the problem itself is resolved without our looking for an answer.

Question: Can there be world peace without a world government to establish and maintain it? And how can that be brought about?

KRISHNAMURTI: Is peace external or inward? Can any government bring peace, even though it be one government for the whole world? It may establish outward order without the constant threat of war, but even that can take place only when there is no nationalism, when there are no frontiers, either political or religious. So we must be clear as to what we mean by peace.

Is peace a thing to be created by the authority of any government, whether communist, imperialist, capitalist, or what you will? Is peace to come about through legislation? One can see that a world government could bring about a certain type of peace. It could perhaps abolish sovereign governments with their armed forces, which are one of the causes of war; but surely that is not the entire meaning of peace. Peace is of the mind. And can the mind be at peace as long as it is ambitious, greedy, envious? It is the greedy, envious, acquisitive mind that has created this warring society in which we live, is it not? Our society is based on acquisitiveness, envy, greed, the driving ambition to be something; and so within

our society there is constant battle, conflict.

So, peace is of the mind, it cannot be brought about through mere legislation. Tyranny may establish some sort of order in a confused and contradictory society, and order can also be brought about through the parliamentary action of a democratic government; but as long as there is the spirit of nationalism, which creates sovereign governments with their armed forces, as long as there are frontiers and racial divisions, there are bound to be wars. So the man who would be peaceful cannot belong to any country; nor can he belong to any religion, for religion at present is merely organized dogmatism.

This thing that we call peace is something that has to be understood inwardly, and not merely sought through legislation, or through the coming together of many opinions. If you observe, you will see how we worship nationalism and uphold the flag of a particular country. We identify ourselves with the whole of what we call India because, being petty, inwardly empty, and living in a little place like Madanapalle, it gives us a certain pride, it flatters our vanity, to call ourselves Indians; and for that pride and vanity we are willing to kill, or be killed. This very complex psychological process, which goes on in every country, has to be understood by each one of us, and not merely legislated against. That is why the truly religious man is one who does not belong to any religion, or to any particular country.

Question: You are an Indian and an Andhra, born here in Madanapalle. We are proud of you and your good work in the world. Why don't you spend more time in your native country instead of living in America? You are needed here.

KRISHNAMURTI: You know, it is a peculiar process that is going on in the world, this identification of oneself with a particular piece of land, or with a

so-called religion. Does it matter very much where you were born, or what language you speak, or what particular culture you were raised in? Look at what is happening in this country. We are breaking up into parts, calling ourselves Tamils, Telugus, Maharashtrians, and all the rest of it. This breaking-up process is maintained in Europe too, with the Germans, the English, the French, the Italians, and so on. When a man worships and identifies himself with the particular, his struggles become much greater, his misery increases. As long as I remain an Andhra, belonging to a particular class and to a particular religion, my mind is very petty, small, narrow. It is surely the function of the mind to break through all these limitations and find the whole; but the whole is not made up of parts. By putting many parts together, the whole is not to be found. It is only by not being entangled in the part that there is a possibility of seeing the whole immediately.

Question: I have a son who is very dear to me, and I see that he is being subjected to many bad influences both at home and at school. What am I to do about it?

KRISHNAMURTI: We are all the product, not of one particular influence, but of many contradictory influences, are we not? And the questioner wants to know how he is to prevent his son from being subjected to the bad influences, both at home and at school. But surely the problem is much more complex than merely to find a way of resisting bad influences. What we have to consider is the whole process of influence, is it not? After all, the student is inevitably exposed to many influences, both good and bad. There is not only the home influence and the influence of the school, but there is also the influence of what he reads, of the things he hears, of the climate, of the kind of food he eats, of the religion and the culture in

which he is brought up. He is the sum total of these many influences, as you and I are, and we cannot reject some and hold on to others. All that we can do is to observe all these influences and find out if the mind can be free of them. But unfortunately, as it is now, our education is a process of imposing on the student the so-called good influences. That is one part of it; and the other part is a process of cramming his mind with certain information so that he can pass some examination, put a few letters after his name, and get a job. That is all we are concerned with in what we now call education.

But right education is something entirely different, is it not? It is not merely a matter of giving the student the technical knowledge which will enable him to hold a job, but it is to help him to be aware of all these influences and not be caught in any one of them. To do this he must have a good mind, and a good mind is one that is learning, not one that has learnt; because the mind that accumulates has ceased to learn. Learning then becomes something out of the past, and so there is no further inquiry.

So, what is right education? Is it merely a definition gathered from some book, or is it a constant process of understanding the many influences that impinge on the mind, so that the mind is set free at the very beginning and is therefore capable of inquiry? Surely, a mind that is capable of real inquiry is always learning, it is not merely a repository of information. Anybody who knows how to read can look up information in an encyclopaedia. While it is obviously necessary in education to impart technical knowledge so that the student can have a job, at present that is all most parents are concerned with. They want their child to be trained for a good position in the present social structure, to be helped to adjust himself to this society, which is based on greed, envy, and ambition. You want your child to fit into that framework, you

don't want him to be a revolutionary; so you have this so-called education which merely helps him to conform, to imitate, to follow. But is it not possible for those who really love their children to help them to understand the many influences of society, of the culture in which they were born, so that when they grow up they will not conform to the pattern of a particular culture, but will perhaps create their own society, free of envy, ambition, and greed? Surely, such people are the only truly religious people. Revolution is religious, not merely economic. Religion is not the acceptance of some dogma, tradition, or so-called sacred book. Religion is the inquiry to find the unknown.

February 12, 1956

II

TALK IN MADANAPALLE

I am sure most of us feel that a fundamental revolution is necessary in a world where there is so much chaos, misery, starvation, and the constant threat of war. We feel there must be some kind of change, and each group has its own particular panacea or method for coping with the miseries of the world. The communists have one pattern, the capitalists another, and the so-called religious people still another. Being eager to bring about a change, which is so obviously necessary, we join one or other of these various groups, and I think it is important to find out what we mean by change—not the change of mere outward, legislative action, but a much more fundamental, more radical change. We can see that any change according to a preconceived plan involves an executive body to carry out that plan, and that the authority which must be vested in such a body invariably becomes tyrannical—

which is what is actually happening in the world. There is the tyranny of well-organized authority in the hands of a few, or the tyranny of a particular religion, or the tyranny of authority vested in a particular section of society. Seeing all this, you and I, the ordinary people, are desirous to bring about a change for the better, so that mankind everywhere will have adequate food, clothing, and shelter, a wider education, and so on.

Now, as I said, it is important to find out what we mean by change. For most of us, change implies a modified continuity of what has been, does it not? Though the so-called revolutionaries desire to bring about a radical transformation of society, their attitude, their values, their concepts and formulas, are all based on the past, on the reaction of what they have known, and any change arising from that source is merely a continuity of what has been, however modified. They may not begin that way, but eventually it comes to that, and to me that is no change at all. Change implies something entirely different, and I would like, if I may, to go into this whole issue.

We realize that there must be a fundamental change in our way of thinking, a radical transformation of the human mind and heart; but this extraordinary change cannot be brought about by merely continuing what has been in a modified form. Nor can this radical revolution in the mind be brought about through education as it now exists; for what we now call education is merely the learning of a technique in order to earn a livelihood and conform to the pattern imposed by society.

So, seeing all this, where are we to begin? Where does one begin to bring about this fundamental change which is so obviously essential in the social order? Surely, the individual problem is the world problem. Society is what we have made it. There are those who have, and those who have not; those who know, and those who are

ignorant; those who are fulfilling their ambition, and those who are frustrated; there are the various religions, with their ceremonies and dogmatic beliefs, and the ceaseless battle within society, this everlasting competition with each other to achieve, to become. All this is what you and I have created. Social reforms may be brought about through legislation or through tyranny; but unless the individual radically changes, he will always overcome the new pattern to suit his psychological demands—which is again what is happening in the world.

It seems to me very important, then, to understand the total process of individuality, because it is only when the individual changes radically that there can be a fundamental revolution in society. It is always the individual, never the group or the collective, that brings about a radical change in the world, and this again is historically so.

Now, can the individual, that is, you and I, change radically? This transformation of the individual, but not according to a pattern, is what we are concerned with, and to me it is the highest form of education. It is this transformation of the individual that constitutes religion, not the mere acceptance of a dogma, a belief, which is not religion at all. The mind that is conditioned to a particular pattern which it calls religion, whether Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, or what you will, is not a religious mind, however much it may practise all the so-called religious ideals.

So, can you and I bring about a radical transformation in ourselves without compulsion, without motive? Any form of compulsion is an ego-centric activity, it distorts the mind, and motive is always based on the process of the self, the 'me', the ego. And can there be a fundamental change in each one of us without motive, without compulsion? I think this is an issue which requires a great deal of thought, inquiry, it is not to be easily dismissed by saying that

there can or cannot be such a change. A man who is really earnest must go deeply into this problem of bringing about a transformation within himself. Surely, this inward change is not according to a pattern, or a religious concept, but it comes about only through self-knowledge. That is, without knowing the totality of my consciousness, the whole of my being, any ideal, formula, concept, or belief I may have, is merely a wish, an idea, it has no basis, and therefore it is not a reality at all. Unless there is self-knowledge, that is, unless I am beginning to know myself completely, whatever activity I may enter will be destructive and only cause more mischief. So, if one is at all serious, if one is really concerned about the chaos and the misery in the world, is it not vitally important to understand the process of oneself?

Now, what is self-knowledge? Self-knowledge is not according to any book, it cannot be had through the authority of any person. The ways of my thought must be discovered, and I can only discover them in relationship; because relationship is a mirror in which I can see myself, not theoretically, but as I actually am. Surely, it is in relationship with my wife, my children, my neighbour, my servants, my boss, with the whole of society, that I discover myself as I am; for in that mirror of relationship I can see my superstitions, my judgments, my habits of thought, the traditions which I follow, the comparative values which I give to experiences and to things.

What generally happens is that we like or dislike what we see in the mirror of relationship, and therefore we either accept or condemn it. But it is possible to discover the ways of thought, the hidden motives and pursuits, the reactions of a mind conditioned by a particular society, only when we look into that mirror without any sense of condemnation or comparison, without judgment. Only then is the mind, the conscious as well as the unconscious,

freed from its own bondage, and so perhaps able to go beyond the limitations of itself. After all, that is meditation, is it not?

True religion is for the mind to understand its own processes, that is, its ambition, envy, greed, hatred, because the very understanding of those things puts an end to them without compulsion, and therefore the mind is free to explore. Then there is a possibility of finding that which is reality, truth, God, or what name you will. But without self-knowledge, merely to assert or deny that God or reality exists, has no significance at all.

We can see that one part of the world is conditioned to accept the idea of God, while another part is being conditioned not to believe in God, but to believe in and sacrifice itself for the State. And is it possible for the mind to free itself from *all* conditioning? Surely, it is only the mind that is unconditioning itself, and is therefore able to act—it is only such a mind that brings about a radical revolution. That is why it is very important for you and me individually to free ourselves from the collective; because if one is not free, there is no possibility of exploring to find out what is true.

So the earnest must obviously inquire into this issue, and not merely conform to a pattern of thought. Only the individual who is religious in the true sense of the word can bring about a new state, a new way of looking at life; and the truly religious individual is he who is freeing himself from the conditioning of a particular society, and is therefore truly revolutionary.

Question: Without believing in a Planner of this universe, I feel that life is meaningless. What is wrong with this belief?

KRISHNAMURTI: Surely, by "Planner of this universe" you mean God, only you use a different name. Now, what is belief? What do we mean by that

word, not just the dictionary meaning, but what is its psychological content?

And what is the process of the mind that necessitates a belief? What makes you say, 'I believe in God' or 'I don't believe in God'? What is the psychological urge that makes the mind accept or reject belief in God, in a Planner of the universe? Until we discover that, mere believing or disbelieving has very little meaning.

Obviously, if from childhood you are told to believe in God, you grow up believing, just as another child, who is told not to believe, grows up disbelieving. One is called a believer and the other an atheist, but both are conditioned. When you believe in a Planner of the universe, it is because you have been encouraged to believe from childhood, and your mind has been impregnated with this idea; or else you feel this life is so uncertain, in such a state of flux, that your mind clings to something as permanent, and that permanency you call God, or by some other name, giving it certain attributes, qualities. This is neither right nor wrong, it is the actual process of the mind. Because we see about us so much misery, chaos, such transiency, an utter lack of peace within and without, the mind creates and clings to something timeless, something everlastingly beautiful, peaceful. So in its uncertainty, the mind creates its own certainty. But a mind that believes or disbelieves, that accepts or rejects, can never find out what is God. God must be found, discovered, not believed in. To find, the mind must be free from both belief and disbelief. Surely, that state which we call God, that timeless reality, must be something totally new, unimagined, never experienced before; and only a free mind can discover it, not a mind that is tethered to a dogma, to a belief.

After all, if you observe, if you think about it at all, you will see that the mind is the result of time—time being memory, experience, knowledge. That is, the mind is the result of the known,

of the past, of many thousands of years. Now, with that mind we are trying to find the unknown, that something which may be called God, truth, or what you will. But such a mind cannot find the unknown, it can only project what is known into the future. Any belief held by the mind is the result of its own conditioning; any speculative formula or concept is the result of the known; any movement of the mind to inquire into the unknown, is utterly useless and vain, because the mind can only think in terms of the known. When it understands this total process and is therefore free of the known, the mind becomes very quiet, completely still; and only then is it possible for the unknown to be. Surely, this is meditation—not the projection of the known into the future, and the worshipping of that projection.

Question: In this world, goodness does not pay. How can we create a society which will encourage goodness?

KRISHNAMURTI: To the intellectuals, 'goodness' is a terrible word, and they generally want to avoid it; but now it is becoming the fashion even among the intellectuals to use that word. And is there goodness when there is a motive behind it? If I have a motive to be good, does that bring about goodness? Or is goodness something entirely devoid of this urge to be good, which is ever based on a motive? Is good the opposite of bad, the opposite of evil? Every opposite contains the seed of its own opposite, does it not? There is greed, and there is the ideal of non-greed. When the mind pursues non-greed, when it tries to be non-greedy, it is still greedy, because it wants to be something. Greed implies desiring, acquiring, expanding; and when the mind sees that it does not pay to be greedy, it wants to be non-greedy, so the motive is still the same, which is to be or to acquire something. When the mind wants *not* to want, the root of want, of

desire, is still there. So goodness is not the opposite of evil; it is a totally different state. And what is that state?

Obviously, goodness has no motive, because all motive is based on the self, it is the ego-centric movement of the mind. So what do we mean by goodness? Surely, there is goodness only when there is total attention. Attention has no motive. When there is a motive for attention, is there attention? If I pay attention in order to acquire something, the acquisition, whether it be called good or bad, is not attention; it is a distraction, a division. There can be goodness only when there is a totality of attention in which there is no effort to be or not to be. Probably you are not used to all this.

To me, making effort to be good is a process which in itself brings about evil. A man who tries to be humble, who practises humility, breeds evil; because the moment you are conscious that you are humble, you are no longer humble, you are arrogant. Sirs, don't laugh it away. Humility is not to be practised; and a man who practises humility is fostering arrogance. Virtue is not a thing to be cultivated; because a man who cultivates virtue, cultivates the ego, the 'me', only in more respectable clothing. As humility is not to be practised, so goodness is not to be practised; it comes into being only when there is the complete attention which comes with the total understanding of yourself.

Think about it, and you will see that the very practice of non-violence creates violence. To be free of violence, you have to understand all the implications of violence; and for that you must give your whole attention, which you cannot do if you are pursuing the so-called ideal. When the mind is able to give its undivided attention to what *is*, which is greed, then you will see that the mind is totally free from greed. It does not become non-greedy—it is free from greed, which is an entirely different state. You see, we use the ideal

of non-greed as a means of getting rid of greed; but we can never get rid of greed through an ideal. We have practised that ideal for centuries, and we are still greedy. But a man who really sees the necessity of being free from greed, has no ideal; he is only concerned with greed, which means he is giving his whole attention to it. And when you give your whole attention to something, in that attention there is no comparison, no condemnation, no judgment. A mind that is comparing, condemning greed, is incapable of giving full attention, because it is concerned with comparison and condemnation.

So goodness is not an opposite, it is not a virtue; it is a state of being without motive which comes through self-knowledge.

Question: Do you accept the view that communism is the greatest menace to human progress? If not, what do you think about it?

KRISHNAMURTI: Surely, any form of tyranny is evil. Any form of power over others is evil, whether it be the little power exercised by a bureaucrat in this town, or the widespread tyranny of a group of people who are planning the future of man according to an ideology and forcing everybody to conform for the so-called benefit of the whole. Such power is evil; but let us look at it very simply and see the difficulty involved in this issue.

A society must obviously be planned. But what happens in planning a society, and in executing that plan? There must be an administrative body vested with the authority to carry it out, which means that the few have power; and that very power becomes evil when exercised in the name of God, in the name of society, or in the name of a future Utopia. And yet we need planning, otherwise society becomes chaotic. There is, then, this problem of power vested in the few who become tyrannical, ruthless, who say, 'We know the future

and you don't. We are planning for the welfare of man, so you must conform, otherwise we will liquidate you'. So, can we plan a society without tyrannizing over man? That is the whole issue.

Communism is only a new word for a game that has been going on for centuries. The Roman Catholic Church has done it, with its Inquisition, excommunication, and torture to save souls; and various forms of tyranny exist in the history of every religion. It is nothing new, it only has a new name, with a new group of people who claim to know the future. Organized tyranny, torture, destruction, were perpetrated in the past by priests in the name of God; and now it is done by dictators and commissars in the name of the State or the party. So our problem is not the word 'communism', but the whole question of whether man lives for the sake of society, or whether society exists for the well-being of man. Do religion and government exist to educate man to be free and find out for himself what is true, to help him to be good and to have the vision of greatness? Or do they exist to tyrannize over man, to brutalize and liquidate him because a few have the power to destroy?

So it is really a very complex question. What is important is not what you or I think about communism, but to find out why society, whether communistic or democratic, compels the mind to conform, and why the individual submits himself to conformity. Surely, it is only the free mind that can explore—not a mind that is tethered to a book, to an organized religion, or to an ideology. A society that conditions the mind to worship the State, and a society that conditions the mind to worship the idea called God, are equally tyrannous.

Now, can there be a society which does help man, the individual, to be good, to be non-greedy, to be free from envy, from ambition? Surely, that is our concern. Man can be good only when he

III

TALK IN MADANAPALLE

is free, not to do what he likes, but free to understand the whole movement of life. That requires a different kind of school, a different kind of education; it demands parents and teachers who understand all the implications of freedom. Otherwise we shall have more tyranny, not less, because the State demands efficiency. You must be efficient to have an industrialized nation, you must be efficient to fight, to kill, to destroy, and that is the whole pursuit of governments as they exist now. And governments are further separated by the so-called religions. No organized religion dares to break away and say to the government, 'You are wrong'; on the contrary, they bless the cannons and the battleships. During the last war a book called *God was my Co-Pilot* was written by a man who dropped bombs that killed thousands of people. Of course, here in Madanapalle you are not directly concerned with all that; but surely war is merely an exaggerated expression of our daily life. We are in constant battle with ourselves and with our neighbour; we are ambitious, we want more power, more prestige, the best position; and this acquisitiveness expresses itself through the group, through the nation. We want to be powerful to defend ourselves, or to be aggressive; and so it goes on.

What is important, then, is not what you or I think of communism, or democracy, but to find out how to set the mind free; for it is only the free mind that can realize what is truth, what is God; and without that realization, life has very little meaning. It is the realization of truth, or God—the actual experience of it, not the belief in it—that is of the highest importance, especially now when the world is in such chaos and misery.

February 19, 1956

I think most of us find life very dull. To earn a livelihood we have to do a certain job, and it becomes very monotonous; a routine is set going which we follow year after year almost till our death. Whether we are rich or poor, and though we may be very erudite, have a philosophical bent, our lives are for the most part rather shallow, empty. There is obviously an insufficiency in ourselves, and being aware of this emptiness, we try to enrich it through knowledge, or through some kind of social activity, or we escape through various kinds of amusement, or cling to a religious belief. Even if we have a certain capacity and are very efficient, our lives are still pretty dull, and to get away from this dullness, this weary monotony of life, we seek some form of religious enrichment, we try to capture that unworldly state of being which is not routine and which for the moment may be called otherness. In seeking that otherness we find there are many different systems, different ways or paths which are supposed to lead to it, and by disciplining ourselves, by practising a particular system of meditation, by performing some ritual or repeating certain phrases, we hope to achieve that state. Because our daily life is an endless round of sorrow and pleasure, a variety of experiences without much significance, or a meaningless repetition of the same experience, living for most of us is a monotonous routine; therefore the problem of enrichment, of capturing that otherness, call it God, truth, bliss, or what you will, becomes very urgent, does it not? You may be well-off and well-married, you may have children, you may be able to think intelligently and sanely, but without that state of otherness, life becomes extraordinarily empty.

So, what is one to do? How is one to capture that state? Or is it not possible

to capture it at all? As they are now, our minds are obviously very small, petty, limited, conditioned; and though a small mind may speculate about that otherness, its speculations will always be small. It may formulate an ideal state, conceive and describe that otherness, but its conception will still be within the limitations of the little mind, and I think that is where the clue lies—in seeing that the mind cannot possibly experience that otherness by living it, formulating it, or speculating about it. Surely, that is a tremendous realization: to see that, because it is limited, petty, narrow, superficial, any movement of the mind towards that extraordinary state, is a hindrance. To realize that fact, not speculatively but actually, is the beginning of a different approach to the problem.

After all, our minds are the outcome of time, of many thousands of yesterdays, they are the result of experience based on the known; and such a mind is the continuity of the known. The mind of each one of us is the result of culture, of education, and however extensive its knowledge or its technical training, it is still the product of time; therefore it is limited, conditioned. With that mind we try to discover the unknowable; and to realize that such a mind can never discover the unknowable, is really an extraordinary experience. To realize that, however cunning, however subtle, however erudite one's mind may be, it cannot possibly understand that otherness—this realization in itself brings about a certain factual comprehension, and I think it is the beginning of a way of looking at life which may open the door to that otherness.

To put the problem differently, the mind is ceaselessly active, chattering, planning, it is capable of extraordinary subtleties and inventions; and how can such a mind be quiet? One can see that any activity of the mind, any movement in any direction, is a reaction of the past; and how can such a mind

be still? And if it is made still through discipline, such stillness is a state in which there is no inquiring, no searching, is it not? Therefore there is no openness to the unknown, to that state of otherness.

