

TALKS BY
KRISHNAMURTI
IN AUSTRALIA

1955

(Verbatim Report)

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SYDNEY

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I

As there are many misconceptions, fantastic ideas, and a great many hopes which have no fundamental basis, I think it is important that we should understand each other and establish the right kind of relationship between the speaker and the individual person who is here.

First of all, what I am going to speak about during these several talks is not based on any Indian religion, nor am I representing any particular philosophy. Thought has neither nationality nor frontier, and what we are trying to do this evening is to find out for ourselves what it is that most of us are seeking. You may have come here with various ideas, with certain hopes, seeking something from the speaker, and I think we ought to begin by clearing up any misconceptions; so I would like to suggest that you listen to find out what I want to convey, which is not merely to hear but really to understand what is being said. It is very difficult to listen rightly, because most of us have opinions, judgments, conclusions, values, and so we never really listen at all; we are only comparing, evaluating, translating, or opposing one idea with another. But if you can listen, not with a so-called open mind, but with the intention to understand, then perhaps you and I together will find out how to approach the many problems which we have.

We can understand our problems only if we have the capacity to listen, to pay full attention, and such attention is not possible if we are seeking an end, an answer. There is attention only when the mind is really quiet, and then it is able to receive, to comprehend; but a mind that is occupied with its own answers, that is caught up in the search for a result, is never quiet, and such a mind is incapable of full attention. So I think it is important to listen with full attention, not just to what is being said, but to

everything in life, for only then is the mind free to discover what is true and find out if there is something beyond its own inventions.

That is what I would like to talk about this evening and throughout these talks. Is it possible to free the mind, not to accept, but to investigate, to inquire profoundly and find out if there is or there is not reality, God? Surely, the mind is incapable of such inquiry as long as it is merely concerned with finding solutions for its own petty problems, that is, as long as it is only concerned with escapes. The mind cannot be free unless it has understood the problem in which it is caught, and this implies self-knowledge, a full awareness of its own activities.

All our problems are really individual problems, because the individual is society. There is no society without the individual, and as long as the individual does not totally understand himself, his conscious as well as his unconscious self, whatever reforms he may devise, whatever gods he may invent, whatever truths he may seek, will have very little significance. So the individual problem is the world problem, which is fairly obvious; and the world problem can come to an end only when the individual understands himself, the activities of his own mind, the workings of his own consciousness. Then there is a possibility of creating a different world, a world in which there are no nationalities, no frontiers of belief, no political or religious dogmas.

So it seems to me very important to find out what it is we are seeking. This is not a rhetorical question, but a question that each one of us must inevitably put to himself; and the more mature, intelligent and alert we are, the greater and more urgent our demand to find out what it is that we are seeking. Unfortunately most of us put this question superficially, and when we receive a superficial answer we are satisfied with it. But if you

care to go into the matter you will find that the mind is merely seeking some kind of satisfaction, some kind of pleasant invention which will gratify it; and once having found or created for itself a shelter of opinion and conclusion, therein it stays, so our search seemingly comes to an end. Or if we are dissatisfied we go from one philosophy to another, from one dogma to another, from one church, from one sect, from one book to another, always trying to find a permanent security, inwardly as well as outwardly, a permanent happiness, a permanent peace. Our search starts with a mind that has already been made petty and superficial by so-called education, so it finds answers which are equally petty and superficial.

Before we begin to seek, then, is it not important to understand the process of the mind itself? Because what we are seeking now is fairly obvious. We are discontented with so many things, and we want contentment. Being unhappy, in conflict with each other and with society, we want to be led to some kind of haven, and we generally do find a leader or a dogma that satisfies us. But surely all such effort is very superficial, and that is why it seems to me important to understand the ways of the mind and not try to find something. To understand oneself needs enormous patience, because the self is a very complex process, and if one does not understand oneself, whatever one seeks will have very little significance. When we do not understand our own urges and compulsions, conscious as well as unconscious, they produce certain activities which create conflict in ourselves; and what we are seeking is to avoid or escape from this conflict, is it not? So, as long as we do not understand the process of ourselves, of our own thinking, our search is extremely superficial, narrow and petty. To ask if there is God, if there is truth, or what lies beyond death, or whether there is reincarnation—all such questioning is infantile,

if I may so, because the questioner has not understood himself, the whole process of his thinking, and without self-knowledge such inquiry only leads one to assertions which have no basis.

So, if we really want to create a different world, a different relationship between human beings, a different attitude towards life, it is essential that we should first understand ourselves, is it not? This does not mean self-centred concentration, which leads to utter misery. What I am suggesting is that without self-knowledge, without deeply knowing oneself, all inquiry, all thought, all conclusions, opinions and values have very little meaning. Most of us are conditioned, conditioned as Christians, as Socialists, as Communists, as Buddhists, as Moslems, or what you will, and within that narrow area we have our being. Our minds are conditioned by society, by education, by the culture about us, and without understanding the total process of that conditioning, our search, our knowledge, our inquiry can only lead to further mischief, to greater misery, which is what is actually happening.

Self-knowledge is not according to any formula. You may go to a psychologist or a psychoanalyst to find out about yourself, but that is not self-knowledge. Self-knowledge comes into being when we are aware of ourselves in relationship, which shows what we are from moment to moment. Relationship is a mirror in which to see ourselves as we actually are. But most of us are incapable of looking at ourselves as we are in relationship, because we immediately begin to condemn or justify what we see. We judge, we evaluate, we compare, we deny or accept, but we never observe actually what is, and for most people this seems to be the most difficult thing to do; yet this alone is the beginning of self-knowledge. If one is able to see oneself as one is in this extraordinary mirror of relationship which does not distort, if

one can just look into this mirror with full attention and see actually what is, be aware of it without condemnation, without judgment, without evaluation—and one does this when there is earnest interest—then one will find that the mind is capable of freeing itself from all conditioning; and it is only then that the mind is free to discover that which lies beyond the field of thought. After all, however learned or however petty the mind may be, it is consciously or unconsciously limited, conditioned, and any extension of this conditioning is still within the field of thought. So freedom is something entirely different.

What is important, then, is self-knowledge, seeing oneself as one is in the mirror of relationship. It is very difficult to observe oneself without distortion, because we are educated to distort, to condemn, to compare, to judge; but if the mind is capable, which it is, of observing itself without distortion, then you will find, if you will experiment with it, that the mind can uncondition itself.

Most of us are concerned, not with unconditioning the mind, but with conditioning it better, making it nobler, making it less *this* and more *that*. We have never inquired into the possibility of the mind's unconditioning itself completely. And it is only the totally unconditioned mind that can discover reality, not the mind that seeks and finds a gratifying answer, not the mind that is Christian, Hindu, Communist, Socialist, or Capitalist; such a mind only creates more misery, more conflict, more problems. Through self-knowledge the mind can free itself from all conditioning, and this is not a matter of time. Freedom from conditioning comes into being only when we see the necessity of a mind that is unconditioned. But we have never thought about it, we have never inquired, we have merely accepted authority, and there are whole groups of people who say that the mind cannot be unconditioned and must therefore be conditioned better.

Now, I am suggesting that the mind can be unconditioned. It is not for you to accept what I say, because that would be too stupid; but if one is really interested one can find out for oneself whether it is possible for the mind to be unconditioned. Surely, that possibility exists only if one is aware that one is conditioned and does not accept that conditioning as something noble, a worth-while part of social culture. The unconditioned mind is the only truly religious mind, and only the religious mind can create a fundamental revolution, which is essential, and which is not an economic revolution, nor the revolution of the Communists or the Socialists. To find out what is true the mind must be aware of itself, it must have self-knowledge, which means being alert to all its conscious and unconscious urges and compulsions; but a mind which is the residue of traditions, of values, of so-called culture and education, such a mind is incapable of finding out what is true. It may say it believes in God, but its God has no reality, for it is only the projection of its own conditioning.

So our search within the field of conditioning is no search at all, and I think it is important to understand this. A petty mind can never find that which is beyond the mind, and a conditioned mind is a petty mind whether it believes in God or not. That is why all the beliefs and dogmas that we hold, all the authorities, especially the spiritual authorities, have to be put aside, and only then is there a possibility of finding that which is everlasting, timeless.

There are some questions here, but before we consider them together I think it is important to understand that serious questions have no assertive answers, either positive or negative. There is no "yes" or "no" to the questions of life. What is important is to understand the question, for the answer is in the question and not away from it. But for most of us this seems an impossibility, because we are

so eager to find an immediate answer, a palliative for our suffering and confusion; and when we seek an immediate answer we are bound to be led into illusions, into further misery. It is extremely difficult for us to understand the problem because our minds are already seeking an answer and are therefore not giving full attention to the problem. We think of the problem as an impediment, as something to be got rid of, something to be pushed away, avoided. But if the mind can look at the problem without seeking an answer, without translating the problem in terms of its own comfort, then the problem undergoes a fundamental change.

Question: You have said that one can discover oneself only in relationship. Is the self an isolated reality, or is there no self at all without relationship?