I don't know if you have thought about this problem at all, or have merely thought about it in terms of the traditional approach, which is to have an ideal and to move towards the ideal through a formula, through the practice of a certain discipline. Discipline invariably implies suppression and the conflict of duality, all of which is within the area of the mind, and we proceed along this line, hoping to capture that otherness; but we have never intelligently and sanely inquired whether the mind can ever capture it. We have had the hint that the mind must be still, but stillness has always been cultivated through discipline. That is, we have the ideal of a still mind, and we pursue it through control, through struggle, through effort.

Now, if you look at this whole process, you will see that it is all within the field of the known. Being aware of the monotony of its existence, realizing the weariness of its multiplying experiences, the mind is always trying to capture that otherness; but when one sees that the mind is the known, and that whatever movement it makes, it can never capture that otherness, which is the unknown, then our problem is, not how to capture the unknown, but whether the mind can free itself from the known. I think this problem must be considered by anyone who wants to find out if there is a possibility of the coming into being of that otherness, the unknown. So, how can the mind, which is the result of the past, of the known, free itself from the known? I hope I am making myself clear.

As I said, the present mind, the conscious as well as the unconscious, is the outcome of the past, it is the accumulated result of racial, climatic, dietetic, traditional, and other influences.

So the mind is conditioned—conditioned as a Christian, a Buddhist, a Hindu, or a communist—and it obviously projects what it considers to be the real. But whether its projection is that of the communist, who thinks he knows the future and wants to force all mankind into the pattern of his particular Utopia, or that of the so-called religious man, who also thinks he knows the future and educates the child to think along his particular line, neither projection is the real. Without the real, life becomes very dull, as it is at present for most people; and our lives being dull, we become romantic, sentimental, about that otherness, the real.

Now, seeing this whole pattern of existence, without going into too many details, is it possible for the mind to free itself from the known—the known being the psychological accumulations of the past? There is also the known of everyday activity, but from this the mind obviously cannot be free; for if one forgot the way to one's house, or the knowledge which enables one to earn a livelihood, one would be bordering on insanity. But can the mind free itself from the psychological factors of the known, which give assurance through association and identification?

To inquire into this matter, we shall have to find out whether there is really a difference between the thinker and the thought, between the one who observes and the thing observed. At present there is a division between them, is there not? We think the 'I', the entity who experiences, is different from the experience, from the thought. There is a gap, a division between the thinker and the thought, and that is why we say, 'I must control thought'. But is the 'I', the thinker, different from thought? The thinker is always trying to control thought, mould it according to what he considers to be a good pattern; but is there a thinker if there is no thought? Obviously not. There is only thinking, which creates the thinker. You may put the thinker at

any level, you may call him the Supreme, the *Atman*, or whatever you like; but he is still the result of thinking. The thinker has not created thought; it is thought that has created the thinker. Realizing its own impermanency, thought creates the thinker as a separate entity in order to give itself permanency—which is after all what we all want. You may say that the entity which you call the *Atman*, the soul, the thinker, is separate from thought, from experience; but you are only aware of a separate entity through thought, and also through your conditioning as a Hindu, a Christian, or whatever it is you happen to be. As long as this duality exists between the thinker and the thought, there must be conflict, effort, which implies will; and a mind that wills to free itself, that says, 'I must be free from the past', merely creates another pattern.

So, the mind can free itself—and thereby, perhaps, that otherness can come into being—only when there is the cessation of effort as the 'I' desiring to achieve a result. But you see, all our life is based on effort: the effort to be good, the effort to discipline ourselves, the effort to achieve a result in this world, or in the next. Everything we do is based on striving, ambition, success, achievement; and so we think that the realization of God, or truth, must also come about through effort. But such effort signifies the self-centred activity of achievement, does it not? It is not the abandonment of the self.

Now, if you are aware of this whole process of the mind, the conscious as well as the unconscious, if you really see and understand it, then you will find that the mind becomes extraordinarily quiet without any effort. The stillness which is brought about by discipline, control, suppression, is the stillness of death; but the stillness of which I am speaking comes about effortlessly when one understands this whole process of the mind. Then only is there a possibility of the coming into

being of that otherness which may be called truth, or God.

Question: Do you not concede that guidance is necessary? If, as you say, there must be no tradition and no authority, then everybody will have to start laying down a new foundation for himself. As the physical body has had a beginning, is there not also a beginning for our spiritual and mental bodies, and should they not grow from each stage to the next higher stage? Just as our thought is kindled by listening to you, does it not need reawakening by getting into contact with the great minds of the past?

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, this is an age-old problem. We think that we need a *guru*, a teacher, to awaken our minds. Now, what is implied in all that? It implies the one who knows, and the other who does not. Let us proceed slowly, not in a prejudiced manner. The one who knows becomes the authority, and the one who does not know becomes the disciple; and the disciple is everlastingly following, hoping to overtake the other, to come up to the level of the master. Now, please follow this. When the *guru* says he knows, he ceases to be the *guru*; the man who says he knows, does not know. Please see why. Because truth, reality, or that otherness, has no fixed point, it obviously cannot be approached by a path, but must be discovered from moment to moment. If it has a fixed point, then that point is within the limits of time. To a fixed point there may be a path, as there is a path to your house; but to a thing that is living, that has no abode, that has neither a beginning nor an end, there can be no path.

Surely, a *guru* who says he will help you to realize, can help you to realize only that which you already know; for what you realize, experience, must be recognizable, must it not? If you can recognize it, then you say, 'I have experienced'; but what you can recog-

nize is not that otherness. That otherness is not recognizable, it is not known; it is not something which you have experienced and are therefore able to recognize. That otherness is a thing that must be uncovered from moment to moment; and to discover it, the mind must be free. Sir, the mind must be free to discover anything; and a mind that is bound by tradition, whether ancient or modern, a mind that is burdened with belief, with dogma, with rituals, is obviously not free. To me, the idea that another can awaken you, has no validity. This is not an opinion, it is a fact. If another awakens you, then you are under his influence, you are depending on him; therefore you are not free; and it is only the free mind that can find.

So the problem is this, is it not? We want that otherness, and since we don't know how to get it, we invariably depend on someone whom we call the teacher, the *guru*, or on a book, or on our own experience. So dependence is created, and where there is dependence there is authority; therefore the mind becomes a slave to authority, to tradition, and such a mind is obviously not free. It is only the free mind that can find; and to rely on another for the awakening of your mind is like relying on a drug. Of course, you can take a drug that will make you see things very sharply, clearly. There are drugs that can momentarily make life seem much more vital, so that everything stands out brilliantly—the colours that you see every day, and pass by, become extraordinarily beautiful, and so on. That may be your 'awakening' of the mind, but then you will be depending on the drug, as now you depend on your *guru*, or on some sacred book; and the moment the mind becomes dependent, it is made dull. Out of dependence there is fear—fear of not achieving, of not gaining. When you depend on another, whether it be the Saviour or anyone else, it means that the mind is seeking success, a gratifying end. You may call it God,

truth, or what you like, but it is still a thing to be gained; so the mind is caught, it becomes a slave, and do what it will—sacrifice, discipline, torture itself—such a mind can never find that otherness.

So the problem is not who is the right teacher, but whether the mind can keep itself awake; and you will find it can keep itself awake only when all relationship is a mirror in which it sees itself as it is. But the mind cannot see itself as it is if there is condemnation or justification of that which it sees, or any form of identification. All these things make the mind dull, and being dull, we want to be awakened; so we look to somebody else to awaken us. But by this very demand to be awakened, a dull mind is made still more dull, because it does not see the cause of its dullness. It is only when the mind sees and understands this whole process, and does not depend on the explanation of another, that it is able to free itself.

But how easily we are satisfied with words, with explanations! Very few of us break through the barrier of explanations, go beyond words, and find out for ourselves what is true. Capacity comes with application, does it not? But we don't apply ourselves, because we are satisfied with words, with speculations, with the traditional answers and explanations on which we have been brought up.

Question: In all religions, prayer is advocated as necessary. What do you say about prayer?

KRISHNAMURTI: It is not a matter of what I say about prayer, for then it merely becomes one opinion against another, and opinion has no validity; but what we can do is to find out what the facts are.

What do we mean by prayer? One part of prayer is supplication, petition, demand. Being in trouble, in sorrow, and wanting to be comforted, you pray. You are confused, and you want

clarity. Books don't satisfy you, the *guru* does not give you what you want, so you pray; that is, you either silently supplicate, or you verbally repeat certain phrases.

Now, if you keep on repeating certain words or phrases, you will find that the mind becomes very quiet. It is an obvious psychological fact that quietness of the superficial mind is induced by repetition. And then what happens? The unconscious may have an answer to the problem which is agitating the superficial mind. When the superficial mind becomes quiet, the unconscious is able to intimate its solution, and then we say, 'God has answered me'. It is really fantastic, when you come to think of it, for the petty little mind, being caught in sorrow which it has brought upon itself, to expect an answer from that otherness, the immeasurable, the unknown. But our petition is answered, we have found a solution, and we are satisfied. That is one form of prayer, is it not?

Now, do you ever pray when you are happy? When you are aware of the smiles and the tears of those about you; when you see the lovely skies, the mountains, the rich fields, and the swift movement of the birds; when there is joy and delight in your heart, do you indulge in what you call prayer? Obviously not. And yet, to see the beauty of the earth, to be cognizant of starvation and misery, to be aware of everything that is happening about us—surely, this is also a form of prayer. Perhaps this has much more significance, a far greater value, for it may sweep away the cowebs of memory, of revenge, all the accumulated stupidities of the 'I'. But a mind that is preoccupied with itself and its designs, that is caught up in its beliefs, its dogmas, its fears and jealousies, its ambition, greed, envy—such a mind cannot possibly be aware of this extraordinary thing called life. It is bound by its own self-centered activity; and when such a mind prays, whether it be for a refrigerator, or to have its

problems solved, it is still petty, even though it may receive an answer.

All this brings up the question of what is meditation, does it not? Obviously, there must be meditation. Meditation is an extraordinary thing, but most of us don't know what it means to meditate; we are only concerned with *how* to meditate, with practising a method or a system through which we hope to get something, to realize what we call peace, or God. We are never concerned to find out what is meditation, and who is the meditator; but if we begin to inquire into what is meditation, then perhaps we shall find out how to meditate. The inquiry into meditation, is meditation. But to inquire into meditation, you cannot be tethered to any system, because then your inquiry is conditioned by the system. To really probe into this whole problem of what is meditation, all systems must go. Only a free mind can explore; and the very process of freeing the mind to explore, is meditation.

Question: The thought of death is bearable to me only if I can believe in a future life; but you say that belief is an obstacle to understanding. Please help me to see the truth of this.

KRISHNAMURTI: Belief in a future life is the result of one's desire for comfort. Whether or not there is a future life in reality can be found out only when the mind is not desirous of being comforted by a belief. If I am in sorrow because my son has died, and to overcome that sorrow I believe in reincarnation, in eternal life, or what you will, then belief becomes a necessity to me; and such a mind can obviously never find out what death is, because all it is concerned with is to have a hope, a comfort, a reassurance.

Now, whether or not there is continuity after death, is quite a different problem. One sees that the body comes

to an end; through constant use, the physical organism wears out. Then what is it that continues? It is the accumulated experience, the knowledge, the name, the memories, the identification of thought as the 'me'. But you are not satisfied with that; you say there must be another form of continuance as the permanent soul, the *Atman*. If there is this *Atman* which continues, it is the creation of thought, and the thought which has created the *Atman* is still part of time; therefore it is not spiritual. If you really go into this matter, you will see there is only thought identified as the 'me'—my house, my wife, my family, my virtue, my failure, my success, and all the rest of it—, and you want that to continue. You say, "I want to finish my book before I die", or, "I want to perfect the qualities I have been trying to develop; and what is the point of my having struggled all these years to achieve something if in the end there is annihilation?" So the mind, which is the product of the known, wants to continue in the future; and because there is the uncertainty which we call death, we are frightened and want reassurance.

Now, I think the problem should be approached differently, which is to find out for oneself whether it is possible, while living, to experience that state of ending which we call death. This does not mean committing suicide; but it is to actually experience that astonishing state, that sacred moment of dying to everything of yesterday. After all, death is the unknown, and no amount of rationalization, no belief or disbelief, will ever bring about that extraordinary experience. To have that inward fullness of life, which includes death, the mind must free itself from the known. The known must cease for the unknown to be.

February 26, 1956

I

TALK IN BOMBAY

I think it is important to understand that freedom is at the beginning and not at the end. We think freedom is something to be achieved, that liberation is an ideal state of mind to be gradually attained through time, through various practices; but to me, this is a totally wrong approach. Freedom is not to be achieved; liberation is not a thing to be gained. Freedom, or liberation, is that state of mind which is essential for the discovery of any truth, any reality, therefore it cannot be an ideal; it must exist right from the beginning. Without freedom at the beginning, there can be no moments of direct understanding, because all thinking is then limited, conditioned. If your mind is tethered to any conclusion, to any experience, to any form of knowledge or belief, it is not free; and such a mind cannot possibly perceive what is truth.

This is something that must be felt and realized immediately, not endlessly argued about, for it is a fact. How can a mind which is crippled, held by a belief, by a dogma, or by its own knowledge and experiences, ever have the capacity to explore and to discover? So freedom is essential to discover what is truth; and it is only the individual who is not merely the result of the collective, that can be free. For the mind to be capable of freedom, there must obviously be application—the application which comes through attention; and that is what I would like to discuss this evening. It is essential, I think, to find out how to listen, because in the very act of listening there is clarification. There is immediate clarification, not through argumentation or comparative knowledge, but when there is complete listening. It is very difficult to listen completely, because our full attention is not there; but it is only

when we listen completely to something that there is immediate understanding.

Now, if you observe your own mind as you are sitting here, you will notice that you are listening through various screens—the screen of what you know, of what you have heard or read, the screen of your own experiences—and these screens actually prevent listening. You never really listen, you are always interpreting what you hear according to your background, your prejudices, according to the conclusions you have arrived at; therefore there is no listening. And there is immediate transformation only when one listens completely, which is not to allow the things that one has learnt to come between. To listen completely is not to judge, not to evaluate, so that your whole being is attentive; and when you are listening in that way, you will find there is immediate clarification. Such clarification is timeless freedom, liberation.

It seems to me that we must differentiate between learning and being taught. Most of you, I am pretty sure, are here to listen to somebody who you think will teach you something; so your approach to the speaker is that of an individual who expects to be taught by a teacher. But I do not believe that there is any teaching; there is only learning, and this is very important to understand. When the individual who is listening regards the speaker as one who is teaching him something, such an attitude creates and maintains the division of the pupil and the master, of the one who knows and the one who does not know. But there is only learning; and I think it is very important from the very beginning to understand this, and to establish the right relationship between us. The man who says he knows, does not know; the man who says he has attained liberation, has not realized. If you think you are going to learn something from me which I know and you do not know, then you become a follower; and he who follows will

never find out what is truth. That is why it is very important for you to understand this.

A man can have knowledge only about things known, he cannot have knowledge about the unknown. The unknown comes into being from moment to moment, it is not to be gathered, accumulated; being timeless, it cannot be stored up and used. The *guru*, the so-called teacher, who asserts he knows, can only know the things he has experienced; and what he has experienced is conditioned, is of time, therefore it is not true. So it is essential, if you and I would understand each other, to establish the right relationship between us from the very beginning. You are not listening in order to be taught by me; you are listening to learn. Life is a process of learning; but there can be no learning as long as the mind is accumulating. How can you learn if the mind is concerned with accumulating, and with using what is newly acquired to further its accumulation?

Please follow this, sirs. When we say, 'I must learn', we mean that, in the process of learning, we will store up what is learned in order to know more, do we not? Such learning is essential in the acquisition of technical knowledge. If you want to build a bridge, you must accumulate the required knowledge; if you are a scientist, you must know the previous experiments and discoveries of other scientists. That kind of knowledge is essential for the physical well-being of man. But I am not talking of knowledge in that sense. Even in science you don't worship or follow anyone; you follow facts, not individuals. The very process of experimentation in science brings its own discoveries. If you are a great scientist, you have no one to lead you to discovery in experimentation; you are constantly investigating, discarding, exploring, inquiring to find out. But we never do that with regard to the inward, religious life—which is much more important than the mere discovery of scientific facts; because scientific facts

can be distorted and used by a mind that is self-centered, that is concerned with itself and its own progress.

What we are concerned with here is the understanding of what is truth, which is the religious life, the good life. If you are merely being taught by a person who asserts he knows, or whom you regard as having achieved something, you are creating a division between yourself and that person; there is always the teacher and the disciple, with the teacher progressing upward, and the pupil following. A state of inequality exists; and such inequality in spiritual matters is unspiritual, immoral, because when you become a follower, you destroy yourself.

Please understand this very simple truth: that as long as you are following another, it does not matter who it is, you will never find the eternal, that otherness which is beyond the mind. So there must be freedom right from the beginning—freedom, not to choose your various *gurus*, which is not freedom, but freedom to investigate, which means there can be no following. Therefore there is no *guru*, no teacher, no sacred book. To be capable of finding out what is true, the mind must be free; and the mind is not free when it is burdened with accumulated knowledge, with its own experiences. Learning is a process of constantly discarding that which is being accumulated, of discarding in order to discover.

A mind which has committed itself to the *Gita*, to the *Koran*, to the *Bible*, or to some belief, can never learn, it can only follow; and it follows because it wants security. As long as the mind desires to be permanently secure, undisturbed, as long as it is seeking its own perpetuation through a belief, it is obviously incapable of finding out what is God, what is truth.

The mind can learn only when it renounces, that is, when it constantly denudes itself of what it is learning. If learning is merely additive, then there is no learning. Please see this fact.

As long as the mind is accumulating, gathering, how can it learn, since what it learns will always be translated according to what it has already gathered? Where there is accumulation, there can never be the movement of learning; for it is only when the mind is free to explore, that it can learn. If the mind really sees this fact, not argumentatively, verbally, or so-called intellectually, but deeply and truly, then such a mind is capable of finding that which may be called bliss, truth, God, or what you will.

So it seems to me very important that you should understand right from the beginning of these talks that I am not teaching you anything, otherwise we shall be moving in opposite directions. I know literally nothing, except such things as how to drive a car, how to write letters, and so on. Therefore, being in a state of not-knowing, the mind is capable of complete investigation. A mind that knows, cannot investigate; and only a mind that is free from the known can find the unknown.

These talks are not meant to guide you, to tell you what to do, but rather to liberate the mind so that it will find out for itself what to do, and not follow anyone. This means breaking down tradition, discarding the whole idea of worshipping somebody in order to find God. We are brought up on the notion that the *guru* is essential because he knows and will tell us what to do; we are soaked in that tradition, and it must be cut away immediately if we are to understand all this. You see, we are frightened not to have leaders, because we are so confused; and when we act out of our confusion, the confusion is increased. But this confusion can only be cleared up by each one of us, and that is why it is so important for the individual to understand himself. With the understanding of oneself, there comes an action which is not confused or confusing. So self-knowledge is essential—but not the kind taught in books, for that is not self-knowledge at

all; it is merely vain repetition. What has value is not to assume anything—that you are the *Atman*, the *Paramatman*, and so on—but to discover in your relationships from day to day, what you actually are, which is to learn about yourself. But you cannot learn about yourself if you have stored up what you learned yesterday, because then you compare yesterday with today, and this comparison destroys further discovery. Self-knowledge is a living thing, not the accumulated debris of yesterday's gathering.

If one really sees this thing, how extraordinarily simple it is! And the mind must be simple, innocent, in the sense that it has no accumulations of yesterday. It is only such a mind that can discover the significance of this whole process of living, which is now so chaotic, miserable, violent. That is why it is essential to understand, from the very beginning, that life is not a school in which there is a teacher and the taught. The significance of life is to be found in living; but the moment you accumulate, you are dead, like a pool of stagnant water. So it is essential for the mind to be like the living waters of the river, ever moving on, which means that there must be freedom at the very beginning.

Before we consider together some of these questions, let us again understand our intent. I am not answering these questions, for there is no answer. Please understand this, otherwise you will be wasting your time in listening to what I am saying. There is no answer, there is only the unfolding of the problem, and therefore the beauty of the discovery of the truth in the problem. A mind that is searching for an answer will never investigate the problem, because it is occupied with the answer; and it is very difficult for the mind not to be occupied with the answer, because it longs to be satisfied. Most of us want a pleasant and easy answer to our problems. But here we are not answering, we are unrolling the problem, uncovering all

its facets, its subtleties, discerning the extraordinary thing that lies behind the problem. After all, the mind is our only instrument of perception, and when it is occupied with an answer, it has blocked itself. The mind that is concerned with a result, a conclusion, hinders its own action, its own living; it is enclosed by the walls of its own arguments, its own determined efforts. So, please bear in mind that I am not answering these questions. We are together trying to find out the truth of the problem, not the answer; because the mind wants to be satisfied, it wants a convenient and agreeable answer, and such an answer is not truth.

Question: After having listened eagerly to you for so many years, we find ourselves exactly where we were. Is this all we can expect?

KRISHNAMURTI: The difficulty in this problem is that we want a result to convince ourselves that we have progressed, that we have been transformed. We want to know that we have arrived; and a man who has arrived, a man who has listened and got a result, has obviously not listened at all. (*Laughter*). Sirs, this is not a clever answer. The questioner says he has listened for many years. Now, has he listened with complete attention, or has he listened in order to arrive somewhere and be conscious of his arrival? It is like the man who practises humility. Can humility be practised? Surely, to be conscious that you are humble, is not to be humble. You want to know that you have arrived. This indicates, does it not?, that you are listening in order to achieve a particular state, a place where you will never be disturbed, where you will find everlasting happiness, permanent bliss. But as I said previously, there is no arriving, there is only the movement of learning—and that is the beauty of life. If you have arrived, there is nothing more. And all of you have arrived, or you

want to arrive, not only in your business, but in everything you do; so you are dissatisfied, frustrated, miserable. Sirs, there is no place at which to arrive, there is just this movement of learning, which becomes painful only when there is accumulation. A mind that listens with complete attention, will never look for a result because it is constantly unfolding; like a river, it is always in movement. Such a mind is totally unconscious of its own activity, in the sense that there is no perpetuation of a self, of a 'me', which is seeking to achieve an end.

Question: In every direction, inwardly as well as outwardly, we see incitement to violence. Hatred, ill-will, meanness and aggression, are rampant, not only in India, but in every corner of the world, and in the very psyche of man. What is your answer to this crisis?

KRISHNAMURTI: This problem, like every other human problem, is very complex. There is no 'yes' or 'no' answer. Why are we violent as individuals, and therefore as a group, as a nation? Look what has happened recently in this town. Why are we violent, and over what? Whether you call yourself a Gujarathi or a Maharashtrian, who cares? What's in a name? But behind the name lie all the pent-up prejudices, the narrow, stupid, isolating provincialism; and overnight you hate, you knife your neighbour with words and with steel. Why do we do this? Why are we, as a group of Hindus, opposed to Christians; and why are the Germans or the Americans, as a group, opposed to some other group? Why are we like this? You and I can invent excuses and explanations by the score, and the cleverer we are, the more argumentative our explanations. But apart from explanations, do you know you are like this? Are you aware that you will suddenly turn on your neighbour over a division of land on the map, because

certain politicians are eager to get more power, and you are eager to support them because you also are seeking power? Why are you like this? The Moslems and the Hindus are mutually opposed. Why? And are you aware of this in yourself? Is it not important to know that you are like this, and not idealistically pretend to be non-violent, and all that nonsense? The actual fact is that you are violent; and I think the problem is that you do not realize you are violent, because you are always pretending to be non-violent. You have been brought up, bred, nurtured on the ideal of non-violence; but the ideal is phoney, it does not exist at all. What exists is what you are, which is violent, and the gap between the ideal and the fact creates this hypocritical dual existence which is one of our misfortunes in this country. You are all such idealistic persons, always talking about non-violence and butchering your neighbour. (*Laughter*). Sirs, don't laugh, it is not funny. These are facts. Do you mean to say you would tolerate the poverty, the degradation, the horrors that exist in every town and village in India, if you were really merciful? You are not merciful and compassionate actually, only theoretically, and that is why you live double lives.

The fact is much more important than what *should* be. The fact is that you are violent, and you refuse to face that fact because you say you must not be like that; you decry violence, you push it away, but it is still there. When you recognize the fact that you are violent instead of pursuing the ideal of non-violence, which does not exist, only then can you deal with violence. Then your attention is not diverted, it is given wholly to understanding violence, and therefore you can do something about it; you can concern yourself attentively, diligently, with the fact of violence, ill-will, meanness, cruelty. That is why it is very important that the ideal should be put away, abolished completely.

You all know that cruelty is going on in every part of this country, cruelty not only to the neighbour, to the villager, but also to the animals. If you realized the falseness of the ideal, do you mean to say you could not face that fact and put a stop to it? Then you would be a different people altogether, you would bring into being a different culture, a different society, you would not be imitative of the West; you would be something real, and reality is original, not imitative. But you cannot see the original, the real, as long as your attention is diverted by the ideal.

The ideal has no significance; what has significance is the fact. Through the ideal you hope to get rid of the fact, but it cannot be done, and I think this is again very important to understand. The mind that pursues an ideal is an unreal mind, it is a mind that escapes, that avoids the fact. But to face the fact is very difficult for a mind that has been trained for centuries to accept the ideal as something worthwhile. You practise non-violence, *Ahimsa*, and all the rest of it—which to me is utter nonsense, because it is not a fact. The fact is that you are violent, it is being proved over and over again, which means you have no compassion; and you cannot have compassion as an ideal. Either you are compassionate, or you are not. Violence exists in the world because it exists in your heart, and to reject violence should be your only concern, not to pursue the ideal of non-violence. To reject violence, you must apply your attention to it in everyday life, you must be aware of it in your words, in your gestures, in the way you talk to your servants, to your neighbours, to your wife and children. Your violence indicates that you have no love, and that is a fact. If you can look at the fact, then that very looking will transform, will do something to the fact.

Question: Granted that religion is of the highest importance in life, will not the truly

religious person be concerned with the plight of his fellow-man?

KRISHNAMURTI: It all depends on whom you call a religious person, and what you mean by being concerned. Please follow this, sirs. Should the religious man be occupied with social reform? What is actually happening in the world? The so-called religious person is concerned with the misery, the troubles, the poverty of his fellow-man, which is called social reform. This is happening here in India, and elsewhere.

Now, as we know, production is on the increase, and it is fairly certain that in 50 or 100 years we are all going to have enough food, clothing and housing; because, the communists are aiming at that in their own brutal, tyrannical way, and the capitalists are also aiming at it for their own purposes. We are all working to lessen poverty and bring about more production through increased efficiency, mechanical inventions, and so on. All this is happening, and will happen more extensively, as it should. But what is of first importance, surely, is to see poverty, to see degradation, to see how man treats man, which is something appalling—and to *feel* it, not ask what to do about it. What to do about it will come later. But most of us lose the love for man in the action of doing something to reform man. This reformation is going to take place through communism, with its disruptive elements, through socialism, through capitalism, and through the constant pressure of the poverty-ridden countries on those that are rich. That very pressure is going to bring about change, revolution.

Now, the problem is, who is a religious man? And should a religious man be concerned with this social reformation, which is a matter of doing away with poverty and bringing about an equitable distribution of worldly goods? It is obviously essential to do away with poverty, to have good health, sufficient food, adequate houses to live in, and all

the rest of it; and this is going to take place through legislation, through pressure, through mass production, and so on.

But what do we mean by a religious man? Surely, a religious man is one who is helping to free the individual, and himself, from all the cruelty and suffering in life—which means that he is free from all belief. He has no authority, he does not follow anyone, because he is a light unto himself; and that light arises from self-knowledge, it is the liberation that comes into being when the individual completely understands himself. The religious man is one who is creative, not in the sense of painting pictures or writing poetry, but there is in him a creativity which is everlasting, timeless.

Now, will that religious man, who is discovering from moment to moment, be occupied with social reform? Or will he remain outside of society, and help the individual who is caught in its ceaseless struggle? Surely, the truly religious man is outside of society because for him there is no authority. He is not seeking a result, therefore results happen in spite of him; and such a man is not concerned with social reform.

Mind you, social reform is essential. But there are many people who are active in social reform; and why are they? Is it out of love? Or is that particular activity, which is called social reform, a means of their own self-fulfilment? To be aware of the beggar in the street, to see the appalling poverty and degradation in the villages, and to feel it, to have love, compassion for the beggar, for the villager, is not to fulfil yourself in the activity of social reform, though you may be socially active. But when you become important in social work, is it not because you are fulfilling yourself through that action? When you do that, you cease to love; and to love, to have compassion, to be sensitive to beauty and to ugliness, is far more important than to fulfil yourself

in some tawdry work which you call social reform.

So it is the religious man who is the real revolutionary, not he who seeks to bring about a revolution in the economic sense. The religious man has no authority, he is not greedy, ambitious, he is not seeking a result, he is not a politician; therefore it is only the religious man who can bring about the right kind of reformation. That is why it is important for all of us, not as groups, but as individuals, to liberate ourselves immediately from beliefs and dogmas, from greed and ambition. Then you will find that the mind becomes astonishingly alive; and such a man is a reformer in an entirely different sense, his action has a totally different significance, because he helps to free the mind to find out, to be creative. The mind that is occupied can never be creative; the mind that is concerned with fulfilling itself can never find the unknown. Only the mind that is completely unoccupied can discover and comprehend the eternal, and such a mind will produce its own action on society.

March 4, 1956

II

TALK IN BOMBAY

We were discussing last Sunday the question of the individual's freeing himself from all the limitations imposed upon him by society, and from the conditioning of religion; because, it is only when he is free from his conditioning that the individual can be creative. I mean by creativeness the instant of being liberated from time, which is the only state that can bring about the right kind of social transformation and the total well-being of man.

I do not think we realize the full significance of individual freedom from

the collective, nor do we see its importance. And is it possible for the individual to emerge from the collective? After all, though we have different names, private bank-accounts, separate houses, distinctive personal qualities, and so on, we are really not individuals, we are merely the result of the collective. Century upon century of traditional values, of beliefs and dogmas, either conscious or stored away in the unconscious, guide our path and compel the mind, which we think is an individual. But the mind is a result of the totality of these compulsions, these urges and desires, and though a separate name is given to it as Mr. X., it has no real individuality; and I do not think we realize how essential it is that the individual should emerge from this total conditioning of man. It is in the instant of being liberated from the collective that there is the creative individual, and the releasing of this creativity is the fundamental issue, because it is only then that one can find out if there is a timeless reality, a state which may be called God. Mere assertion that there is or is not such a state, has no value at all; what has value is direct experience uncontaminated by the past.

As I was explaining last time we met, liberation must be at the beginning, not at the end. Freedom must come first, not last, and there can be freedom only when the mind begins right at the start to liberate itself from its own conditioning. So it is important for each one of us to bring about that freedom in ourselves, and to demand it for our children through right education, and so on, which is what I would like to discuss this evening.

Now, we are obviously not free as long as we are following another. There must be freedom from the teacher, from the *guru*, which implies, does it not?, that one must become a light unto oneself, and not depend for that light on anyone. And can we really experience the unburdening of the

mind, the freeing of the mind from the leader, from the teacher, from the *guru*? Can we actually experience that state as we are discussing it now, so that the mind does not depend upon another for its guidance?

All your so-called religious teachings create an ideal which you follow, and which again is another form of teacher. And surely, this total freedom from the concept of a leader, a teacher, from following in any form, is essential; because, following a teacher implies the accumulation of knowledge, and there can be liberation only when there is the total renunciation of knowledge. After all, it is knowledge that we are actually seeking in everyday life, is it not? We want knowledge to do things, knowledge to act, knowledge which will guide us towards the goal, towards success, achievement; and that very knowledge becomes the binding factor. Now, can the mind free itself from knowledge? I think this is an important question to consider, so let us investigate and not brush it aside as impossible, or merely assert that it can be done.

All following implies the accumulation of knowledge, does it not? And where there is the accumulation of knowledge, there must be imitation. After all, when you are asked a familiar question, your response is immediate. When you are asked where you live, what is your job, your name, and so on, memory responds instantaneously because you are familiar with all that. But if a more complex question is asked, there is hesitation, which implies that the mind is searching in the storehouse of memory for the correct answer. And if a question is asked of which you know practically nothing at all, you refer to a book, or search more deeply in that part of consciousness which is memory. So you are always being guided by memory. Memory must exist, otherwise you would not know how to get back to your house, how to do your job, how to build a bridge, and so on. We learn a multitude of necessary things,

and obviously such knowledge is not to be forgotten. But I am talking of a totally different kind of knowledge—the knowledge that the psyche accumulates in order to guard itself in the future and achieve whatever it wants to achieve psychologically, spiritually. It is this knowledge that makes us self-centered, because the mind uses it as a means to its own continuity, which is the expansion of the 'me'; and it is this knowledge that must be totally renounced. That is the only real renunciation—not giving up a little property, a house, or a bit of land, and putting on a loin-cloth.

So there is this accumulated knowledge on which the psyche builds and sustains itself; and can the mind, which is a result of the past, renounce all that? Surely, until the mind puts all that aside, it can never find out what is new, it can never know that instant of timelessness which is creativity. You see, what we need in this world is not more physicists, scientists, engineers, bureaucrats, politicians, but individuals who have felt this creativity, for they are the truly religious people—which means that they do not belong to any society, to any group, to any classification. That is why it is very important to understand this whole process of the accumulation of knowledge, by which I mean identification and the sense of evaluation. Can the mind be free to observe without evaluation, without judgment? Surely, its evaluations, its comparisons, its condemnations, are all based on knowledge, and such a mind is incapable of understanding what is true.

If you observe the process of your own thinking, you will see that the mind is only concerned with accumulating more and more knowledge, and therefore there is never a moment of freedom to explore; and I think it is important to understand, which is actually to experience on the instant, this state of freedom without the continuity of the past, and not merely

assert that the mind can or cannot be free. This will be fairly simple if we can listen to exactly what is being said; because it is a thing to be experienced, to be felt, and not to be argued about.

After all, the mind is the result of the past, of many yesterdays, which is fairly obvious; it is the residue of the known—the known being the experienced, the word, the symbol, the name, the whole process of recognition. Surely, such a mind is incapable of discovering or experiencing the unknown. It can speculate, but its speculation will be based on the known, on what it has read. The mind can experience that state only when knowledge—by which I mean the memory of the many experiences, the whole process of recognition which is the self, the 'me'—has come to an end.

Now, if you can not only listen to what is being said, but actually put aside everything you have known—the conclusions, the evaluations, the determinations, the ideals—, then you will find that there comes a state which has no continuity as memory, but which on the instant is the totality of being. It is this moment that is the highest, the supreme, and that must be experienced; but it can be experienced only when the mind is completely still through understanding the totality of its own structure. It is through self-knowledge that there is quiescence of the mind, not through discipline, not through compulsion; and in that total stillness you will find there is a moment unrelated to the past, an instant in which all creation takes place. It is this creativity that is essential, for it releases the mind from the collective, and makes for individuality.

The collective is the mind which is conditioned by society, by innumerable influences, by the values and beliefs which the multitude hold and the few discard, only to add another belief. Seeing all this, is it possible for the mind, without effort, to renounce the past? Until it does, there must be the following

of tradition, whether it is the tradition of yesterday, or of a thousand yesterdays; and a mind that follows tradition is imitative, it is dependent on a teacher, and therefore it maintains inequality, not only at the physical level, but at the psychological level as well. To such a mind, creativity is merely a word without any significance. To bring about a different state, a different culture, a different way of life, there must be the release of the individual, of this inner creativity, which will then produce its own society, its own values.

Question: Day follows day in this futile journey of existence. What does it all mean? Has life any significance?

KRISHNAMURTI: Most of us ask this question, do we not? Most of us are confused; and when we ask if life has any significance, we want to be assured that it has, or we want to be told the purpose, the goal of life.

Now, has life a goal, a purpose? And what is the state of the mind that asks such a question? Surely, this is much more important to find out than if life has significance. After all, what is life? Can it be comprehended by the mind? Life is sorrow and joy, the smiles, the tears, and the endless struggle; it is the extraordinary depth and beauty of everything and of nothing. Life is immense, it cannot be comprehended by a little mind; and it is the little mind that asks this question. Because the little mind is confused, as most of us are, it wants to know what is the purpose of life. Being confused politically, economically, and also spiritually, inwardly, we want a directive, we want to be told what to do; and when we ask, the answer we receive is invariably confused, because the confused mind projects or translates the answer.

So the question is not what is the purpose, the significance of life—because you cannot hold the wind in your fist, nor put the vastness of life in a frame

and worship it. But what you can do is to see the state of confusion you are in, and find out how to tackle it. Once we understand our own confusion, we shall never ask what is the significance of life, for then we shall be living, we shall not be bound by the tyrannical pattern of a particular society, whether communist or capitalist; and that very living will find its own answer.

A confused mind seeking clarity will only find further confusion. That is so, is it not? If I am confused and I seek a way, a directive, the way or the directive will also be confused. It is only a clear mind that can find the way, if there is a way—not a confused mind. Surely, that much is simple and obvious.

Now, if I realize that it is futile to seek a directive as long as I am confused, will I go on seeking it? Or will I refuse to go to anybody to ask for a directive, because I see that my choice of a *guru*, of a politician, of a book, or of certain values, being based on my own confusion, must also be confused? So I think it is essential to realize the totality of one's own confusion, not theoretically, but as an actual experience.

The fact is that you are confused, only you are frightened to acknowledge it; you are nervous, apprehensive, because if you admit you are confused, you will not know what to do; so you get carried away by immediate action. But if you become aware of the totality of your own confusion, what happens? Knowing that any movement of a confused mind can only create further confusion, don't you stop? Then all seeking ceases; and when a confused mind ceases to seek, confusion also ceases, and there is a new beginning. It is quite simple; but the difficulty is to acknowledge to oneself that one is confused.

So, are you experiencing, actually and not merely verbally, this state of confusion in which you are caught? If you are, then you will not ask anybody what the significance of life is. If you really see your own confusion,

actually experience it as a fact, a reality, you are bound to stop asking, demanding, searching; and that very act of stopping is the beginning of an entirely new kind of inquiry. Then the mind will discover the extraordinary significance of life without being told.

At present we want to be led out of our confusion by another; but no one can lead us out of our confusion. As long as choice exists, there must be confusion. Choice indicates confusion; Yet we are very proud of that choice, which we call free will. It is only the mind that does not choose, but sees directly without interpretation, without being influenced—it is only such a mind that is not confused, and can therefore proceed to discover and explore the unknowable.

Question: Is there any way to build good will? Can you tell us how to live together in peace rather than in this bitter antagonism that exists between us?

KRISHNAMURTI: Surely, peace and good will are very difficult to build. You may construct a bridge, or work in an office together, because you have a boss over you, somebody to tell you what to do; but real co-operation cannot be compelled, nor does it come into being by following the blue-print laid down by an architect. Peace and good will can be built only when we feel that this earth is *ours*—not that of the communists, the socialists, or the capitalists, but yours and mine. It is our earth to enrich, to share together, and not to divide nationalistically, racially, or according to the beliefs, the creeds and dogmas, of the various organized religions.

Please listen to all this, sirs, it is not just a tirade of words. If you really want to build good will and live together in peace, you must remove all class differences and religious barriers—the barriers of dogma, tradition, and belief. You cannot look to government

legislation to bring about this peace of good will, because the peace of the politicians is not the same as that of a religious man; they are two entirely different things. It is a matter of actually feeling peace and good will every day, of being really good, and not being ashamed of that word, and of not getting caught in organizations which are supposed to bring peace, but which in fact destroy it through the pursuit of their own vested interests. When there is this feeling of peace and good will within each one of us, it will create its own world. But unfortunately, most of us are not concerned with building this feeling together. What brings us together mostly is not love, not sympathy, not compassion, but hatred—identifying ourselves with one group in opposition to another. When our particular group is threatened by another in what is called war, it brings us together; and we separate again when the threat is over—which is being proven from day to day.

So what is necessary is not the ideal of peace and good will, but the actual facing of the fact that you are violent. When you call yourselves Maharashtrians, Gujarathis, or who knows what else, you are violent, because you have separated yourselves with a word; and that word stimulates antagonism, it builds a barrier between you and somebody else. But we are all human beings with essentially the same troubles, worries, miseries, suffering; and what matters, surely, is to realize this obvious fact, to put away easily, happily, our nationalism, our petty little organizations and communities, and be simply human. But most of us would rather spend our days speculating about God, discussing the *Gita*, and all the rest of that stuff learnt from books, which has no meaning at all; therefore our antagonism continues. What has meaning is relationship; and if together we would build peace and good will, we must cease to be merely idealistic, and actually shed the absurd stupidities of nationalism, provincialism,

strip ourselves of beliefs and vanities, and begin anew, freely and happily.

This is not a talk, or an answer, to encourage you to do these things. An intelligent man will act out of his own understanding. It is only the stupid man who seeks encouragement; and if he is encouraged, he will still be stupid. But if he knows he is stupid, then he can do something about it. If he is aware of his own pettiness, jealousy, violence, and sees that to pursue ideals is another form of stupidity, then he can bring about a transformation in himself. If I know I am arrogant, I can deal with it, or not, as the case may be. But the man who is arrogant and pretends to be humble, or who pursues the ideal of humility, is stupid, because he is escaping from the fact into unreality. Non-arrogance is an unreal state for the man who is arrogant; but we are brought up with this division in ourselves of the fact and the ideal, and, therefore we are hypocritical. Whereas, to know that one is arrogant, and to face that fact, is the beginning of the end of arrogance.

In the same way, if we really wish to build peace and good will together, there must be love—not the ideal love, but just love, kindness, compassion, which means breaking away from a particular community and shedding all our national, racial, and religious prejudices. We are human beings, living together on this earth, this earth which is ours; and to feel the truth of that, one must be extraordinarily humble. To feel anything deeply, there must be humility; but humility ceases when we are pursuing the ideal.

Question: You say that, do what we will, the state of reality can never come into being through our own efforts, and that even the desire for it is a hindrance. Then what can we do which will not create an obstacle?

KRISHNAMURTI: Now, you are not listening to me, and I am not replying; but together let us inquire into this

problem. The problem is, how can we experience the real, the unknown, if the mind cannot capture it through its own effort, striving? So we have to understand the mind, and why we make effort.

If we did not make effort at the physical level, we would not survive. If there were not the effort of working at a job, eating the right kind of food, taking exercise, and so on, the body would disintegrate. That is an obvious fact. So we make effort in order to survive physically.

Now, similarly, we make effort in order to survive psychologically; that is, in order to achieve what we call reality. We think that reality is a state to be attained through discipline, control, suppression, through various forms of compulsion, and we force the mind to conform to a pattern in the hope of arriving at that state. All this implies, does it not?, that the mind is continually seeking security; being afraid of uncertainty, it wants to find certainty—a certainty which is permanent, and which it calls reality, God, truth, or what you will. That is what most of us are concerned with. We want a state in which there will be no disturbance of any kind, and which will never come to an end, a permanent state which we call peace; and the mind is making a constant effort to capture that state, to enter into it. So we have to understand the process that is involved in this effort.

As I said, just as we make effort to survive physically, so also we make effort to continue as the 'me'. Do you understand? As long as I want to survive spiritually, I must make an effort towards the attainment of that which I call reality. Now, what is the 'me' which is making this effort? What are you? Surely, you are a name attached to a bundle of memories, experiences; you are an accumulation of hidden motives and outward pursuits, of various qualities, passions, fears, virtues. All that is the 'you', is it not? And that 'you', you want to

continue in a direction which will lead to reality; so you make an effort, you meditate, you practise some form of discipline. Surely, only when the mind ceases to make this effort and is completely still without being induced or compelled to be still; only when it does not want anything, and is therefore not seeking any experience—only then is there a possibility of the coming into being of the unknown.

The mind, after all, is the result of the known, and any effort which the mind makes must be within the field of the known; therefore it cannot make an effort towards the unknown. No movement in the field of the known can ever lead to the unknown. This again is very simple and clear. The mind is still only when it has totally renounced the known; in that stillness there is no effort, and only then is it possible for the unknown to come into being.