KRISHNAMURTI: This is really a very interesting question, and I hope you and I can think it out together. We are thinking it out together, you are not awaiting an answer from me. It is your problem, and if through my verbalisation we can go into it seriously, I think we shall directly or indirectly discover a great many things and not have to be told.

I have said that one can discover oneself only in relationship. That is so, is it not? One cannot know oneself, what one actually is, except in relationship. Anger, jealousy, envy, lust—all such reactions exist only in one's relationship with people, with things, and with ideas. If there is no relationship at all, if there is complete isolation, one cannot know oneself. The mind can isolate itself, thinking that it is somebody, which is a state of lunacy, unbalance, and in that state it cannot know itself. It merely has ideas about itself, like the idealist who is isolating himself from the fact of what he is by pursuing what he should be. That is what most of us are doing. Because rela-

tionship is painful we want to isolate ourselves from this pain, and in the isolating process we create the ideal of what we should be, which is imaginary, an invention of the mind. So we can know ourselves as we actually are, consciously as well as unconsciously, only in relationship, and that is fairly obvious.

I hope you are interested in all this, because it is part of our daily activity, it is our very life, and if we do not understand it, merely going to a series of meetings, or acquiring knowledge from books, will have very little meaning.

The second part of the question is this: "Is the self an isolated reality, or is there no self at all without relationship?" In other words, do I exist only in relationship, or do I exist as an isolated reality beyond relationship? I think the latter is what most of us would like, because relationship is painful. In the very fulfilment of relationship there is fear, anxiety, and knowing this, the mind seeks to isolate itself with its gods, its higher self, and so on. The very nature of the self, the "me", is a process of isolation, is it not? The self and the concerns of the self—my family, my property, my love, my desire—is a process of isolation, and this process is a reality in the sense that it is actually taking place. And can such a self-enclosed mind ever find something beyond itself? Obviously not. It may stretch its walls, its boundaries, it may expand its area, but it is still the consciousness of the "me".

Now, when do you know you are related? Are you conscious of being related when there is complete unanimity, when there is love? Or does the consciousness of being related arise only when there is friction, when there is conflict, when you are demanding something, when there is frustration, fear, contention between the "me" and the other who is related to the "me"? Does the sense of self in the relationship exist if you are not in

pain? Let us look at it much more simply.

If you are not in pain, do you know that you exist? Say, for instance, you are happy for a moment. At the precise moment of experiencing happiness, are you aware that you are happy? Surely, it is only a second afterwards that you become conscious that you are happy. And is it not possible for the mind to be free from all self-enclosing demands and pursuits so that the self is not? Then perhaps relationship can have quite a different meaning. Relationship now is used as a means of security, as a means of self-perpetuation, self-expansion, self-aggrandisement. All these qualities make up the self, and if they cease, then there may be another state in which relationship has a different significance altogether. After all, most relationship is now based on envy, because envy is the basis of our present culture, and therefore in our relationship with each other, which is society, there is contention, violence, a constant battle. But if there is no envy at all, neither conscious nor unconscious, neither superficial nor deep-rooted, if all envy has totally ceased, then is not our relationship entirely different?

So there is a state of mind which is not bound by the idea of the self. Please, this is not a theory, it is not some philosophy to be practised, but if you are really listening to what is being said you are bound to experience the truth of it. These meetings will be utterly futile, they will have no meaning at all, if you are treating what is being said as a lecture to be listened to, talked over, and forgotten. They will have meaning only if you are listening and directly experiencing these things as they are being said.

Question: What do you mean by awareness? Is it just being conscious, or something more?

KRISHNAMURTI: May I again suggest that you listen, not merely to my words, but to the significance of the words, which is really to follow experimentally, through my description, the actual functioning of your own mind as you are sitting here.

I think it is important to find out what awareness is, because it is an extraordinarily real process. It is not a thing to be practised, to be meditated upon daily in order to be aware. That has no meaning at all.

What do we mean by awareness? To be aware is to know that I am standing here and that you are sitting there. We are aware of trees, of people, of noise, of the swift flight of a bird, and most of us are satisfied with this superficial experience. But if we go a little deeper we become conscious that the mind is recognising, registering, associating, verbalising, giving names; it is constantly judging, condemning, accepting, rejecting, and to see this whole process in operation is also part of awareness. If we go still deeper we begin to see the hidden motives, the cultural conditioning, the urges, the compulsions, the beliefs, the envy, the fear, the racial prejudices that lie hidden in the unconscious and of which most of us are unaware. All this is the process of consciousness, is it not? So, awareness is to see this process in operation, both the outward consciousness and the consciousness which is hidden, and one can be aware of it in relationship, while one sits at table, while one eats, while one is travelling on a bus.