March 7, 1956

III

TALK IN BOMBAY

One of our great difficulties in communicating with each other is to understand the content, the intention of the words we employ, is it not? The depth of our words depends, surely, on the way we think, feel, and act. If we speak the word superficially, or if the word is merely an abstraction, it has very little significance; whereas, if the word is not merely an abstraction, but has a referent which we both understand, a referent which we have established together with balance, with sanity, with clarity, then there is a possibility of communicating with each other, and a meeting of this kind will be useful. But the difficulty generally is that you have a certain referent, while I have quite another; or I may be speaking

merely abstractly, and have no referent at all; therefore communication, a deep exchange of thought between us, becomes almost impossible. So it seems to me very important, in a meeting of this kind, to communicate on the same level, at the same time; and such communication can take place only when we both understand the full content of the words we use. Understanding, surely, is instantaneous; it is not tomorrow, or after you have heard the talk.

To understand each other, I think it is necessary that we should not be caught in words; because, a word like 'God', for example, may have a particular meaning for you, while for me it may represent a totally different formulation, or no formulation at all. So it is almost impossible to communicate with each other unless both of us have the intention of understanding and going beyond mere words. The word 'freedom' generally implies being free *from* something, does it not? It ordinarily means being free from greed, from envy, from nationalism, from anger, from this or that. Whereas, freedom may have quite another meaning, which is a sense of being free, not *from* anything, but the realization of the fact of being free; and I think it is very important to understand this meaning.

Most of us are not familiar with the feeling of being free, and it seems to me that we have to become familiar with it, we have to get acquainted with that feeling; because throughout the world, tyranny is spreading. Whether under the guise of fascism, communism, socialism, or what you will, society is being more and more organized to fit a blueprint, a five-year plan, or a ten-year plan, which means that there must be an executive body vested with the authority to carry it out; and thereby tyranny begins. And yet society has to be organized. So the problem of what is freedom, is very complex, and I think it is really quite important to go into it.

Without freedom, there is obviously no possibility of exploring and finding

out what is truth. But how difficult it is for the mind to be free, to actually experience that state, and not just think it is free! To explore and to discover, the mind must have this quality of freedom, which is not the negative state of being free *from* something. I think there is a difference between the two. When I am merely free *from* something, that state of freedom is negation, it is a vacuum; but the realization of the fact of freedom, not *from* something, is a positive state. So I think we must understand the content of this word 'freedom'.

From childhood we are not educated to be free, but we are conditioned, shaped to the pattern of society. Because we are afraid that freedom will make the child go wrong, spill over, we in our turn establish various rules and regulations, do's and don'ts, thinking that these will guide the child in the right direction, lead him towards bliss, God, truth, or whatever it may be called. From the very beginning we assert that the mind must be conditioned, moulded; so we have never inquired into this problem of freedom. If we had, our values, our action, our whole outlook on life, would be entirely different.

The question is, then, can the mind, which is the result of innumerable influences, of the books it has read, of the social, cultural, and religious environment in which it has been brought up, of the memory which has shaped it and made it what it is—can such a mind free itself, not abstractly, or as an ideal, but actually free itself from the past? And what is the continuity of the past? Do you understand the problem?

At present the mind is obviously a store-house of memory—memory being accumulation, association, recognition, and response. It is very interesting to observe that there are now machines which can do all this much quicker than the human mind, which shows that it is a purely mechanical process; and a mind caught in that process, whatever its activity, must also be mechanical. So,

can the mind, realizing all this, be in a state of freedom, though it may employ the machine?

I do not know if I am explaining this issue clearly, but I think it is significant; because it seems to me that our existence as individuals—if we are individuals at all, which perhaps we are not—is mechanical, routine, and that as individuals we are not creative. I do not mean creativity in the narrow sense of mere production; I am talking of creativity in a totally different sense, which we shall go into presently.

Now, what gives the mind this sense of continuity in which there is not a moment of freedom, but merely a constant modification, a mechanical process of adding or subtracting? Surely, creativity is possible only when the mind is not occupied with the machinery of memory. I think this is very clear if you will follow it, though verbally it may be difficult. If you observe your own mind in operation, you will see that it is continually responding from the background of memory; and such a mind cannot know the state of freedom, in which alone there is creativity. To me, this is the supreme problem; because it is only at the instant of being free that the mind is capable of discovering something totally new, uncontaminated, unpremeditated by the past.

So, what gives the mind this mechanical continuity, and why is the mind afraid to let it go? And what creates time—not chronological time, but time as this feeling of moving from yesterday, through today, to tomorrow? Surely, as long as the mind is seeking the 'more', there must be this sense of continuity. Being dissatisfied with myself as I am, I want to change; and to change I say I must have time. Changing is always in terms of the 'more'; and the moment I demand the 'more', there must be continuity. The demand for the 'more' is envy, and our social structure is based on envy. There is envy, not only in our worldly relationships, but also in our desire to be more spiritual. As long

as the mind thinks in terms of the 'more', either inwardly or outwardly, there must be envy; and freedom from envy is not a denial of or an abstraction from envy, but the total absence of envy without struggling to be non-envious.

Can we go into this a little? You know what envy is, do you not? I think most of us are quite familiar with that feeling, and perhaps we have noticed that our whole society is based on it. There is a constant struggle to be something more, not only in the hierarchical social structure, but also inwardly. I see a car, and I want to possess it; I see a saint, and I want to become like him. This constant struggle to have or to become something, indicates an extraordinary dissatisfaction with what we are; but if we would understand what we are, we cannot compare it with what we would like to be. The understanding of what *is* does not come about through comparing what *is* with what *should* be.

I do not know if you have ever tackled this problem of envy. In our jobs, in our daily life and work, envy is rampant; it shows in the respect we pay to the man who knows more, to the man who has power, position, prestige, and in the constant struggle for the 'more' within ourselves. We all know this feeling of envy, and as long as it exists there must be frustration and sorrow.

Now, can the mind be totally free from envy? I think this is a very important question; because if the mind can never be totally free from envy, we shall perpetuate a society based on acquisitiveness, on ambition and all the rest of the horrors, and there will be ceaseless conflict between us, the meaningless struggle to become something at all levels of our existence. So, can the mind be free from envy? If I struggle to be free from envy, through discipline, through practising a method, surely I give continuity to envy in a different form. There is still the desire to be something, and I have merely changed the object of that desire. I now want

to be what I call non-envious; but the want is still the same, the demand for the 'more' is still there. So, being aware of this fact, can the mind be free from envy? If you will go slowly with me, step by step, I think you will see it.

When am I conscious of envy? Does not envy come into being through comparison? Surely, I am envious because you have, and I have not. The very process of comparison is envy. I am a petty little being, and you are a big saint, and I want to be like you. So where there is comparison, there is envy, and if you observe you will see that we are brought up on this; our education, our culture, our whole manner of thinking, is based on comparison and the worship of capacity. And do we understand anything through comparison? Through comparison we may extend knowledge; but knowledge, surely, is not understanding.

So the word 'envy' implies ambition, greed, the desire to be something, not only socially, but psychologically. And can the mind be entirely free from this demand for the 'more'? Why do we demand the 'more'? And does that demand lead to progress? When we demand a refrigerator, a better car, and so on, it brings about progress at one level, obviously. But when we demand more power, more fulfilment, greater virtue, when psychologically we want to achieve a result, that inner demand destroys the benefits of technical progress, and brings misery to man. As long as we psychologically demand the 'more', our society will be acquisitive, and there must be conflict and violence. This does not mean that we should do away with physical comforts, the mechanical aids produced by technology; but it is the psychological urge to use these things for self-expansion, which is the demand for the 'more', that is destroying us.

So, can the mind free itself from envy? It can free itself from envy only when comparison ceases, that is, when the mind is directly confronted by the fact

that it is envious. Do you understand, sirs? To be directly confronted by the fact that I am envious, is not the same as the realization of that fact which comes through comparison. I hope you are listening, not merely to my verbal expression, the description of what I am trying to convey, but listening in the sense that you are actually experiencing what I am saying—which is to observe the activity of your own mind and come to the point where you are aware, directly conscious, of the fact that you are envious.

Now, when do you know that you are envious? Do you know you are envious only when comparison exists, and when you employ the word 'envy'? Do you not know that you are envious when you see something which you want, and there is the demand for the 'more': more pleasure, more prestige, more money, more virtue, and so on? Or do you know that you are envious without the process of demanding the 'more'? That is, can the mind look at the fact that it is envious without this demand? Can the mind free itself from the word 'envy'?

After all, the mind is made up of words, amongst other things. Now, can the mind be free of the word 'envy'? Experiment with this and you will see that words like 'God', 'truth', 'hate', 'envy', have a profound effect on the mind. And can the mind be both neurologically and psychologically free of these words? If it is not free of them, it is incapable of facing the fact of envy. When the mind can look directly at the fact which it calls 'envy', then the fact itself acts much more swiftly than the mind's endeavour to do something about the fact. As long as the mind is thinking of getting rid of envy through the ideal of non-envy, and so on, it is distracted, it is not facing the fact; and the very word 'envy' is a distraction from the fact. The process of recognition is through the word; and the moment I recognize the feeling through the word, I give continuity to that feeling.

Surely, a man who is concerned with the total freedom from envy must go into all this; he has to see that our whole cultural background is based on envy, on acquisitiveness, spiritually as well as mundanely. That is, most of us want to be something, in this life or the next. We want more knowledge, greater power, a higher position, more virtue; so the continuity of the mind as the 'me' is through the demand for the 'more', which is envy. Envy is also the process of dependence.

Now, seeing the extraordinarily complex ways of envy, can the mind totally free itself from envy? If it does not, it cannot be free to explore, to discover, to understand. It can be free of envy only when it is directly aware of the fact that it is envious; and it cannot be directly aware of that fact as long as it condemns or compares. This is really quite simple. If you want to understand your son, you must study him, must you not? Studying your son implies watching him, and not comparing him with his elder brother, or anybody else; it means looking at him directly, and not thinking of him comparatively. The moment you think comparatively, you are destroying him, because the image of the other then becomes more important than your son.

So, can the mind watch in itself this unrolling of envy, but without condemnation or comparison? Can it be cognizant of the fact that it is envious, and not act upon that fact? The action of the mind upon the fact is also envy, because the mind then wants to change the fact into something else. Unless the mind is totally free from envy, we shall always be in bondage, there will always be suffering, and whatever the mind's activity, it will only create more mischief. The mind that is concerned with total freedom from envy has to be aware of the fact, and not act upon the fact. Then you will see how swiftly the fact itself brings a result, an action, which is not the action of a mind distracted from the fact; and only then can the mind be still. No amount of

control, or self-hypnosis, can ever make the mind really quiet; and it is essential for the mind to be quiet, unoccupied with itself, for only then is there a possibility of discovering or experiencing something new. Any experience which has continuity is based on envy, on the demand for the 'more'; so the mind must die to everything it has learnt, acquired, experienced. Then you will find that the mind is silent, and this silence has its own movement, uncontaminated by the past; therefore it is possible for something totally new to take place.

In considering these questions together, again I think it is important to realize that there is no answer; and this realization is in itself an extraordinary experience. But to realize that there is no answer is very difficult for most of us because the mind is seeking a result. When the mind is seeking a result, it will find what it seeks; but that very result creates problems.

Question: When I listen to you, it appears to create and intensify my perplexity. Eight days ago I was without a problem, and now I am swamped by confusion. What is the reason for this?

KRISHNAMURTI: It may be very simple. Perhaps you have been asleep, and now you are beginning to think. Coming and sitting here casually, perhaps you have been pushed, cornered, stimulated, therefore you are confused; but if you are merely stimulated, when you leave here you will fall back into the same old condition. Stimulation makes the mind dull, it does not awaken the mind; it may awaken it for a minute or a second, but the mind will fall back into its habitual dullness. Depending on these meetings as a means of stimulation is like taking a drink: in the end it will make the mind dull. If you depend on a person to stimulate you to think, you become his disciple, his follower, his slave, with all the nonsense of it; and

so you are bound to be dull. Whereas, if you realize that you have problems—they may be dormant for the moment, but they are there—and begin directly to confront them, then you won't have to be stimulated by me, or by anyone else. Then you won't have to seek out the problems, for you will see them in yourself, and in everything about you as you go down the street: tears, disease, poverty, death.

So the question is, how to tackle, how to approach the problem. If you approach any problem with the intention of finding an answer, then the answer will create more problems—which is so obvious. What is important is to go into the problem, and begin to understand it; and you can do that only when you don't condemn, resist, or push it away. The mind cannot solve a problem as long as it is condemning, justifying, or comparing. The difficulty is not in the problem, but in the mind that approaches the problem with an attitude of condemnation, justification, or comparison. So first you have to understand how your mind is conditioned by society, by the innumerable influences that exist about you. You call yourself a Hindu, a Christian, a Moslem, or what you will, which means that your mind is conditioned; and it is the conditioned mind that creates the problem. When a conditioned mind seeks an answer to a problem, it is going around in circles, its search has no meaning; and your mind is conditioned, because you are envious, because you compare, judge, evaluate, because you are tethered to beliefs, dogmas. That conditioning is what creates the problem.

Question: How can I be active politically without being contaminated by such action?

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, what do we mean by political action? What is politics? Surely, it is one segment, one part of a vast complex, is it not? Life consists of many parts, political, social, religious;

and if you pursue one part, which you call political action, irrespective of the whole—that is, without considering the totality of life—, then, whatever you do, your action will be contaminating. I think that is so obvious. Only the mind that is seeking, groping, that does not think in compartments, either political, social, or religious, can understand the totality of life. A man who is thinking as a Maharashtrian, or a Gujarathi, cannot perceive the significance of that totality, he does not see that this earth is ours. He can only think in terms of Poona or Bombay, which is so silly; and his separative thinking must eventually lead to mischief and murder, as it has already done. The mind is always setting itself apart as an Indian, a Hindu, a Moslem, a communist, a Christian, this or that, and holding on to its separation, its provincialism, thereby creating ever-increasing misery. Whereas, the man who does not feel himself to be an Indian, a Christian, or a Hindu, but only a human being, and who thinks in terms of the totality of life—it is such a man whose action will not be contaminating. But this is very difficult for most of us, because we are always thinking in segments, and we hope by putting these segments together to make the whole. That can never happen. One must have a feeling for the totality of life, and then one can work differently.

Unfortunately, the politically-minded want to cling to their politics, and introduce religion into it; but that is an impossibility, because religion is something entirely different. Religion is not dogma, it is not ritual, it is not knowledge of the *Gita*, of the *Bible*, or of any other book. Religion is an experience, on the instant, of that state of mind which is without the continuity of time. It is a single second of being free from time; and that state cannot act politically, or in terms of social reform. But when a man has that feeling which is without the continuity of time, his action, whatever it be, will have quite

a different meaning. Through the part, you cannot come to the whole, and you don't realize this. To truth there is no path, neither Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, nor Moslem. Truth has no path, it must be discovered from moment to moment; and you can discover it only when the mind is free, unburdened with the continuity of experiences.

Question: We listen to all that you say to the point of surfeit. Can there be such a thing as listening too much to you? Don't we become dull by excess of stimulation?

KRISHNAMURTI: Is there such a thing as too much listening? What do we mean by listening? If I listen in order to store up, and from that stored-up knowledge to act, then listening can become too much, because it is merely a stimulation to further action. That is what most of us do. We listen in order to learn, to acquire; we retain in the mind what we have learnt, and from there proceed to act. As long as listening is a process of accumulation, naturally there can be too much, a surfeit; but if I am listening without any sense of acquisition, without storing up, then listening has quite a different significance. Listening is learning; but if I am storing up what I learn, then learning becomes impossible. What I learn is then contaminated by what I have stored up, therefore it is no longer learning. It is in the process of accumulation that listening becomes wearisome, excessive, and like any other stimulant, it soon makes the mind dull; you know that what is going to be said, has already been said, and you are at the end of the sentence before I finish it. That is not listening. Listening is an art; it is to hear the totality of a thing, not just the words; and of such listening there can never be too much.

Question: Is God a reality to you? If so, tell us about God.

KRISHNAMURTI: It is the indolent mind that asks this question, is it not? It is like a man sitting comfortably in the valley and wanting a description of what lies beyond the mountains. That is what we are all doing. The words we read in the so-called sacred books satisfy the mind. The descriptions of the experiences of others gratify us, and we think we have understood; but we never bestir ourselves, we never move out of the valley, climb the steep hills, and find out for ourselves. That is why it is very important to start anew, to put aside all the books, all the guides, all the teachers, and take the journey by oneself. God, the unknown, is a thing to be discovered, not to be told about or speculated upon. What is speculated upon is the outcome of the known; and a mind that is crippled, burdened, occupied with the known, can never find the unknown. You may practise virtue, sit meditating by the hour, but you will never know the unknown, because the unknown comes into being only through self-knowledge. The mind must free itself from the sense of its own continuity, which is the known—and then you will never ask if God is a reality. The man who says he knows what God is, does not know. It is only the mind that frees itself from the experience it had a second ago, that can know the unknown. God or truth has no abiding place, and that is the beauty of it; it cannot be made into a shelter for the petty little mind. It is a living, dynamic thing, like the moving waters of a river. It is only a mind that is not tethered to any organized religion, to any dogma or belief, that is not burdened with the known—it is only such a mind that can discover if there is, or there is not God. To state that there is, or there is not, cripples all discovery. But because the mind itself is impermanent it wants to be assured that there is something permanent, so it says there must be the eternal, the everlasting. Out of its own quality of time, it projects a thing which it calls the

timeless, and then speculates about it; but only the mind that frees itself from time can know the unknown.

March 11, 1956

IV

TALK IN BOMBAY

We may theoretically or verbally agree that it is very important for the individual to emerge from the collective, but I do not think we pay sufficient attention to the problem; because it is only when there is the creative release of the individual that there is a possibility of discovering and living a totally different kind of life from that which we are living now. At present our life, our thinking, is collective; we are part of the collective; and if we are to bring about a different kind of society, with different values, it seems to me that the individual must begin to understand all the collective impressions that the mind has gathered through the centuries. And as I was saying, it is only when there is freedom at the very beginning that the true individual can emerge. After all, most of us are the result of environment; our thoughts, our activities, our beliefs, our various pursuits, are conditioned by the many influences that exist about us; and to discover what is truth, one has to free the mind from this conglomeration of influences, which is extraordinarily arduous and difficult. I do not think we give sufficient importance to this. It is not until the mind frees itself from these many influences that it is uncorrupted, and only then is there a possibility of discovering something entirely new—something which has not been premeditated, which is not a self-projection, which is not the result of any culture, society, or religion.

Propaganda is the cultivation of prejudices; and all of us are prejudiced,

because we have been educated to accept or to reject, but never to inquire into this whole problem of influence. We say that we are seeking truth; but what is it that most of us are really seeking? If you are at all aware, self-observant, you will know that you are seeking a result of some kind; you want some form of satisfaction, an inward stability or permanency which you call by different names, according to the environment in which you have been brought up. And are you not seeking success? You want to be successful, not only in this world, but also in the next. It seems to me that this desire to be successful, to arrive, to become something, is a result of the wrong kind of education. And can the mind totally free itself from this desire?

I do not think we ask ourselves this question, because all we are concerned with is to follow a method, a system, or an ideal, which we hope will produce a result, lead us to certainty, to success, to definite and permanent happiness, bliss, or what you will. So our minds are always occupied in the effort to arrive at something; and as long as the mind is seeking a goal, an end, a result which will give it complete satisfaction, there must be the creation and following of authority. That is so, is it not? As long as I think that bliss, happiness, God, truth, or what you will, is an end to be reached, there will be the desire to reach it; so I must have a *guru*, an authority, who will help me to achieve what I demand. Therefore I become a follower, I depend on another; and as long as there is dependence, there is no question of the individual's emerging from the collective and finding out for himself what is truth, or what is the right thing to do.

So, if you observe, you will see that we are always seeking someone to tell us what to do. Being confused, we go to another to seek advice. The result is that we are always following, thereby psychologically setting up authority which invariably blinds our thinking

and prevents the creativity which is so essential. Outwardly, in this competitive, acquisitive society, we are ambitious, ruthless, otherwise we shall be driven out, pushed aside. Inwardly, psychologically, we are equally ambitious; there also we want to arrive at a certain height, so we pursue an end, either self-projected, or created by another. Seeing all this, what is one to do? How is one to find out what is right action?

Surely, this must be a problem to all of us. We see confusion within us and around us; the old values, beliefs, and dogmas, the leaders we have followed, no longer satisfy us, they have lost their grip; and seeing all this chaos, what is one to do? How is one to find out what is right action? To go into this problem, we must ask ourselves what we mean by search, must we not? We all say we are seeking—at least, those of us do who are serious, earnest; but before we go on with our search, surely we must find out what we mean by that word, and what it is that each one of us is seeking.

Sirs, can you find anything new by seeking it? Or, in your search, can you only find that which you have already known and projected into the future? I think this is an important question. What is it that we are seeking? And can a mind that is seeking ever find something beyond time, beyond its own projections? That is, I say I am seeking truth, God, bliss; but to find it, I must be able to recognize it, must I not? And to be able to recognize it, I must have already experienced it. Previous experience is necessary for recognition, so what I can recognize has already existed in my mind; therefore it is not truth, it is my own projection. And yet that is what most of us are doing. When we seek, we are seeking something which the mind has already experienced and wants to recapture; therefore what we are really after is the permanency of an experience of pleasure, gratification. So, as long as the mind is seeking, obviously it can never find out what is truth.

It is only when the mind is no longer seeking—which does not mean that it becomes dull, distracted—and understands this whole process of search, that there is a possibility of discovering something which is not of its own projection, of its own evaluation.

For example, you read in the *Gita* or the *Upanishads* a description of something permanent, an everlasting bliss, or what you will; and because this life is transient and your thinking, your activities, your relationships, are confused, disturbing, miserable, you want that other state about which you have read. That is what you are seeking. In the search for that state, you cultivate the acceptance of authority, you go to someone who promises to lead you to what you want. Therefore you become a follower; and as long as you follow, you are part of the collective, the mass. You have already recognized, you have established in your mind what that other state is, and you are seeking it through following a *guru*, through meditation, through the practice of various forms of discipline, and so on. What you are really seeking is something which you already know, or have been taught, a state which you have read about or vaguely experienced; so your search is for the continuance of a gratifying experience, or for the discovery of a pleasurable state which you hope exists, is it not? And I say this search will never reveal the unknown; therefore all seeking must cease.

Please do listen to all this with a little attention, if you kindly will. As they are now, our lives are contradictory, shallow, empty, and we are very confused. We go from one *guru* to another, from one book to another; all about us there are specialists in what we call spirituality, each offering a particular form of meditation, discipline, and we have to choose what is the right thing to do. Now, as long as there is choice, there must be confusion; and it seems to me that before we choose, seek, it is imperative to find out for ourselves

what is freedom. For it is only the free mind that can inquire, and not the mind that is caught in tradition, that is conditioned, influenced; nor the mind that is seeking a result; nor the mind that is filled with the activity of the immediate in relation to a projected future.

Surely, then, we must discover for ourselves the full significance of freedom, not as a goal, not at an end, but now. What does freedom mean to all of us? As long as the mind is conditioned by society, by culture, as long as it is burdened with its own loneliness, emptiness, as long as it is a slave to any kind of influence, it is not free. So, can the mind be fully aware of the influences that exist outside of and within itself, and which cause it to think in a particular direction, thereby making it incapable of straight thinking? As long as there is pressure behind thinking, thinking can never be straight; and can the mind remove all this pressure? That is, can it be free of motivation, of all compulsion to be this or to be that? We may not be conscious of the pressure, that lie behind our thinking, the compulsions of fear, of motive, of dogma and belief; but they are there. Now, can we be fully aware of these influences, and allow the mind to think very smoothly and straightly for itself? Surely, that is one of our greatest problems, is it not? Can we find out what are the pressures on and in the mind that are making us think and act in a certain direction? Let us look at the problem differently.

You live here in Bombay. Are you to take the side of Maharashtra, or Gujarat? To which state is Bombay to go? You all sit up and take interest now, do you not? (*Laughter*). It is very surprising. Now, what are you to do? If you say, 'As a citizen I must choose', and you act either as a Maharashtrian, or a Gujarathi, that action is bound to lead to further misery. Whereas, if you act neither as a Maharashtrian, nor a Gujarathi, but as a human being who is

not involved in any of this business—with all its stupidity and narrow prejudice, with its clinging to caste, and all the rest of that nonsense—, then your action will obviously be entirely different.

So we have to inquire what are the pressures, the motives that are compelling us to act in this way or that; for unless we understand these influences and are free of them, our action will invariably lead to greater sorrow and confusion. That is why it is very important to have self-knowledge, which is to understand the background, the conditioning of one's own mind, and to be freeing oneself from it all the time. You see, when we are merely concerned with immediate action, we get carried away by it, without inquiring into the whole problem of conditioning, how the mind is shaped as a Hindu, as a Christian, or what you will; and unless the mind is liberating itself from its conditioning, whatever action we may take is bound to be disintegrating, and can only create more chaos. So our concern is not to choose this or that course of action, but to understand how the mind is conditioned; for in freeing the mind from its conditioning, there comes an action which is sane, rational, intelligent.

What is important, then, is to find out for ourselves what each one of us is seeking, and whether what we are seeking has any validity, or is merely an escape. It is imperative to have self-knowledge, to know oneself—not as the *Atman*, and all the rest of it, but to know what one is from day to day, which is to observe how one thinks, to see what are the influences behind one's thought, and to be aware of the conscious as well as the unconscious movements of the mind. Then the mind is capable of being very quiet; and it is only in that quietness that something real can take place.

Question: One of the dominant ideas in Hinduism is that this world is an illusion.

Do you not think that this idea, through the centuries, has been a strong contributing factor to the present misery?

KRISHNAMURTI: I do not know what the doctrines of Hinduism are, because I am not a Hindu; nor am I a Christian, or a Buddhist. But I know, as we all do, that the mind has the power to create illusion. It can mesmerize itself into believing that the trees and the houses do not exist, or that suffering is not; it has the extraordinary faculty of believing whatever it likes, irrespective of facts—which is the power to create illusion. Illusion is of different kinds. We have created the illusion of the ideal. We say this world does not matter, it is only the next world that matters, and this world is merely a passage to that. Or we say, 'I am rich now because I lived a good life last time'. So we can explain anything away, but the fact remains that the mind has the power to create illusion.

Now, can the mind free itself from that power and see facts as they are, instead of its opinion *about* the facts? Is it possible to see that one is cruel, and not explain cruelty away, or speculate about what it is that has made one cruel? Can one see the starvation, the degradation, the misery, the conflict, the brutality that exists in the world, and not explain it? Can we be simply aware of the fact that we are brutal, violent, cruel, not only outwardly, but inwardly? If we just see that fact without explaining it, what happens? Then the fact begins to operate on the mind, the mind does not operate on the fact. The mind operates on the fact only when we evaluate the fact, when we have opinions about it. Being cruel, I have the ideal of kindness, compassion, which is over there, away from the fact. What is over there is an illusion created by the mind; the fact is, I am cruel. Now, can the mind remain with the fact, not morbidly, but just remain with the fact that I am cruel, full stop? The ideal has been created by the mind, and it is a

total illusion; it exists because I want to escape from the fact. But if the mind is free from that illusion which it calls the ideal, then the mind can be operated on by the fact. Let us make it more clear and simple.

Most of you, I am sure, have ideals; and ideals exist because the mind has the power to create them. They have no validity, they are not facts; they are the mind's conception of what *should* be, which is entirely different from what *is*. What *is* is the fact, not what *should* be; but unfortunately we are all idealistic, and so there is the split personality. We are always talking about non-violence, *Ahimsa*—how easily this word slips out of us!—and yet we are Maharashtrians, Gujarathis, Telugus, and God knows what else. (*Laughter*). Sirs, why have ideals, which have no value at all? If we have no ideals, then the fact of misery, of starvation, and the appalling cruelty we indulge in, will force us to do something.

As long as we belong to any religion, to any caste, to any particular group, as long as we make the family or the nation the most important unit, there must be cruelty; and we never face this fact, we never look at it, but are always attempting to reach the ideal, and never do. When the mind frees itself from the idea of what *should* be, it can look at the fact of what *is*; and then the fact will obviously do something to the mind. As long as I only speculate about there being a poisonous snake in my room, I can go on speculating indefinitely, and there is no action; but if there is an actual snake, then action is immediate, I do not have to think about action.

So it may be partly because we have thought of this world as illusory, or as a stepping-stone to something much greater, that we are not very concerned with its social horrors and utter misery—but this does not mean that each one of us should immediately enter the field of social reform, which would only increase the present chaos. What is important is to find out how your mind

works, which means seeing the pressures, the compulsions, that make you do a certain thing, and freeing the mind from its conditioning. As long as the mind thinks as a Hindu, a Brahmin, a Catholic, or what you will, its conditioning prevents it from facing the fact; but the moment it frees itself from that conditioning and faces the fact, there is an action uninfluenced by the past.

Sirs, the problem is very complex. You see, any ideas the mind creates are the outcome of its background, of its prejudice, bias; and a mind that would find out what is the right thing to do in all this chaotic misery, must understand and free itself from its background—which is much more important than to find out what to do. The 'what to do' will come with the understanding of the background. As long as you think as a Brahmin, or a non-Brahmin, as long as you follow this path, or that path, any action born of such thinking inevitably creates more confusion, more wars, more hatred. But if you begin to understand the background, there is bound to be right action; and the understanding of the background comes only through awareness in relationship.

Question: Can there be a synthesis of the East and the West, and is not that the only way of bridging the gulf between them?

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, what are the East and the West? You see, we are asking a wrong question and trying to find a right answer. Is there an East and a West, except geographically? Is there an eastern culture and a western culture? Is there an eastern way of thinking and a western way of thinking? Superficially there may be; but whether it is called eastern or western, communist or Catholic, each one of us is conditioned by the culture in which he is brought up. You may live in the East, and another in the West; but he is conditioned by his society, by the

climate, by the food he eats, by the innumerable impressions, pressures, influences, that exist around him, just as you are. In the West, people wear a certain type of clothing, and here they wear something else; but the human being is the same throughout the world, whatever he wears, and regardless of whether his skin is brown, white, black, or yellow. We are all ambitious, greedy, envious, wanting success—though 'success' may take one form there, and a different form here. We are human beings, not easterners and westerners; this is *our* world, it is not the world of the communists, the Catholics, or of any other group, however much they may want it to be. Large groups of people are deliberately being conditioned to think in a certain way. But there is no 'better' conditioning, there is only conditioned thinking; and as long as our minds are conditioned, and act according to that conditioning, we are bound to create wars. As long as you think as a Hindu, opposed to Americans, or Russians, or Moslems, or what you will, you must inevitably bring about antagonism; as long as you think of yourself as a Gujarathi, or a Maharashtraian, you are going to have appalling brutalities.

So there is only the human mind, there is only thinking, whether here or in the West; and it is the primary job of every serious person to inquire into the whole process of thinking, because all action springs from thought. Without thinking, there is no action; and thinking is now divided as Indian, European, this or that, which means that it is conditioned, influenced, shaped by a particular culture. Having produced its own culture, the mind then gets caught in that culture, in that society; and to understand this process, to go into it and break it down, is the function of every responsible human being. It is only when we free the mind from its conditioning that we can know what love is, what compassion is; and as long as we remain Hindus, Maharashtraians,

or what you will, it is all nonsense to talk about God, truth, love, compassion.

A new world cannot come into being unless each one of us feels that this earth is ours to live on, yours and mine; and we cannot live on it peacefully if I think of myself as a Brahmin, or a great saint, and look upon you as a little man, a servant to be abused. We are human beings together, and the change of heart is much more important than the change of legislation. Laws cannot change the heart; and the heart or mind which is ambitious, can utilize or circumvent any form of legislation to enrich itself. That is why it is very important to understand all this, and not divide the world as the East and the West.

Question: According to you, the known can never discover the unknown. How then can one recognize the unknown? Is it so utterly different?

KRISHNAMURTI: Surely, the mind is the result of the known. The mind only knows as a fact what *has* been, it can never know as a fact what will be. It can conjecture; but there are innumerable influences which are constantly changing the future, so no man can say what the future will be; and I think it is very important to understand this politically. No group of people, whether communist, Catholic, socialist, or any other, can know the future. To assume that the future can be known is to have a pattern, from which arises the effort to force man to fit into that pattern, liquidating him if he does not, or destroying him in prison-camps, and all the rest of the horrors. What can be known is the process of one's own thinking. The known is the past; recognition is the whole process of the known.

The questioner asks, in effect, "Can I recognize the unknown? Can I experience, and know that I am experiencing, the unknown?" Now, what do we

mean by recognition? Surely, we can only recognize something we have known. Having met you before, I recognize you; if I have not previously met you, I cannot recognize you—recognition being familiarity with the name, the quality and shape of the face, the manner of speech, the gesture, and all the rest of it. So recognition is always the result of the known. I recognize, because I have experienced before, that *that* is a house, *that* is a tree, *that* is a man, a woman, or a child; I know because I have been told, and also because it is my own experience. I know through experience; so the mind is the result of the known. From the known it can project the unknown, calling it God, truth, or what you will; but it is still a projection of the known.

So, can the known experience the unknown? Obviously not. Such a question is a contradiction, it has no validity. The question is not whether the mind can recognize or experience the unknown, but whether the mind can free itself from the known. Being the result of the known, can the mind free itself from the known? This is an extraordinary question, if you really put it to yourself and go into it. The mind has become mechanical because it functions from the known to the known. Like the electronic machines which have been invented, it can only function through association. Our thinking is the result of the known, otherwise there is no thinking; it is the reaction of memory, which is the past; and it is the past that asks, "Can I know or experience something which is timeless, something without measure, beyond recognition?" The answer is obvious.

So, all that we can do is to understand the operations of the known, to see how the mind thinks, feels, inquires—which is meditation; and only then is the mind completely still. Stillness of the mind may be induced by drugs, or by discipline, suppression, but that is not meditation; it is just a trick, and such a mind is not still. It is only

through inquiring into the known that the mind can be quiet, completely still—the totality of the mind, the conscious as well as the unconscious, not just the superficial mind which says, “I must be still in order to experience the unknown”. The totality of the mind must be still, which means that the whole process of thinking must come to an end; and it cannot come to an end by chopping it off, or operating upon it, but only by understanding it. When the whole process of thinking is understood, there comes a stillness of mind in which there is neither the experiencer nor the experienced, there is no movement; and only then is there a possibility of the coming into being of something which is beyond the measure of time.

Our job, then, is not to inquire into the unknown, but to find out whether the mind can be free from the known. If you really put this question to yourself, factually and not theoretically, you will find out whether the mind can or cannot be free. I cannot tell you; it is for you to discover the truth of the matter. And you are bound to put this question to yourself, because, as it is now, your mind is mechanical, it endlessly repeats what it has been taught, what it has learnt, what it has read—the eternal gossip about the known. Only when the mind understands itself is there the possibility of freedom from the known.

March 14, 1956

V

TALK IN BOMBAY

The last four times we have met here, I have been talking about how important it is for the individual to free himself from the many social, cultural, and religious influences, for it is only then that there can take place the creative

release of the good mind. It seems to me very important to understand the quality of the mind, and to bring about that which is good. Most of us are not concerned with bringing about the good mind, but only with what to do; action has become much more important than the quality of the mind. To me, action is secondary. If I may so put it, action does not matter, it is not important at all; because when there is the good mind, the mind that is creatively explosive, then from that creative explosiveness comes right action; it is not ‘doing is being’, but ‘being is doing’.

For most of us, action seems vital, important, and so we get caught in action; but the problem is not action, though it may appear to be. Most of us are concerned with how to live, what to do in certain circumstances, whether to take this side or that side in politics, and so on. If you observe you will see that our search is generally to find out what is the right action to take, and that is why there is anxiety, this pursuit of knowledge, this search for the *guru*. We inquire in order to find out what to do; and it seems to me that this approach to life must inevitably lead to a great deal of suffering and misery, to contradiction, not only within oneself, but socially, a contradiction that invariably breeds frustration. To me, action inevitably follows being. That is, the very state of listening is an act of humility. If the mind is capable of listening, that very listening brings about the good mind, from which action can come into being. Whereas, without the good mind, without that strange, explosive quality of creativity, mere search for action leads to pettiness, to shallowness of heart and mind.

I do not know if you have noticed how most of us are occupied with what to do, and probably we have never had this quality of mind which immediately perceives the totality. The very perception of the totality is its own action, and I think it is important to understand this, because our culture has

made us very shallow; we are imitative, traditionally bound, incapable of wide and deep vision, because our eyes are blinded by the immediate action and its results. Observe your own mind and you will see how concerned you are with what to do; and this constant occupation of the mind with what to do can only lead to very shallow thinking. Whereas, if the mind is concerned with the perception of the whole—not with *how* to perceive the whole, what method to use, which is again to be caught in the immediate action—, then you will see that from this intention comes action, and not the other way around.

What is it that most of us are now concerned with? With violence and non-violence, with acquiring a little virtue, with the particular caste or nation we belong to, with whether there is God or not, with what kind of meditation to practise, and so on—all of which is on a limited, petty scale. So the mind gets lost in little things; but this does not mean that one must not inquire into what is meditation. To discover what meditation is, is quite a different matter. But the mind is concerned with what system of meditation to use in order to arrive, and this pre-occupation with a system makes the mind petty, shallow, empty—which is what is happening to most of us. We repeat the *Gita*, the *Bible*, the *Koran*, or some Buddhist book, or we quote Lenin or Marx, and think we have solved all the issues. Whereas, it seems to me that what is important is to bring about the good mind, that extraordinary quality of the mind that captures instantaneously the totality of feeling, the totality of being; and I think that the good mind is not possible as long as there is effort. As long as one is striving in any direction, making an effort to be or not to be this or that, the good mind, the mind that is capable of perceiving the whole, is not possible. It is only the mind that is freeing itself from effort, from striving, that can understand the totality of being.

Why do we make effort? Please, this is a serious question; let us think it out together. Effort is obviously necessary at a certain level of our existence—the struggle to acquire knowledge in school, to learn a technique, and so on; but why does the mind make an effort to be something, to be non-violent, or to be peaceful? Is it not because, being aware that it is violent, greedy, or stupid, the mind wants to transform that state into something else? The desire to change from what *is* to what *should* be, brings about a process of effort, does it not? I am ignorant, and I must have knowledge; I am envious, and I must be non-envious. So the desire to be non-envious breeds effort, the struggle to be something. To me, this effort, in which most people are caught, is the deteriorating factor. As I said, the very act of listening is humility; but we do not listen. We say to ourselves, “What is he talking about? What will happen to me if I make no effort to be something? How shall I live? How shall I get a job, or be promoted?” All life as we know it is struggle, effort, drive, compulsion; we are used to that rhythm, to that way of thinking, and so we never listen. We are listening through the objection of our own opinions.

Now, can we put all that aside and merely listen? When we are merely listening, what has happened? That very act of listening is humility. There is no effort involved, the mind has done nothing to be humble; it *is* humble. therefore it is capable of listening. Do you follow? Because I want to understand what another is talking about, I am not offering my opinion, my objections, my arguments; that is all laid aside, and I listen to what is being said. That very listening is humility; the mind is humble in that very act; therefore there is no effort to be humble. The arrogant mind cannot listen. The mind that is full of knowledge, argumentation, that has acquired, experienced—such a mind is incapable of listening, because it is full of vanity,

conceit. So the problem is not how to get rid of conceit, but whether the mind is able to listen. When it can listen, the mind is in a state of humility, and then it is capable of perceiving totally, from which action follows. But what are we concerned with now? Most of us are concerned with the accumulation of a little virtue, a little knowledge, and with multiplying it, making it bigger, wider; but it is still an additive process. We have knowledge, we know what the *Gita* says, what our *guru* says, but the good mind is not; therefore the mind is incapable of perceiving, of understanding the whole, without this everlasting struggle.

So it seems to me that the greatest factor in the deterioration of the mind is this struggle to be something. After all, when you desire to be something, when you have a goal, an end in view, you struggle towards that end and your whole life is moulded by it; therefore your mind is not concerned with its own quality and depth, but only with the result of effort.

Do think about this and you will see how uncreative we are throughout the world. We are merely imitative, we are shaped by the pattern of society, by the blue-print of a particular culture; and can such a mind be creatively explosive? Obviously it cannot. Yet all we are concerned with is what to do. There is starvation in the world, there is misery, suffering, both outwardly and inwardly, and we are only concerned with how to put an end to it all. So the mind gets caught in the 'how', the answer, the explanation: how to find God, how to meditate, whether or not there is a continuity after death, what is the right action, who is the right *guru*, which is the right book, and so on. That is all you are concerned with, is it not? You are not concerned with the quality of the mind, but only with the many 'how's', which obviously make the mind shallow. You may have the best *guru*, read all the sacred books, be extraordinarily virtuous; but if you have

not this creatively explosive quality of the good mind, your virtue becomes very shallow, respectable, therefore it has no validity, because virtue is not an end in itself.

So it seems to me that what is important is really to inquire into the quality of the good mind, which is a mind that is not imitative, that does not merely follow, but is literally creatively explosive; because without that quality, of what value is your virtue, your knowledge, your search for truth? And can the shallow, mediocre mind, the mind that is educated merely to fit into society, that is beaten, broken, suffering—can such a mind find this creatively explosive quality?

Sirs, first we must realize that our minds are shallow, empty; we may fill them with a lot of words, with the knowledge of books, but they are still empty. And can a petty, shallow mind break up its pettiness, its shallowness? Can it make itself vast and deep? Now, when you ask this question, with what intention do you ask it? Is it in order to arrive at a result, to find a method? Or do you ask it merely as the gardener plants a seed, waters it, and lets it grow? I do not know if I am making this issue clear. To me, the explanation of why the mind is petty, is of no importance; what is important is for the mind to find out why it is putting this question.

Realizing that it is empty, what does the mind do? It proceeds to acquire more knowledge, it makes effort to fill, to enrich itself. Because it feels shallow, the mind wants to be deep, and then the problem arises of *how* to be deep; so it practises a method which promises what it wants, and thereby it gets caught in the method. To me, this is a totally wrong process, it is most destructive, because it leads to further shallowness, emptiness. The mind that is caught in a method, is still petty, because it is only concerned with its own enrichment, it has not understood itself. Whereas, if the mind realizes that it is shallow, and asks of itself why it is

shallow without seeking an explanation, an answer, then quite a different process takes place. As I said, it is like a gardener planting a seed and watering it. If the water and the soil are good, and if the seed has vitality, it puts out a shoot. Similarly, if the mind asks itself why it is shallow, and does not seek an answer or try to find ways and means of enriching itself, then that very question brings about its own explosion. Then you will find that there comes a totally different state in which the mind is no longer struggling to achieve, to accumulate; and such a mind knows no deterioration.

At present our minds are all deteriorating, and what matters, surely, is to put an end to that deterioration. This cannot be done by merely searching out the cause of deterioration and explaining it. But if one is aware of this inner deterioration, and, without seeking an answer, one asks oneself why it exists, then that very questioning is an act of listening. To listen, there must be humility, and humility cleanses the mind of the past; the mind is fresh, innocent, and is therefore capable of perceiving the totality, the whole. It is only such a mind that can bring about order and create a new society with values entirely different from those that exist now.

Question: What do you say regarding Tapas, and the Sandhana mentioned in Hindu books for bringing about the cessation of thought?

KRISHNAMURTI: I think it is a great mistake to interpret what the books tell you. Please follow this, I am not saying anything irrational. The books tell you to do this or that, and the books may be wrong; and it is also possible that thought can never cease. But what you can do is to find out directly for yourself, without depending on a single person or book, whether or not thought can come to an end. That is much more vital, much more significant, than

practising some method that promises the cessation of thought.

Now, why do you want thought to cease? Is it because thought is very disturbing, contradictory, transient? And how do you know thought can cease? Do you know because the books have said so? Or is your mind inquiring into the whole process of thinking? Do you follow, sirs? Our problem is to understand the process of thinking, and not how to end thought. You can end thought by taking a drug, or by learning a few tricks which you call meditation; but the mind will still be dull, shallow. Whereas, if you begin to inquire into what is thinking, then you will find out whether or not thought can come to an end.

Let us be very clear about this. A method, however noble, however promising, can only stifle thinking, or hold it in a static state; but that is not the cessation of thought. You have only smothered, put a lid on thinking. Whereas, if you begin to inquire into the whole process of thinking, then you will find out what that process is.