Now, is there something other than this? Is awareness something more than merely the awareness of the process of consciousness? The something more cannot be discovered if you have not understood the whole content of your consciousness, because any desire to find something more will be a mere projection of that consciousness. So you must first understand your own consciousness, you must understand what you are,

and you can understand what you are only by being aware, which is to see yourself in the mirror of relationship; and you cannot see yourself as you are if you condemn what you see. That is fairly simple. If you condemn a child, obviously you do not understand him, and you condemn because that is the easiest way to get rid of the problem.

So, to be aware is to see the total process of the mind, not only of the conscious mind, but also of the mind which is hidden and which reveals itself through dreams; but we won't go into that now.

If the mind can be aware of all its own activities, both conscious and unconscious, then there is a possibility of going beyond. To go beyond, the mind must be completely still, but a still mind is not one that is disciplined. A mind that is held in control is not a still mind, it is a stale mind. The mind is still, tranquil, only when it understands the whole process of its own thinking, and then there is a possibility of going beyond.

November 9, 1955

II

One of our great problems, it seems to me, is how to free the mind from its own shallowness, because most of our lives are very superficial, narrow and petty. Our thinking is also very shallow, and I feel that if we could free the mind from its pettiness, its self-centred activity, then perhaps there would be a possibility of wider, deeper experience and happiness.

If we are aware that we are petty and that all our thinking is shallow, we try to free the mind from this shallowness through various forms of effort. We dig deeply into ourselves, analysing, imitating, forcing, disciplining, hoping thereby to enlarge the mind and have wider experiences. But is it possible through thought to

break down the self-enclosing walls of experience? Is thought the way to free the mind?

Before I go further may I suggest that you neither accept nor reject what is being said. Let us investigate the problem together so that you do not merely repeat what is being said but rather directly experience the truth or the falseness of it for yourself. To do that it seems to me very important to know how to listen, how to pay attention. A mind that is occupied cannot pay attention, and most minds are occupied with some kind of idea, opinion, judgment. When anything new is presented to such a mind, there is an immediate reaction either of acceptance or rejection, which actually prevents understanding, does it not? And what we are trying to do this evening is to see if the mind, which in most people is very shallow, petty, can be freed through any form of thinking, which is really the cultivation of memory. We have enormous problems before us, and a petty mind, however cunning, however clever, however scholarly, can never tackle these problems fully, completely, and hence breeds further misery. So, is it possible to free the mind through the process of thinking?

One is aware that one's thinking is petty, shallow, limited in every direction; and is it possible for such a mind to break down the walls of its own limitation through the process of thinking? That is what we are trying to do, is it not?

Now, does thinking free the mind? What is thinking? The mind, both the conscious and the unconscious, is the result of time, of memory, it is the residue of centuries of knowing, and the totality of this consciousness is the process of thinking. All thinking, surely, springs from a background of various cultures, of innumerable experiences, individual as well as collective, and this background is obviously conditioned.

If one observes oneself and is

aware of one's own consciousness, one sees that it is the outcome of many influences: climate, diet, various forms of authority, the society about one, with its taboos, its do's and don'ts, the religion in which one has been brought up, the books one has read, the reactions and experiences one has had, and so on. All these influences condition and shape the mind, and from this background our thinking comes. This is an actual fact, and I do not think we need to discuss it at very great length.

So, thinking is obviously the result of memory, and this result has produced the chaos, the misery, the strife that exists within and without. The mind is the outcome of time, of many influences, of so-called culture and education, and how can such a mind free itself from its own destructive activities? I hope I am making myself clear.

We see there is chaos and misery in the world, a passing happiness. We have developed various forms of technique in order to earn a livelihood, and we have cultivated memory to a vast extent. All our education leads to the cultivation of memory, which is the process of time, and when the mind is functioning wholly within this area it is very superficial, narrow, limited. So, is it possible through thinking, which is the process of time, to reach or to discover something which is beyond time, where true creativeness is?

Most of us spend our energy in the most uncreative thinking, our lives are guided by respectability, by the edicts of society, by various forms of discipline, suppression, resistance, so there is always conformity and fear. Very few know this extraordinary sense of creativity which is obviously beyond time. It is not the creativity of writing a poem or of painting a picture, but a sense of being creative without necessarily expressing it in any form. This creativity may be reality, it may be the highest, the sublime, and until the mind is aware

of this creative state, whatever thinking it does can only produce further misery.