Thinking, surely, is the response of memory to challenge—memory being the continuity of the past. Behind thinking there are certain pressures, compulsions, which make thought crooked. When there is pressure of any kind behind thinking—pressure being motive, compulsion, urge—, thought must invariably be crooked. But if the mind can free itself from all pressures, from all motives, then you will find that the mind becomes extraordinarily quiet, and that in this quietness there is the cessation of what you call thinking. If you merely wish for the cessation of thinking because you hope it will solve all your problems, or because the books promise a reward, you may succeed in making your mind very still; but it is still a petty mind. So, what we are concerned with is not how to put an end to thought, but with putting an end to pettiness, to shallowness; and for the mind to cease to be

petty, it must be free from all authority, from all following, so that it is capable of thinking anew.

Sirs, to put the problem differently, a collective belief is very destructive. Many of you call yourselves Hindus, which means that you are still bound by the collective dogmas, traditions, and influences that have made you what you are. Where there is a collective belief, there is deterioration, a destructive process is going on, and that is exactly what is happening throughout the world at the present time. We are all communists or socialists, Hindus or Christians, this or that, which is the collectivity of belief, so there is no individuality at all; and that is why it is very important to see the evil of collective belief. In the very perception of that evil, the individual emerges. It is only the mind that is neither communist nor capitalist, neither Christian nor Hindu, the mind that has no compulsion, no pressure or motive behind it—it is only such a mind that can be without thought. With the ceasing of thought there comes a quietness like that of living waters, and in that quietness there is a vast movement which cannot be comprehended by the mind that is urged through pressure, through motive. Any practice by a mind which is petty will only make the mind still more petty, because it does not understand itself, it is not aware of its own pettiness; it may learn new tricks, new ways or methods, but it will still be petty. All that a petty mind can do is to be aware that it is petty, and not do a *thing* about it. When the mind is aware that it is petty, it has done everything that it can do.

Question: You say that the past must totally cease for the unknown to be. I have tried everything to be free from my past, but memories still exist and engulf me. Does this mean that the past has an existence independent of me? If not, please show me how I can be free of it.

KRISHNAMURTI: First of all, is the past different from the 'me'? Is the thinker, the observer, the experiencer, different from the past? The past is memory, all one's experiences, one's ambitions, the racial residue, the inherited tradition, the cultural values, the social influences—all that is the past, all that is memory. Whether we are conscious or unconscious of it, it is there. Now, is the totality of all that different from the 'me' who says, "I want to be free from the past"?

Please follow this patiently with me. There is this continuance of memory, which is extensive and has great depth, and which is responding all the time to challenge. Now, is this memory different from the 'me', or *is* it the 'me'? Do you understand? If there were no name, no association with the family, with the past, with the race, and all the rest of it, then would there be a 'me'? Would there be a 'me', a thinker, if there were no thinking? Or do you say that above the 'me' there is the *Atman*, an independent entity who is watching all the time? If there is an independent entity, surely the mind which is dependent is incapable of knowing it. Do you follow? The mind which is both dependent on and a result of the past, has said there is the *Atman*, the watcher from above, who is free, independent; but it is still the dependent mind that has said it; therefore what it calls the *Atman* is part of the mind, it is within the field of memory, of tradition. That is fairly obvious, is it not? You are educated through tradition, through repetition, through reading, and all the rest of it, to believe that there is something independent of this 'me', something beyond this field of memory; but a man educated in Russia will say there is no such thing, it is all nonsense, there is only this 'me'. So we are all the result of our education, we are conditioned by our past, by the culture in which we live, by the religious, political and social influences in which we have been brought up; and to assume, to

postulate, to suppose, that there is something superior to this 'me', though there may be, is a most infantile and immature way of thinking which has led to a great deal of confusion and misery.

So, there is no 'me' separate from the past. The 'me' is the past, it is the quality, the virtue, the experience, the name, the family association, the various tendencies, both conscious and unconscious, the racial inheritance—all that is the 'me', and the mind is not separate from it. The soul, the *Atman*, is part of the mind, because the mind has invented these words.

The problem is, then, how can the mind, which is a result of the past, free itself from its own shadow? Do you understand? How can the mind, which is the totality of memory, free itself from the past? Is that a right question, sirs? I think it is a wrong question. All that the mind can do is to be aware of the past, how every reaction, every response derives from the past—just be totally aware of it without the desire to alter it, without choosing what is good and rejecting what is bad out of the past. If the mind struggles to end, to forget, or to alter the past, it separates itself from the past and so creates a duality in which there is conflict; and that very conflict is the deterioration of the mind. Whereas, if the mind sees the totality of this memory, and is simply aware of it, then you will find that something strange happens. Without effort, the past has come to an end.

Try it, not because I say so, but because you see it for yourself. A mind which is the result of the past cannot free itself from the past through its own effort. All that it can do is to be aware of its reactions, aware of how it accumulates resentment, and then forgives; of how it acquires, and then renounces; of how it chooses, and then gets confused in choice. A mind that chooses is a confused mind. Be aware of all this, and you will find that the mind becomes astonishingly quiet. Then there

is no choice, because the mind sees the falseness of doing something to free itself from the past. Out of that perception there comes, not a freedom from the past, but a sense of freedom which can deal with the past.

Question: The strongest underlying commandment in all religions is: Love your fellowman. Why is this simple truth so difficult to carry out?

KRISHNAMURTI: Why is it that we are incapable of loving? What does it mean to love your fellow-man? Is it a commandment? Or is it a simple fact that, if I do not love you, and you do not love me, there can only be hate, violence, and destruction? What prevents us from seeing the very simple fact that this world is ours, that this earth is yours and mine to live upon, undivided by nationalities, by frontiers, to live upon happily, productively, with delight, with affection and compassion? Why is it that we do not see this? I can give you lots of explanations, and you can give me lots more, but mere explanations will never eradicate the fact that we do not love our neighbour. On the contrary, it is because we are forever giving explanations, causes, that we do not face the fact. You give one cause, I give another, and we fight over causes and explanations. We are divided as Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, this or that. We say we do not love because of social conditions, or because it is our karma, or because somebody has a great deal of money while we have very little. We offer innumerable explanations, lots of words, and in the net of words we get caught. The fact is that we do not love our neighbour, and we are afraid to face that fact, so we indulge in explanations, in words, in the description of the causes; we quote the *Gita*, the *Bible*, the *Koran*—anything to avoid facing the simple fact.

Do you understand, ladies and gentlemen? What happens when you face the

fact and know for yourself that you do not love your neighbour? Your son is your neighbour, so you do not have to go very far. You do not love your son, and that is a fact. If you loved your son, you would educate him entirely differently; you would educate him, not to fit into this rotten society, but to be self-sufficient, to be intelligent, to be aware of all the influences around him in which he is caught, smothered, and which never allow him to be free. If you loved your son, who is also your neighbour, there would be no wars between Pakistan and India, or between Germany and Russia, because you would want to protect *him* and not your property, your petty little belief, your bank-account, your ugly country, or your narrow ideology. So you do not love, and that is a fact.

The *Bible* may tell you to love your neighbour, and the *Gita* or the *Koran* may tell you the same thing, but the fact is that you do not love. Now, when you face that fact, what happens? Do you understand? What happens when you are aware that you are not loving, and being aware of that fact, do not offer explanations or give causes as to why you do not love? It is very clear. You are left with the naked fact that you do not love, that you feel no compassion, that you have not a single thought of another. The contemptuous way you talk to your servants, the respect you show to your boss, the deep, reverential salute with which you greet your *guru*, your pursuit of power, your identification with a country, your seeking after the great ones—all this indicates that you do not love. If you start from there, then you can do something. Sirs, if you are blind and really know it, if you do not imagine you can see, what happens? You move slowly, you touch, you feel; a new sensitivity comes into being.

Similarly, when I know that I have no love, and do not pretend to love; when I am aware of the fact that I have no compassion, and do not pursue the

ideal, which is all nonsense—then, with the facing of that fact, there comes a different quality; and it is this quality that saves the world, not some organized religion, or an ideology invented by the clever. It is when the heart is empty that the things of the mind fill it; and the things of the mind are the explanations of that emptiness, the words that describe its causes.

So, if you really want to stop wars, if you really want to put an end to this conflict within society, you must face the fact that you do not love. You may go to a temple and offer flowers to some stone image, but that will not give the heart this extraordinary quality of compassion, love, which comes only when the mind is quiet, and not greedy, envious. When you are aware of the fact that you have no love, and do not run away from it by trying to explain it, or find its cause, then that very awareness begins to do something; it brings gentleness, a sense of compassion. Then there is a possibility of creating a world totally different from this chaotic and brutal existence which we now call life.

March 18, 1956

VI

TALK IN BOMBAY

It seems to me that one of the most difficult things in our life is to understand the whole implication of living, and what it is all about. With its pleasure and sorrow, its varieties of experience, its strife and strain, this enormous process that we call living becomes extremely complex, and perhaps very few of us understand it completely. In this vast process, there are many problems, some impersonal, outside of us, and others that are intimately related to the individual, which we almost never consider. Why do we

perform any action, and what is its significance, what are its implications? Is there such a thing as the absolute, the immeasurable, and is there any relation between that immensity and our everyday living? We keep all these things in watertight compartments, and then try to find a relationship between them. Unfortunately, we are educated, not to understand the whole significance of life, but only to have a job, to perform some immediate action, to earn a livelihood; and so the mind is incapable of thinking deeply on any issue.

Now, I do not think that the problem of immediate action, the problem of what to do, whether in this or in any other country, can be divorced from the inquiry into whether there is such a thing as the absolute, the immeasurable, something beyond the field of the mind; because, without this inquiry, I feel that mere action, however satisfactory and necessary, will only lead to further misery. If we would understand each other, I think this point must be made very clear. Our fundamental problem is not what to do, but rather how to awaken the creativity of the individual; that is, how not to get so involved in the immediate action, that the immense significance of this creative release is denied or put aside.

After all, why is it that we are listening? Surely, not to be told what to do, but rather, if we are at all serious and thoughtful, to find out together—not as pupil and teacher, but *together*—how the mind gets caught in all the various influences to which it is subjected, and so becomes incapable of deep inquiry. Without deep inquiry, without search, one may bring about immediate results which produce temporary alleviation; but this may be the cause of further misery, further strife.

So I think it is very important for each one of us to find out for himself what it is that he ultimately wants, and whether there is such a thing as the immeasurable, in the understanding of which his present activity will have

quite a different significance. To me, most definitely, the immediate activity has significance only in the understanding of that immensity, call it God, truth, reality, or what you will; and to be concerned with immediate change or reformation, divorced from the other, has no meaning at all.

For most of us, life is chiefly a process of earning a livelihood, with its constant economic and social pressures, and the complex demands of individual relationships. We are caught in this process, and we are trying to do something within its field—trying to be noble, non-violent, and all the rest of it. We seem to be incapable of inquiring into this whole issue, of searching out its significance at a deeper level. So, why is one not capable of deep inquiry? I think that is a legitimate question for all of us to ask ourselves. Why is it that we are apparently incapable of penetrating into the deeper issues of life? Why is it that we do not even ask fundamental questions? Is it that we are blocked by so-called education, by society, by our relationships, by our own miseries and conflicts? What actually blocks or hinders this inquiry? And are we blocked, or are we just incapable of real inquiry?

We are trying to find out if there can be a creative release of the individual, so that the mind is capable of constant inquiry, of penetrating to extraordinary depths, not theoretically, abstractly, but actually. Is this capacity to probe, to penetrate deeply, blocked by our own thinking? Or does it not exist in us at all?

We know when we are blocked, we know what that word signifies. When I want to do something, I am consciously blocked, prevented, hindered by society, by some relationship, or by a particular act; or there is an unconscious hindrance. This conscious or unconscious blockage may be the factor which is preventing the mind from penetrating to great depths. Is there a blockage because our education is so superficial that we

cannot inquire profoundly? Is it because our so-called intellectual training is so limited or specialized that our minds cannot penetrate deeply, or ask really fundamental questions?

Our education at present is merely the cultivation of memory, it is the repetition of phrases, words, the learning of techniques; it is as superficial as lighting a lamp. With a mind so educated, we try to inquire; and we feel blocked, incapable of asking a really serious question and going into it alone. Now, is there a blockage, or is it that we have not the capacity to inquire? I think there is a difference between the two. It may be that I block my own inquiry through various fears, frustrations, and all the rest of it; or I may simply not have the capacity to inquire persistently, to dig very deeply and discover something extraordinarily significant which will give light to my daily activities.

What do we mean by the capacity to inquire? Can a mind which has been trained, educated to think only superficially, penetrate to great depths? Obviously not. After all, the man who has read the *Gita*, the *Koran*, or what you will, and knows all the ready-made answers; the man who has compared the various teachers, and learnt a cunning way of approaching every problem, has acquired knowledge which is very superficial. He repeats what others have written, and this repetition, which is traditional, makes the mind very shallow. If one talks with a man who is erudite, who has read all the *Shastras*, who is familiar with the teachings of Buddha and Shankara, who has great knowledge as well as the power of expression, and who has therefore become a leading authority—if one talks with such a man, one sees that his mind is very shallow. Such a man has never put a fundamental question to himself, and found the truth of it on his own; he is always quoting some authority. We also are trained to be like that, therefore the mind is very shallow, limited, petty; and with such a

mind we try to inquire. But I say a shallow mind cannot penetrate very deeply, or ask questions that have profound significance. So what is one to do? I think this is your problem, if you really think about it.

Let us put it differently. We see great confusion around us, not only among the experts, the authorities, but also among ourselves, and in our own thinking. There are many political, sociological, and so-called religious organizations, and most of us join one or other of these, throwing ourselves into its work because we think it has the final answer. So we come to depend on organizations, or on leaders who give us an assurance; they know, therefore we follow, we imitate, we belong to these various groups. All this indicates does it not?, a mind that is not solitary, alone, a mind that is incapable of thinking out a problem completely for itself, because it is dependent. The moment the mind becomes dependent, it is made incapable of inquiry; like a child who is dependent on its mother, such a mind is not free to inquire.

So, through dependence on organizations and authority, through so-called education, culture, through our own constant ambition, our desire for power, position and prestige, the mind is made incapable of deep penetration. If you actually observe your own mind—I am repeating this most respectfully—you will see how incapable it is of real penetration into what may be called truth, or God. Probably your mind has never asked what life is all about; and when it does ask, it has an answer according to Buddha, Christ, Shankara, the *Upanishads*, or what you will, so it is satisfied. Only the mind that is alone, that is really free, can penetrate to great depths without seeking some stupid result. But our minds are not like that; and until they are, our life has very little meaning, it can only produce more war, more despair, more chaos—which is being shown in the world at the present time.

So, is it possible for you and me, who have no capacity for it, to penetrate deeply? And without that capacity, has it any significance for us to inquire into that which may be the final answer to all our problems? Surely, you must have asked yourself this question. If not, I am asking it now. After all, if you have no capacity to inquire, what is the good of following somebody? By that very following you are made more dependent, and therefore less capable of inquiry. To be capable of inquiring profoundly, you need a mind which is completely alone—alone in the sense that it is not being pushed in any direction, not being driven by the anxiety of immediate action, immediate reformation, immediate demand. So what is one to do?

You see, the difficulty with most of us is that we want tangible evidence that we have arrived; we want to be assured of a result, we want to be told that we have changed, that we are good, or that we are effective social entities. To me, all these things are unimportant, because I see that the capacity to inquire, to discover what is truth, cannot be cultivated. All that the mind can do is to be aware that it is incapable of inquiry, and not keep on imitating, copying. Sirs, it is like leaving the window open; then the fresh air comes in as it will, if there is fresh air. Similarly, all that one can do is to leave the window of the mind open—not ask *how* to leave it open, but actually leave it open. I hope you see the difference between the two. To ask, “How am I to leave the window of the mind open, so that reality can come into being?”, only makes you incapable of leaving it open. When you want to know the ‘*how*’, the method, you are a follower of the method, and to the method you become a slave. Any method can only produce its own result, which is not the opening of the mind; the moment you really understand this, the mind is open. Then you will see that your inquiry no longer has a particular

object; and because the mind is open, free of any system, it is capable of receiving something immeasurable. That immeasurable thing is not to be talked about, it has no meaning if it is merely read about and repeated. It must be experienced; and that very experience brings about an action in the world, without which this existence has no significance at all, except that it produces more misery.

After all, what is it we all want? Life, with its constant change, its strife, its varieties of experience, is very fleeting; and the mind says, “Is this all?” When it asks that question, it generally turns to a book, or to a person, and thereby gets caught in authority, because the mind is very easily satisfied with words. But when the mind is not satisfied with words, with explanations, but proceeds to delve, to inquire freely, easily, without any pressure, then there comes into being that extraordinary something—the name does not matter—which will solve all the complexities of our life.

Sirs, what is a problem? Does not the problem exist only when the mind has given soil for it to take root? If there is no soil for the problem to take root, then you can deal with the problem. The mind at present has so many rooted problems that it is nothing but a seed-bed of problems. So the question is, not how to solve any particular problem, but whether it is possible for the mind not to give soil to problems. The moment the mind gives soil to a problem, the problem takes root and spreads. Now, listen to this and understand it. Do not ask how not to give soil to problems, but see that a problem exists only when there is soil in the mind for the problem to take root. Just to see and to understand that fact is sufficient to dissolve the problem.

Question: From what you said last Sunday, I gather that you think we do not love our children. Do you not know, sir,

that the love of our children is one of the greatest and most deep-rooted of human affections? Surely you realize how helpless we are individually to do anything about war and peace.

KRISHNAMURTI: If we loved our children, there would be no wars, for our education would be entirely different, and we would create a totally different kind of society; but since there are wars and our society is in perpetual conflict within itself, with each man against another, it indicates that we do not love our children. That is what I said last Sunday, and I think it is a fact. You say that your love for your children is deep-rooted and great; but the fact is that you are at each other's throats. There is ambition, and when man is ambitious, there is no love in his heart; when he encourages his son to climb the ladder of success and reach the top, obviously he is encouraging him to be ruthless. Surely, all this indicates that there is no love, does it not?

After all, as a parent, you are also a teacher, because your child lives with you; you train him, he follows you, he builds himself in your image. There is the teacher at school, but you are the teacher at home, and you train the child in the 'do's' and 'don'ts', compelling him to imitate, to copy, to follow in your footsteps and become somebody in society. All you are concerned with is the child's security, which is your own; you want him to be respectable, to earn a livelihood, to adjust himself to the demands of the existing social order. You call that love; and is it love? What does it mean to love a child? Surely, it does not mean encouraging him to become your little image, shaped by society, by so-called culture; it means, rather, helping him to grow freely. He has acquired certain tendencies, inherited certain values from you, and so he cannot be free at the beginning; but to love him is to help him from the beginning to free himself

constantly, so that he becomes a real individual, not merely an imitative machine.

If you love your child you will educate him not to conform to society, but to create his own society, which may be entirely different from the present one; you will help him to have, not a traditional mind, but a mind that is capable of inquiring into the significance of all the cultural, social, religious, and national influences by which he is surrounded, and not be caught in any of them, so that his mind is free to find out what is true. Surely, that is right education. Then the child will grow into a free human being, self-sufficient and capable of creating his own world, a totally different kind of society; having confidence, the capacity to work out his own destiny, he will not want your property, your money, your position, your name. But now it is the reverse; you expect your son to carry on your property, your wealth, your name, and that is what you call love.

What can the individual do about all this? Surely, it is only the individual who can alter the world, the individual who feels very strongly that a new kind of education, a new way of living must be brought about. It begins with the individual, with those of you who really feel the importance of these things. You may not prevent an immediate war, but you can prevent future wars if you see for yourself, and help your children to see, the stupidity of wars, of class-divisions, of social conflict. But unfortunately, most of us are not aware of the implications of all this, which means that the coming generation is an imitation of ourselves in a modified form, and so there is no new world. It is only when we love our children in the true sense of the word that we shall bring about the right kind of education and thereby put an end to war.

Question: What is beauty?

KRISHNAMURTI: In exploring this question are we looking for an explanation, the dictionary meaning of that word? Or are we trying to feel out the full significance of beauty? If we are merely looking for a definition then we shall not be sensitive to that which we call beauty. Surely, the mind must be very simple to appreciate what is beautiful. Please follow this a little bit. I am thinking aloud, exploring as I go along. The mind must be sensitive, not only to that which it thinks is beautiful but also to that which is ugly; it must be sensitive to the dirty villages, to hovels as well as to palaces and beautiful trees. If the mind is sensitive only to what is beautiful then it is not sensitive at all. To be sensitive it must be open to both the ugly and the beautiful. That is obviously so. To pursue beauty, and deny that which is not beautiful makes the mind insensitive. To feel that which is ugly (which may not be ugly), and that which is beautiful (which may not be beautiful), there must be sensitivity—sensitivity to poverty, to the dirty man sitting in the bus, to the beggar, to the sky, to the stars, to the shy, young moon.

Now, how is this sensitivity to come into being? It can come into being only when there is abandonment—not calculated abandonment, but the abandonment that comes when there is no self-fulfilment. You see there can be no abandonment without austerity. But it is not the disciplined austerity of the ascetic, because the ascetic is seeking power, and therefore he is incapable of abandonment. There can be abandonment only when there is love; and love can come into being only when the 'me' is not dominant. So the mind must be very simple, innocent—not made innocent. Innocency is not a state to be brought about through discipline, through control, through any form of compulsion or suppression. The mind is fresh, innocent, only when it is not cluttered up with the memories

of many centuries; and this implies, surely, an extraordinary sensitivity, not merely to one part of life which is called beauty, but also to tears, to suffering, to laughter, to the hovels of the poor, and to the open skies—that is, to the totality of life.

Question: You are helping us to understand the workings of our own minds, and to see how unintelligently we are living; but in an industrial society, is it possible to practise what you say?

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, what I say cannot be practised, because there is nothing to practise. The moment you practise something, your mind is caught in that practice, therefore it is made dull, stupid. Practice creates habit, and whether good or bad, it is still habit; and a mind that is merely the instrument of habit, is not sensitive, it is incapable of penetration, inquiry, deep search. Yet your whole tradition and education is to practise, practise, practise, which means that you are concerned, not with helping the mind to be sensitive, profound, supple, but with learning a few tricks so that you will not be disturbed. If anyone offers a method which will enable you not to be disturbed, that method you practise, and in practising it you are putting the mind to sleep. Surely, the mind that is alert, watchful, inquiring, does not need any practice.

And what is it that we are talking about? We are saying that unless you understand yourself, any society, industrial or otherwise, is going to destroy you—and you *are* being destroyed, crushed, made uncreative. Unless you understand the whole content of your being, the motives, the urges, the ways of your thought, unless you know the total substance and depth of your mind, you will gradually become just another machine—which is what is actually happening. Slowly, inescapably, you

VII

TALK IN BOMBAY

are being made into machines—machines which are creating problems.

So, what matters is to understand yourself, the ways of your own mind—but not through introspection or analysis, whether by an analyst or by yourself, nor through reading books about the mind. The ways of the mind are to be understood in our relationships from day to day, which means seeing what we actually are without distortion, as we see our faces in the mirror. But we destroy the understanding of what we are the moment we compare or condemn, reject or accept. It is by just seeing what is that the mind makes itself free; and only in freedom is there the coming into being of that which may be called God, truth, or what you will.

Sirs, as one begins to understand oneself, that very beginning is the moment of freedom; and that is why it is very important not to have a *guru*, or make any book into an authority—because it is *you* who create authority, power, position. What is important is to understand yourself. You may say, “Well, that has been said before, many teachers have said it”; but the fact is that we do not know ourselves. When you begin to discover the truth about yourself, there is something totally new, and this quality of newness can come into being only through self-discovery from moment to moment. There is no continuity in discovery; all that you have discovered must be lost in order to find the new again. If the mind really does this, then you will see that there comes an extraordinary quality—the quality of a mind that is completely alone, uninfluenced, a mind that has no motive; and it is only such a mind that can receive something which has never been known before. There must be freedom from the known for the unknown to be; and this whole process is meditation. It is only the meditative mind that can discover something beyond itself.

March 21, 1956

It seems to me that, all over the world, there is very little respect for the individual; and without this respect, the individual is totally crushed—which is what is happening in modern society. A different social environment must obviously be brought about, but I do not think we realize how important it is for the individual to be free; that is, we do not see the significance of individual inquiry, search, and release. It is only the individual who can ultimately find reality, it is only the individual who can be a creative force in this disintegrating society; and I do not think we fully comprehend how urgent it is that we as individuals should discover for ourselves a way of life dissociated from the cultural, social, and religious influences which surround us. If we did perceive the importance of the individual, we should never have leaders and be followers. We follow only when we have lost our individuality. There are leaders only when we as individuals are confused, and are therefore incapable of clearly thinking out our own problems, and acting upon them. At present we are not individuals, we are merely the residue of collective influences, of cultural impressions, and social restrictions. If you observe very closely and carefully the operation of your own mind, you will see that your thinking is according to tradition, according to books, according to leaders or *gurus*, which means that the individual has completely ceased; and surely it is only the individual who can create anything new.

Now why is it that we have lost respect for the individual? We talk a great deal about the importance of the individual; all the politicians talk about it, including those in the collective, tyrannical society, just as the various religious leaders talk about the importance of the soul. But how does it

happen that, in actual practice, the individual is ground down, totally lost? I do not know if this is a problem to any of you; but if we can pay sufficient attention this evening, perhaps we shall be able to emerge from the mass of collective influences—actually emerge from it, and discover for ourselves what it is to be real individuals, totally integrated human beings.

I think one of the fundamental reasons for our having ceased to be individuals is the fact that we are pursuing power; we all want to be somebody, even in the house, in the flat, in the room. Just as nations create the tension of power, so each separate human being is everlastingly seeking to be something in relation to society; he wants to be recognized as a big man, as a capable bureaucrat, as a gifted artist, as a spiritual person, and so on. We all want to be something, and the desire to be something springs from the urge to power. If you examine yourself, you will see that what you want is success and the recognition of your success, not only in this world, but in the next world—if there is a next world. You want to be recognized, and for that recognition, you are dependent on society. Society recognizes only those who have power, position, prestige; and it is the vanity, the arrogance, of power, position, prestige, that most of us are seeking. Our deep underlying motive is the pride of achievement, and this pride asserts itself in different ways.

Now, as long as we are seeking power in any direction, real individuality is crushed out—not only our own individuality, but that of others. I think this is a basic psychological fact in life. When we seek to be somebody, it means that we desire to be recognized by society; therefore we become slaves to society, mere cogs in the social machine, and hence we cease to be individuals. I think this is a fundamental issue, not to be quickly brushed aside. As long as the mind is seeking any form of power—power through a sect, power

through knowledge, power through wealth, power through virtue—it must invariably breed a society which will destroy the individual, because then the human mind is caught and educated in an environment which encourages the psychological dependence on success. Psychological dependence destroys the clear mind which is alone, uncorrupted, and which is the only mind capable of thinking problems right through individually, independent of society and of its own desires.

So, the mind is everlastingly seeking to be something, and thereby increasing its own sense of power, position, prestige. From the urge to be something springs leadership, following, the worship of success; and hence there is no deep individual perception of inward reality. If one actually sees this whole process, then is it possible to cut at the root of one's search for power? Do you understand the meaning of that word 'power'? The desire to dominate, to possess, to exploit, to depend on another—all that is implied in this search for power. We can find other and more subtle explanations, but the fact is that the human mind is seeking power; and in the search for power it loses its individuality.

Now, how is this demand for power, which breeds arrogance, pride, vanity, to be put away? The mind is constantly seeking flattery, its emphasis is on itself, all its activities are self-centered; and how is the mind to cut at the root of this thing? I do not know if you have thought about this problem of how to be totally rid of the drive to power, but I think it would be worthwhile if we could go into it this evening.

There is the desire to be somebody in this world, or to be somebody spiritually. Now, is it at all possible to get at and uproot this thing, so that we never follow a leader, have no sense of self-importance, and do not want to be somebody in the political or any other world? Can we be nobody, even though the whole stream of existence is moving the

other way, urging us from childhood to be somebody? All our education is comparative; we are always comparing ourselves with somebody, which is again the search for power and position. And can this competitive spirit be got rid of, not little by little, not gradually through time, but completely and instantaneously, like cutting at the root of a tree and destroying it? Can this be done, or must we have time to bridge the gap between what *is* and what *should* be?

I think we all realize the significance of this desire to be something, which produces imitation and destroys real individuality, clear perception; so I need not go into further details this evening. Now, can this desire be destroyed, wiped away instantaneously, or does it need time, which we call evolution? As we are at present educated, we say that it is a matter of time, of gradually approaching the ideal state in which there is no desire for power, and in which the mind is totally integrated. That is, we are *here*, and we must reach *there*, which is somewhere in the far distance; so there is a gap, an interval between the two, and hence we must struggle, we must move away from *here* to arrive *there*, which demands time. To me, this idea that the root of the desire to be something can be destroyed through time, is utterly false. It must be wiped away immediately, or it can never be; and if you will give this your full attention, you will see it for yourself. Please listen, not merely to what I am saying, but to what is actually happening in your own mind as I am talking—to the reaction, the psychological process, awakened in you by my words, my description.

It is obvious that each one of us wants to be something; and we see that the desire to be something does breed antagonism, arrogance, crime. We also see that it brings about a social structure which encourages that very desire, and in which the individual ceases to exist, because the mind gets caught up in the

organization of power. Seeing this whole process, can the desire to be something utterly disappear? Surely, it is only when the mind is capable of complete and direct thinking, uninfluenced by any self-centered activity, that it can find out what is real; and being caught in this extraordinarily complex desire to be something, is it possible for the mind totally to free itself? If the problem and its implications are clear, we can proceed. But if you say, "It will take time to get rid of the desire to be something", then you are already looking at the problem with a prejudice, with a so-called educated mind. Your education, or the *Gita*, or your *guru*, has told you it will take time; so when you approach the problem, you already have a preconceived opinion about it.

Now, is it possible for the mind instantaneously to wipe away this desire to be something, and hence never again create a leader by becoming a follower? It is the follower who creates the leader, there is no leader otherwise; and the moment you become a follower you are an imitative entity, therefore you lose creative individuality. So, can the mind wipe away totally this sense of following, this sense of time, this wanting to be something? You can wipe it away only when you give it your whole attention. Please see this. When you give your undivided attention to it and are completely observant, fully aware of the fact that the mind is seeking power, position, that it wants to be something—only then can you be free. I shall explain what I mean by complete attention.

Attention is not to be forced, put together; the mind is not to be driven to pay attention to something. Please look at this, if you kindly will. The moment you have a motive for attention, there is no attention, because the motive is more important than paying attention. For the total cessation of the desire to be something, complete attention must be given to that desire. But you cannot give complete attention to

it if there is any motivation, any intention to wipe away that desire in order to get something else; and our minds are trained, not to pay attention, but to derive from attention a result. You pay attention only when you get something out of it; but here such attention is an obstruction, and I think it is very important to understand this right from the beginning. Any form of attention which has an objective, becomes inattention, it breeds indolence; and indolence is one of the factors which prevent the immediate wiping away of the desire we are talking about. The mind can wipe away a particular desire only when it gives it complete attention; and it cannot give it complete attention as long as it is seeking a result. That is one factor of inattention; and any form of explanation, verbalization, is another. That is, there can be no attention as long as the mind has explanations of why it is seeking power, position, prestige. When you are trying to explain the cause of all that, there is inattention; therefore through explanation you will never find freedom.

There is no attention as long as you are comparing what has been said about this problem by various authorities, by Shankara, Buddha, Christ, or X, Y, Z. When your mind is full of other people's knowledge, other people's experience, when it is following guides, sanctions, there can be no attention. Neither is there attention if you judge or condemn—which is fairly obvious. If you condemn a thing, you cannot understand it. And there can be no attention when there is an ideal, because the ideal creates duality. Please see this. The ideal creates duality, and in that duality we are caught, especially in this unfortunate country, where we all have ideals. Everybody talks about the ideal of the *guru*, the ideal of non-violence, the ideal of loving your neighbour, the ideal of one life—and all the time you are denying that very thing in your living. So why not scrap the ideal? The moment you have an ideal, you

have duality, and in the conflict of that duality the mind is caught. The fact is that there is this desire for power, this pride in being something, and it can only be wiped away instantaneously, not through the process of time; that is, only when the mind is aware of it without being distracted by the ideal. The ideal is a distraction, breeding inattention.

I hope you are giving your complete attention to the problem now, not because I am telling you to, but because you see for yourself the full significance of this desire to be something. If the mind is giving complete attention to the problem, it is not creating the opposite; therefore there is humility. The fact is that your mind is seeking power, position, mundanely or spiritually, and is thereby causing all this mess, the chaos, confusion, and misery in the world. When the mind really sees that fact, which is to give complete attention to it, then you will find that pride and arrogance totally cease; and this cessation is an entirely different state from that brought about by the desire to be humble. Humility is not to be cultivated; and if it is cultivated, it is no longer humility, it is merely another form of arrogance. But if you can look at the problem very clearly and directly, which is to give it your undivided attention, you will discover that to wipe away this desire to be something, with its arrogance, vanity and disrespect, is not a matter of time, for then it is wiped away immediately. Then you are a different human being, who will perhaps create a different society.

Question: It seems to me that the most notable thing about India is the all-pervading sense of timelessness, of peace and religious intensity. Do you think this atmosphere can be maintained in the modern industrial age?

KRISHNAMURTI: Who do you think has created this sense of timeless peace

and religious intensity? You and I? Or was it set going by some ancient people who lived quietly, anonymously, who felt these things intensely and perhaps expressed them in poems, in religious books? Because they felt intensely this religious spirit, it has remained; but it is not in our life, it is outside somewhere, and it has become our tradition. We are inclined to be so-called idealistic, which is a most unfortunate thing; and somewhat surreptitiously we have maintained this sense of timelessness—or rather, we have not maintained it, but it has gone on in spite of us. We are now caught in this modern industrial society. It is right that we should have machines to produce what is necessary in a country which is poverty-stricken; but because we have had nothing for so long, now that we can have things, if we are not very alert, individually clear-sighted and aware of the whole problem, we shall probably become more materialistic than America and the other Western nations—while America and Europe may perhaps become more spiritual, more timeless, more gentle, more compassionate. That may happen.

So, what is the problem? Is it how to maintain the sense of timelessness, the sense of peace and religious intensity, in spite of this modern industrial society? This industrial society has to exist, and production must be stepped up still more; but unfortunately, in bringing about greater production, in mechanizing farms and industries, the danger is that the mind will also become mechanized. We think science is going to solve all our difficulties. It is not. The solution of our difficulties depends, not on machines and the inventions of a few great scientists, but on how we regard life. After all, though we may talk about religion, we are not religious people; because the religious person is free of dogma, of belief, of ritual, of superstitions, he is not bound by class or caste, which means that he is free of society. The man who belongs to

society is ambitious, he is seeking power, position, he is proud, greedy, envious; and such a man is not religious, though he may quote *Shastras* by the dozen. It is the religious person who will create this sense of timelessness, this sense of peace, even though living in an industrial society, because he is inwardly intense in his discovery from moment to moment of that which is eternal. But this requires astonishing vigour, mental clarity; and you cannot be mentally clear if your mind is cluttered up with knowledge gathered from the *Shastras*, the *Gita*, the *Koran*, the *Bible*, the Buddhist scriptures, and all the rest of it. Knowledge is the past, it is all that the mind has known, and as long as the mind is burdened with knowledge, it is incapable of discovering what is real. Only the religious mind can be timelessly creative, and its action is peace, for it reflects the intensity and the fullness of life.

Question: Is there anything new in your teaching?

KRISHNAMURTI: To find out for yourself is much more important than my asserting 'yes' or 'no'. It is your problem, not my problem. To me, all this is totally new, because it has to be discovered from moment to moment; it cannot be stored up after discovery, it is not something to be experienced, and then retained as memory—which would be putting new wine in old bottles. It must be discovered as one lives from day to day, and it is new to the person who so discovers it. But you are always comparing what is being said with what has been said by some saint, or by Shankara, Buddha, or Christ. You say, "All these people have said this before, and you are only giving it another twist, a modern expression"—so naturally it is nothing new to you. It is only when you have ceased to compare, when you have put away Shankara, Buddha, Christ, with all their knowledge,

information, so that your mind is alone, clear, no longer influenced, controlled, compelled, either by modern psychology, or by the ancient sanctions and edicts—it is only then that you will find out whether or not there is something new, everlasting. But that requires vigour, not indolence; it demands a drastic cutting away of all the things that one has read or been told about truth and God. That which is eternal, new, is a living thing, therefore it cannot be made permanent; and a mind that wants to make it permanent will never find it.

Question: Listening to you, one feels that you have read a great deal, and are also directly aware of reality. If this is so, then why do you condemn the acquisition of knowledge?

KRISHNAMURTI: I will tell you why. It is a journey that must be taken alone, and there can be no journeying alone if your companion is knowledge. If you have read the *Gita*, the *Upanishads*, and modern psychology; if you have gathered information about yourself from the experts, and about what they say you should strive after—such knowledge is an impediment. The treasure is not in books, but buried in your own mind, and the mind alone can discover this treasure. To have self-knowledge is to know the ways of your mind, to be aware of its subtleties, with all their implications; and for that you don't have to read a single book. As a matter of fact, I have not read any of these things. Perhaps as a boy, or a young man, I casually looked at some of the sacred books, but I have never studied them. I do not want to study them, they are tiresome, because the treasure is somewhere else. The treasure is not in the books, nor in your *guru*, it is in yourself; and the key to it is the understanding of your own mind. You must understand your mind, not according to Patanjali, or according to some

psychologist who is clever at explaining things, but by watching yourself, by observing how your mind works, not only the conscious mind, but the deep layers of the unconscious as well. If you watch your mind, play with it, look at it when it is spontaneous, free, it will reveal to you untold treasures; and then you are beyond all the books. But that again requires a great deal of attention, vigour, an intensity of pursuit—not the dilettantism of lazy explanations. So the mind must be free from knowledge; because a mind that is occupied with knowledge can never discover what is.

Question: I have tried various systems of meditation, but I don't seem to get very far. What system do you advocate?

KRISHNAMURTI: I do not advocate any system, because every system makes the mind a prisoner; and I think it is very important really to understand this. It does not matter what system you practise, what posture you take, how you control your breathing, and all the rest of it, because your mind becomes a prisoner of whatever system you adopt. But there must be meditation; for meditation is a sweet thing, it clarifies the mind, bringing order, and revealing the significance, the fullness, the depth and beauty of life. Without meditation, the mind is shallow, empty, dull, dependent on stimulation. So meditation is necessary—but not the meditation that you do now, which has no value at all; it is a form of self-hypnosis. The problem is not how to meditate, or what system to follow, but to discover for yourself what meditation is.

Now, we are going to enter into this question of what meditation is, so don't shut your eyes and go to sleep over it, thinking you are meditating. We are inquiring, and inquiry demands attention, vigour—not closing your eyes and going into a trance, which you are apt to do when you hear that word 'meditation'. We are trying to find out

what meditation is; and to find out what meditation is, requires meditation. (*Laughter.*) Sirs, please don't laugh it off. To find out what meditation is, your mind must be meditating, not just following some stupid system based on the teachings of a *guru*, of Shankara or Buddha. All teachings are stupid the moment they become systems. You and I are trying to find out together what meditation is, and what it means to meditate; we are not concerned with where meditation is going to lead. If you are intent upon finding out where meditation is going to lead, then you will never discover what meditation is, because you are interested in the result, not in the process of meditation.

So we are setting out on a journey to find out what is meditation; and to find out, to discover what is meditation, the mind must first be free of systems, must it not? If you are tied to a system, it does not matter whose system it is, you obviously cannot find out what is meditation. You follow a system because you want a result out of it, and that is not meditation; like practising the piano, it is merely the development of a certain faculty. When you follow a system, you may learn a few tricks, but your mind is caught in the system, which prevents you from finding out what is meditation; therefore, to find out, the mind must be free of systems. It is not a question of how to be free; because the moment you say, "How am I to be free of the system in which my mind is caught?", the 'how' becomes another system. But if you see the truth that the mind must be free of systems, then it is free, you don't have to ask how.

So, being free of systems, the mind must then inquire into the whole problem of concentration. This is a little more abstract, but please follow it. When a child is playing with a toy, the toy absorbs his mind, it holds his attention. He does not give attention to the toy, but the toy attracts him. That is one form of what you call concentration. Similarly, you have phrases,

images, symbols, pictures, ideals, which attract and absorb you—at least, you *want* to be absorbed by these things, as the child is absorbed by the toy. But what happens? You are not as absorbed as the child; other thoughts come in, and you try to fix your mind on the chosen image or symbol, so you have a battle. There is contradiction, strife, a ceaseless effort to concentrate, but you never quite achieve it. This effort is what you call meditation. You spend your time trying to concentrate, which any child can do the moment he is interested in something; but you are not interested, so your concentration is a form of exclusion.

Now, is there attention without anything absorbing the mind? Is there attention without concentrating upon an object? Is there attention without any form of motive, influence, compulsion? Can the mind give full attention without any sense of exclusion? Surely it can, and that is the only state of attention; the others are mere indulgence, or tricks of the mind. If you can give full attention without being absorbed in something, and without any sense of exclusion, then you will find out what it is to meditate; because in that attention there is no effort, no division, no struggle, no search for a result. So meditation is a process of freeing the mind from systems, and of giving attention without either being absorbed, or making an effort to concentrate.

Meditation is also a process of freeing the mind from its own projections; and its projections take place when the mind is occupied with the past. That is, when the mind is full of experiences, which are a result of the past, it inevitably projects and is caught in the images or ideations of the past. To project an image of Rama, Seeta, Christ, Buddha, or Mataji, and then worship that projection, is a form of self-hypnosis which does bring extraordinary visions, a state of trance, and all the rest of that non-sense; but meditation is the process of freeing the mind from the past,

so that there are no such projections at all.

So the worshipping of a projection, however noble, is not meditation. And meditation is not prayer—the prayer which demands, petitions, begs for some result. Nor is meditation the pursuit of virtue, which becomes a self-centered activity. When the mind is free from the hypnosis of the past, from the pursuit of its own activities, its own projections, when it is no longer experiencing the things it has learned, then you will find out what meditation is. Then you will never ask how to meditate, because from morning till night, in whatever you are doing, subtle, hidden, the perfume of meditation is there. But merely closing your eyes, repeating some phrases, fingering the beads, is utterly vain. These things do not free the mind at all; on the contrary, the mind becomes a slave to them. It is the inquiry into what is meditation that has significance, that has great depth and vision, not the inquiry into what system to follow. It is only the stupid, arrogant mind that wants a system. The free mind never asks how, but is always discovering, moving, living.

March 25, 1956

V

TALK IN BOMBAY

This is the end of the present series of meetings, and I wonder what most of us have made of these talks and discussions. What have we understood, how far have we penetrated into our problems and comprehended them? Have we merely listened to find an answer, a solution to our problems, a practical way of dealing with everyday suffering and the trials of existence? Or have we broken through to a wider and deeper awareness of ourselves, so that independently and

freely we can resolve the problems which inevitably arise in our life? I think it is very important, after having listened to these talks and discussions, to discover for oneself what one has understood, and how that understanding operates in one's daily activities. Obviously, mere listening divorced from action has very little meaning; and I feel it would be utterly useless and vain to attend these meetings without having something come of it—not something that is put together, a conclusion logically arrived at, or a plan systematically thought out for future activity, but rather the breaking down of the mind's narrow walls of conditioning which make it incapable of seeing the totality of things. Whether those walls have been broken down in listening to these talks is the only significant question, not how much one has learnt from whatever has been said. What matters is to discover for ourselves our own conditioning and to break it down spontaneously, easily, almost unconsciously; because it is not the deliberate thought, with its particular action, but rather the spontaneous and almost unconscious falling away of this conditioning, that is going to free the mind.

So, considering the present state of society, the utter confusion we are in—with wars, inequality, various forms of degradation, and the constant battle within and without—, it seems to me very important for those of us who have taken these talks seriously to find out if we have brought about a radical change in ourselves; because, after all, it is only the individual, not circumstances, that can bring about a radical change. When we merely yield to the change of circumstances, the mind resolves its problems on a very superficial level, therefore it becomes petty and incapable of seeing the whole. I think it is the comprehension of the whole, of the total, the limitless, or even a slight opening in the conditioned mind, that is going to resolve our problems, and not the process of dissecting and analyzing our problems one by one. A tree

is made up, not only of the trunk, the branches, the leaves, the blossoms, and the fruit, but also of the roots hidden deep in the earth; and without understanding all that, without having a feeling for the totality of it, you can never experience the fullness, the beauty of the tree.

Now, it seems to me that what most of us are doing is very unfortunate. By trying to understand our daily struggles and miseries separately, that is, through the gradual accumulation of knowledge, we think we shall understand the totality of life. But putting many parts together does not make the whole. By putting together leaves, branches, a trunk, and some roots, you will not have a tree; and yet that is what we are doing. We are approaching the problems of life separately, not as a unitary process; and the whole cannot be comprehended through analytical, cumulative knowledge. Knowledge has its place; but knowledge becomes a hindrance, a complete barrier to the discovery of the truth in its totality, in its beauty, for which the mind must be extraordinarily simple.

Most of you are concerned with what to do, you want to know what practical results you have gained by listening to these talks. I am sure many of you have asked yourselves that question, and others have put it to me. I sincerely hope that you have gained *nothing* practical; because the mind seeks what is practical, what can be used, or carried out, only when it is concerned with the little activities of its own momentum. "How can I practise what I have heard? In what way can I use it?"—all such questions seem to me so superficial, and it is the small mind that puts them, not the mind that sees the totality, the immensity of life, with all its many problems. When one really sees the immensity, the extraordinary depth and width of life, that very perception produces action which is not of the petty mind. What the small, conditioned mind does is to produce activity in its

own dimension, and so there is more and more confusion.

Why is it that we think in parts, that is, in terms of a particular segment of society? Have you ever asked yourself this question? Is it not because our minds are conditioned by the literature we read, the education we get, the cultural and religious influences we are exposed to from childhood? All these factors condition the mind, and it is this conditioning that makes us think in parts. We think of ourselves as Hindus or Christians, Americans or Russians, as belonging to the Asiatic or the Western world. Here in India we divide ourselves still further; we are Malabaris, Madrasis, or Gujarathis, we belong to this caste or that caste, we read this book or that book.

Sir, would you mind not taking photographs now? I do not know what you think these meetings are for. It is too bad that you have to be reminded what kind of gathering this is. When you take photographs, watch people coming in, look to see where your friends are sitting, converse with each other—all this indicates such disrespect, not to me, but to your neighbour and to yourself. When you cannot diligently and purposefully pursue a thought to the end, it shows to what extraordinary superficiality you have reduced yourself. If you will just listen, I feel very strongly that in that very listening you will break down your conditioning; the act of listening is all that is needed. The after-thought, the thought which you accumulate and take away with you to think over, is not going to liberate you. What will break down the wall is giving your full attention now; and you cannot give your full attention if your mind is wandering, if you are distracted. When you are listening to a song which you love, to your favourite music, there is no effort, you just listen and let the music have its own action on you. Similarly, if you will listen now with that kind of attention, with that ease, you will find that the very act of listening does

something which has much greater significance than any deliberate effort on your part to hear, to rationalize, and to carry out what is said.

I was asking why it is that all of us are thinking in parts, in little segments, when all over the world human beings are struggling with more or less the same problems, having the same anxieties, the same fears and transient joys. Why do we not take this extraordinary life on our earth as a whole, as something which you and I have to understand, not as Indians or Englishmen, Chinese or Germans, communists or capitalists, but as human beings? It is not because we think in these little segments that we are forever quarrelling, fighting, destroying each other? And this partial thinking, this divided comprehension, takes place because, through education, through social influences, through so-called religious instruction, through books and the interpretation thereof, our minds are conditioned. Only the mind that is unconditioned can be free; and you cannot uncondition the mind by deliberately setting about it. You have to understand the whole process of conditioning, and why the mind is conditioned. Every act, every thought, every movement of the mind, is limited; and with that limited mind we are trying to comprehend something which has the depth and width of all existence.

So, the question is not what to do, or whether one has learnt anything practical by attending these meetings. It is not merely by trying to find an answer, a solution to the problem, but rather by listening, by discussing, by deep inquiry, by putting serious and fundamental questions, that the mind's conditioning is broken down. But the conditioning must break down of its own accord, the mind cannot do anything about it. Being conditioned, the mind cannot act upon its own conditioning. A narrow mind trying to be broad will still be narrow. A petty mind may conceive of God, truth, but its conception can only be a projection of its own

pettiness. When once the mind realizes this, it no longer formulates what God is, or struggles to be free. It leaves all that entirely alone, because it is now only concerned with inquiring into the whole process of conditioning; and if you are at all serious, you will find that this very inquiry opens the door so that your conditioning is revealed and destroyed. *You* don't destroy your conditioning; but the very perception of the fact that you are conditioned, brings a vitality which destroys your conditioning. I do not think we see this. The very fact that I am greedy, and know it, has its own vitality to destroy greed.

So if we can really inquire into and comprehend why the mind thinks in parts, then I feel we shall have discovered a very important fact about ourselves; and it is out of this questioning that individuality comes into being. At present we are not free individuals, we are conditioned by society and are merely the playthings of environment; but if the mind can inquire into and thereby free itself from that conditioning, then there emerges the free individual who does not follow, who has no authority, no leader; and with this uninfluenced state of mind, there comes the creativity which is not of time.

So, if I may suggest, don't inquire to find out what you can learn. If you are merely listening in order to learn, then you create a teacher whom you follow. Surely, what matters is to be very clear that your mind is limited, conditioned, which is an obvious fact, and that whatever solution the petty mind may find, it is still petty. The very realization of this fact—that you are conditioned, and that your values, your opinions, your learning, your judgments, are petty, dull, empty—is the beginning of humility. It is not the mind that has cultivated humility, but the mind that is simple, humble, that is ever in a state of not-knowing—it is only such a mind that can find the unknowable. The mind that is pursuing virtue, respectability, that is seeking

a system or a practical philosophy to live by in this world, will never find the unknowable. But the mind that understands its own conditioning, and so becomes simple, humble; the mind that is not accumulating, that is uncertain, always in a state of not-knowing, and is therefore a living, moving, dynamic thing—it is such a mind that can experience the unknowable, or allow the unknowable to be.

Question: It often seems to me that you give the gloomy rather than the happy side of life. Do you deliberately do this?

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, our life is both gloomy and cheerful, dark and light. It would be terrible and destructive if life were nothing but light, good cheer, happiness, or nothing but darkness; but life is not like that, is it? Life has extraordinary variety. But unfortunately, you want to cling to the light, to the pleasurable, to the beautiful, and put all the rest away; and you call gloomy any man who says, "Look, there is also the other side, and if you really understand it, I think there will come into being an entirely different state". You see, we have divided life as happiness and unhappiness, so we are all the time battling between these two. We know that life sometimes has delight, but for most of us, life is sorrow. For those who have money, position, authority, respectability, life may be gay; but that makes the mind very superficial, as is shown in modern civilization. Whereas, if each one of us understands the whole significance of sorrow and joy as a total process, not as opposites in conflict with each other, then perhaps we shall find that life is neither sorrow nor joy, but something entirely different which is not of this dualistic quality; and if we have never tasted or experienced that state, it is only because we are caught in this ceaseless struggle between the opposites.

That state beyond the opposites is not a formula, a mere conception, and it must be directly experienced; but you see, it cannot be directly experienced as long as the mind is seeking happiness. Happiness is a by-product; like virtue, it is of secondary importance. The man who is pursuing happiness will never be happy, for happiness comes upon us suddenly, obscurely, unexpectedly. Have you not noticed that the moment you know you are happy, you have lost happiness? When you say, "I am joyous", it is over, finished. Happiness, like love, is something of which the mind can never be conscious. The moment the mind is conscious that it loves, there is no longer love. It is very strange, and very interesting, that a mind which is deliberately trying to experience something, loses the whole perfume of life. This is not a poetical saying to be brushed aside, but rather a fact to be realized. The mind must not seek anything, because what it seeks it will experience; and what it then experiences is not the truth, for in its very search it has projected what it wants. That projection is out of the past, it has already been tasted; therefore the projection, and the attainment of that projection, are not happiness, but a delusion, a process of self-hypnosis. Once you realize this, if you are at all serious and deeply interested, you will find that your mind is always empty, ever experiencing and never gathering.

But our minds are full, are they not? They are full of acquired virtue; they are constantly occupied with pursuing the ideal, seeking God, truth, this or that; therefore there is always a conditioned response. So what matters is to understand that, in its very search, the mind creates its own hindrance; because what it finds will be the projection of its own desire. When the mind deeply realizes this, all seeking comes to an end; the mind is very quiet, alert, and then there comes into being a different state altogether. When you begin to understand sorrow, to observe how it

arises; when you go into it, cherish it, and do not merely resist it, then you will find that the mind is not caught in sorrow, or in its opposite, because such a mind is empty in the deep sense of that word. Most minds are empty in the superficial sense that they are perpetually occupied with problems. I do not mean that kind of emptiness. I am talking of the emptiness which has extraordinary depth and width; and a mind that is everlastingly occupied with problems and immediate solutions, cannot be empty in that deep sense of the word.

Question: What is psycho-somatic disease, and can you suggest ways to cure it?

KRISHNAMURTI: I do not think it is possible to find ways to cure psycho-somatic disease; and perhaps the very search for a way to cure the mind, is producing the disease. To find a way, or to practise a method, implies inhibiting, controlling, suppressing thought, which is not to understand the mind. It is fairly obvious that the mind does create disease in the physical organism. If you eat when you are angry, your tummy is upset; if you violently hate somebody, you have a physical disorder; if you restrict your mind to a particular belief, you become mentally or psychically neurotic, and it reacts upon the body. This is all part of the psycho-somatic process. Of course, not all diseases are psycho-somatic; but fear, anxiety, and other disturbances of the psyche, do produce physical diseases. So, is it possible for the mind to be made healthy? Many of us are concerned with keeping the body healthy through right diet, and so on, which is essential; but very few are concerned with keeping the mind healthy, young, alert, vital, so that it does not deteriorate.

Now, if the mind is not to deteriorate, it must obviously never follow, it must be independent, free. But our education does not help us to be free; on the contrary, it helps us to fit into this

deteriorating society, therefore the mind itself deteriorates. We are encouraged from childhood to be fearful, competitive, to think always about ourselves and our own security. Naturally, such a mind must be in everlasting conflict, and that conflict does produce physical effects. What is important, then, is to discover and understand for ourselves, through our own vigilant watchfulness, the whole process of conflict, and not depend on any psychologist or *guru*. To follow a *guru* is to destroy your mind. You follow him because you want what you think he has; therefore you have set going a process of deterioration. The effort to be somebody, mundanely or spiritually, is another form of deterioration, because such effort always brings anxiety; it produces fear, frustration, making the mind unhealthy, which in turn affects the body. I think this is fairly simple. But to look to another for the cure of the mind, is part of the process of deterioration.

Question: You have suggested that through awareness alone transformation is possible. What do you mean by awareness?

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, this is a very complex question; but I shall try to describe what it is to be aware, if you will kindly listen and patiently follow it step by step, right through to the end. To listen is not just to follow what I am describing, but actually to experience what is being described, which means watching the operation of your own mind as I describe it. If you merely follow what is being described, then you are not aware, observant, watchful of your own mind. Merely to follow a description is like reading a guide-book while the scenery goes by unobserved; but if you watch your own mind while listening, then the description will have significance, and you will find out for yourself what it means to be aware.

What do we mean by awareness? Let us begin at the simplest level. You are

aware of the noise that is going on, you are aware of the cars, the birds, the trees, the electric lights, the people sitting around you, the still sky, the breathless air. Of all that you are aware, are you not? Now, when you hear a noise, or a song, or see a cart being pushed, and so on, what is heard, or observed, is translated, judged by the mind; that is what you are doing, is it not? Please follow this slowly. Each experience, each response, is interpreted according to your background, according to your memory. If there were a noise which you were hearing for the first time, you would not know what it was; but you have heard the noise a dozen times before, so your mind immediately translates it, which is the process of what we call thinking. Your reaction to a particular noise is the thought of a cart being pushed, which is one form of awareness. You are aware of colour, you are aware of different faces, different attitudes, expressions, prejudices, and so on. And if you are at all alert, you are also aware of how you respond to these things, not only superficially, but deeply. You have certain values, ideals, motives, urges, on different levels of your being; and to be conscious of all that is part of awareness. You judge what is good and what is bad, what is right and what is wrong; you condemn, evaluate, according to your background, that is, according to your education and the culture in which you have been brought up. To see all this is part of awareness, is it not?

Now, let us go a little further. What happens when you are aware that you are greedy, violent, or envious? Let us take envy, and stick to that one thing. Are you aware that you are envious? Please go with me step by step, and bear in mind that you are not following a formula. If you make it into a formula, you will have lost the significance of the whole thing. I am unfolding the process of awareness; but if you merely learn by heart what has been described, you will be exactly where you are now.

Whereas, if you begin to see your conditioning, which is to be aware of the operation of your own mind as I go on explaining, then you will come to the point where an actual transformation is possible.

So you are aware, not only of outward things and your interpretation of them, but you have also begun to be aware of your envy. Now, what happens when you are aware of envy in yourself? You condemn it, don't you? You say that it is wrong, that you must *not* be envious, that you must be loving, which is the ideal. The fact is that you are envious, while the ideal is what you *should* be. In pursuing the ideal, you have created a duality; so there is a constant conflict, and in that conflict you are caught.

Are you aware, as I am describing this process, that there is only one thing, which is the fact that you are envious? The other, the ideal, is nonsense, it is not an actuality. And it is very difficult for the mind to be free of the ideal, to be free of the opposite; because traditionally, through centuries of a particular culture, we have been taught to accept the hero, the example, the ideal of the perfect man, and to struggle towards it. That is what we have been trained to do. We want to change envy into non-envy, but we have never found out how to change it; and so we are caught in everlasting strife.

Now, when the mind is aware that it is envious, that very word 'envious' is condemnatory. Are you following, sirs? The very naming of that feeling is condemnatory; but the mind cannot think except in words. That is, a feeling arises with which a certain word is identified, so the feeling is never independent of the word. The moment there is a feeling like envy, there is naming, so you are always approaching a new feeling with an old idea, an accumulated tradition. The feeling is always new, and it is always translated in terms of the old.

Now, can the mind not name a feeling like envy, but come to it afresh, anew? The very naming of that feeling is to

make it old, to capture it and put it into the old framework. And can the mind not name a feeling—that is, not translate it by calling it a name, and thereby either condemning or accepting it—, but merely observe the feeling as a fact?

Sir, experiment with yourself and you will see how difficult it is for the mind not to verbalize, not to give a name to a fact. That is, when one has a certain feeling, can that feeling be left unnamed, and be looked at purely as a fact? If you can have a feeling and really pursue it to the end without naming it, then you will find that something very strange happens to you. At present the mind approaches a fact with an opinion, with evaluation, with judgment, with denial or acceptance. That is what you are doing. There is a feeling, which is a fact, and the mind approaches that fact with a term, with an opinion, with judgment, with a condemnatory attitude, which are dead things. Do you understand? They are dead things, they have no value, they are only memory operating on the fact. The mind approaches the fact with a dead memory, therefore the fact cannot operate on the mind. But if the mind merely observes the fact without evaluation, without judgment, condemnation, acceptance, or identification, then you will find that the fact itself has an extraordinary vitality because it is new. What is new can dispel the old; therefore there is no struggle not to be envious: there is the total cessation of envy. It is the fact that has vigour, vitality, not your judgments and opinions about the fact; and to think the thing right through, from the beginning to the end, is the whole process of awareness.

Question: Why is there such fear of death?

KRISHNAMURTI: Again, if I may suggest it, let us think the problem right through to the end, and not stop halfway, or wander off at a tangent. We know that the body deteriorates and

dies; the heart beats only so many times in so many years, and the whole physical organism, being in constant use, must inevitably wear out and come to an end. We are not afraid of that, it is a common, everyday event, and we often see the body being carried away to be burnt. But then we say, "Is that all? With the ending of the body, will the things I have gathered, my learning, my love, my virtue, also end? And if all that does end, then what is the good of living?" So we begin to inquire, we want to know whether there is annihilation or continuity after death.

This is not a problem merely for the superstitious, or the so-called educated; it is a problem for each one of us, and we must find out for ourselves the truth of the matter, neither accepting nor rejecting, neither believing nor being sceptical. The man who is afraid of death, and therefore clings to belief in reincarnation, in this or that, will never find out the truth of the matter; but a mind that really wants to know, and is trying to find out what is true, is in quite a different state; and that is what we are doing here.

Now, what is it that continues? Do you understand, sirs? How do you know you have continued from yesterday, and that, if all goes well and there is no accident, you will continue through today to tomorrow? You know that only through memory, do you not? Let us keep it very simple, and not philosophize or introduce a lot of words. So I know I exist only because of memory. The mere statement that I exist has no meaning; but I know I exist because today I remember having existed yesterday, and I hope to exist tomorrow. So the thread of continuity is memory—the memory which has been accumulating for centuries, which has gone through a great many experiences, distortions, frustrations, sorrows, joys, the endless struggle of ambition. We want all that to continue; and because we do not know what is going to happen to it when the body dies, fear comes into

being. That is one fact. And why do we divide death from living? It may be altogether wrong to divide them. It may be that living is dying—and perhaps that is the beauty of living. But living is something which most of us have not fully grasped or understood, nor have we understood what death is; so we are afraid of living, and we are afraid of death.

Now, what do we mean by living? Living is not merely going to the office, or passing examinations, or having children, or the everlasting struggle for bread and butter; that is only part of it. Living also implies seeing the trees, the sunlight on the river, a bird on the wing, the moon through the clouds; it is to be aware of smiles and tears, of turmoils and anxieties; it is to know love, to be gentle, compassionate, and to perceive the extraordinary depth and width of existence. Do we know all that? Or do we know only a little part of it, the part which is made up of *my* struggle, *my* job, *my* family, *my* virtue, *my* religion, *my* caste, *my* country? All we know is the 'me', with its self-centered activities, and that is what we call life.

So we do not know what living is. We have divided living from dying, which shows that we have not understood the whole depth and width of life, in which death may be included. I think death is not something apart from life. It is only when we die every day to all the things we have gathered—to our knowledge, our experiences, to all our virtues—that we can live. We do not live because we are continuing from yesterday, through today, to tomorrow. Surely, only that which comes to an end has a beginning; but we never come to an end. Again, this is not just a poetical saying, so don't brush it aside. We have no beginning because we are not dying; we never know a timeless moment, and so we are concerned about death. For most of us, living is a process of struggle and tears; and what we are frightened of is not the unknown, which we call death, but of losing all that we have known. And what do we

know? Not very much. This is not cynical, but factual. What do we actually know? Hardly anything. Our names, our little bank accounts, our jobs, our families, what other people have said in the *Gita*, the *Bible*, or the *Upanishads*, the various preoccupations of a superficial life—these things we know; but we do not know the depths of our own being. So we are covering the unknown with the known, and we are afraid to let go of, to renounce, the known. But to renounce in order to find God, is not renunciation; it is merely another form of seeking a reward. A man who renounces the world in order to find God, will never find God, because he is still out to get something. There is total renunciation only when there is no asking for anything, no laying up for tomorrow, which is to die to everything of yesterday. Then you will find that death is not something to be afraid of and run away from, nor does it demand belief in the beyond. It is the known that captures and holds us, not the unknown; and the mind is full of the known. It is only when the mind is free from the known, that the unknown can be. Death and life are one; and death is to be experienced, not at the last moment through disease and corruption, or accident, but while we are living, and the mind is vigorous.

You see, sirs, timelessness is a state of mind; and as long as we are thinking in terms of time, there is death and the fear of death. Timelessness is not to be glibly talked about, but to be directly experienced; and there can be no experiencing of timelessness as long as there is a continuity of all the things that one has gathered. So the mind must be free from all its accumulations, and only then is there the coming into being of the unknown. What we are afraid of is letting go of the known; but a mind that is not dead to the known, free from the known, can never experience the extraordinary state of timelessness.

March 28, 1956

INDIA TALKS 1955-56 (BANARAS—MADRAS—MADANAPALLE—BOMBAY)

ERRATA SLIP

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line and Column</i>	<i>Correction</i>
6	13 fm top , 2nd	add full-stop after the word it
28	23 fm bottom, 1st	add comma after the word attention
31	12 fm bottom, 1st	broken letter " t " in " environment "
32	12 fm bottom, 2nd	add comma after the word nonsense
41	6 fm bottom, 2nd	delete second word the
44	24 fm top , 2nd	add full-stop after the word recognition
45	14 fm top , 2nd	delete the word, " as ", at beginning of line
46	16 fm top , 1st	broken letter " s " in " is "
50	25 fm bottom, 1st	delete comma after the word find
55	6 fm top , 2nd	put comma instead of period after word concept
56	17 fm top , 2nd	add full-stop after " conditioned "
63	11 fm bottom, 2nd	change the word " cowebs " to " cobwebs "
65	17 fm top , 2nd	change " tion " into " mation ", at beginning of line
66	3 fm top , 1st	change " uunderstand " into " understand "
74	13 fm top , 2nd	Y in the word " Yet " to be lower case
75	24 fm top , 2nd	delete comma after the word " and "
78	19 fm bottom, 1st	change " unpremeditated " into " uncontaminated "
78	20 fm bottom, 1st	change " uncontaminated " into " unpremeditated "
82	5 fm bottom, 2nd	put comma after the word impermanent
85	11 fm top , 1st	change " not at an end " to " not as an end "
85	25 fm bottom, 1st	delete comma and add s to the word pressure
90	15 fm bottom, 2nd	delete period & add semicolon after word humble
97	21 fm top , 2nd	add comma after the word indicates
100	2 fm top , 1st	add comma after the word question
100	16 fm top , 1st	add comma after the word hovels
100	18 fm top , 1st	put comma after the word beautiful
100	19 fm top , 1st	add comma after the words To be sensitive
100	23 fm top , 1st	add comma after the word beautiful
101	8 fm bottom, 2nd	add comma after the word Now
107	2 fm bottom, 2nd	delete the hyphen between non-sense
108	- , 1st	change the V ₇ to VIII at head of talk
110	16 fm top , 1st	change " It is not " to " Is it not "
114	18 fm bottom, 1st	delete comma after the word acceptance
114	17 fm top , 2nd	delete comma after the word superstitious