So, is it possible for the mind to be aware of the whole process of influence, the influence of society, of culture, of relationship, of food, of education, of the books we read, the religions and the dogmas we follow? Can it be aware of all this and not create thought out of its awareness, but allow thought to come to an end? This is really the complete cessation of all movement of the mind which is the result of the past. Thinking can never discover anything new, because thinking is the result of time, of the past.

All verbalisation of thought is the outcome of time, of memory, and through this process the mind can never discover anything new. Surely, that which you call God, truth, reality, or whatever name you like to give it, must be something totally new, unexperienced before. It must be discovered from moment to moment, and that can happen only when the mind is dead to the past, to all accumulated influences. When the mind, which is the product of time, of memory, is able to die from day to day to everything that it has accumulated, only then is it possible to experience something which is totally new, and this new thing is reality.

So, the mind which knows continuity, which is the product of time, of memory, can never discover the new. When the mind is totally still, not made still through desire, through any form of compulsion, repression or imitation, when there is that stillness which comes with the deep understanding of this whole process of thinking—it is only then that one can experience the new. Until that happens, all thinking is obviously petty. We may be very clever, erudite, capable of keen analysis and discovery, but such analysis and discovery only lead to further misery, as has been shown in the world. That is why it seems to me important for those who

think differently, who are really seeking to go beyond the limitations of the mind, to understand themselves and the whole content of their consciousness, for only then is it possible to have an extraordinarily still mind; and perhaps in that stillness reality comes into being.

There are several questions, or problems. And what is a problem? Surely, the mind creates a problem when it is occupied in analysing, examining, worrying about something. Life is a series of challenges, and is it possible to meet these challenges without creating problems, that is, without giving soil in the mind for problems to take root and become corroding, destructive? To put it differently, can the mind be unoccupied so as to meet each challenge anew? After all, it is an occupied mind that creates problems, not an unoccupied mind. I think we shall discuss this in different ways during the coming talks.

Question: Some people say that there are actually two paths to the highest attainment, the occult and the mystic. Is this a reality, or a purposeful invention?

KRISHNAMURTI: Most of us, I think, have an idea that reality, God, or whatever name you like to give it, is something fixed, permanent, and that there are various paths to that reality. Now, is there anything permanent? Or is it that the mind *desires* something permanent, something enduring, as it does in all relationship? Surely, the mind is seeking permanency, a permanent stillness, a permanent happiness, a reality which is secure, unchanging; and as long as the mind is seeking a permanent state, it must create paths to that state.

But is there a permanency, anything that is everlasting, enduring? Or is there no permanency, but a constant movement, not the movement that we know in time, but a movement beyond time? If it is believed

that there is something permanent, fixed, unchangeable, in the sense in which we use those words within the area of time, then people will think that there are various paths to it, and the occult and the mystic become the purposeful invention of those who have a vested interest in both. So, what is important is to find out directly for ourselves whether there is anything permanent.

Though the mind may wish to have a permanent tranquillity, a permanent peace, bliss, or what you will, is there such a permanent state? If there is, then there must be a path to it, and practice, discipline, a system of meditation, are necessary to achieve that state. But if we look at it a little more closely and deeply, we find that there is nothing permanent. But the mind rejects that fact because it is seeking some form of security, and out of its own desire it projects the idea of truth as being something permanent, absolute, and then proceeds to invent paths leading to it. This purposeful invention has very little significance to the man who really wishes to find out what is true.

So there is no path to truth, because truth must be discovered from moment to moment. It is not a thing that is the outcome of accumulated experience. One must die to all experience, because that which is accumulating, gathering, is the self, the "me", which is everlastingly seeking its own security, its own permanency and continuity. Any mind whose thought springs from this desire for self-perpetuation, the desire to attain, to succeed, whether in this world or in the next, is bound to be caught in illusion, and therefore in suffering. Whereas, if the mind begins to understand itself by being aware of its own activities, watching its own movements, its own reactions; if it is capable of dying psychologically to the desire to be secure so that it is free from the past, the past which is the accumulation of its own desires and experiences, the past which is the

perpetuation of the "me", the self, the ego, then you will see that there are no paths to truth at all, but a constant discovery from moment to moment.

After all, that which gathers, which hoards, which has continuity, is the "me", the self that knows suffering and is the outcome of time. It is this self-centred memory of the "me" and the "mine"—my possessions, my virtues, my qualities, my beliefs—which seeks security and desires to continue. Such a mind invents all these paths, which have no reality at all. Unfortunately, people who have power, position, exploit others by saying that there are different paths, the occult, the mystic, and so on, but the moment one realises all this, one discovers for oneself that there is no path to truth. When the mind can die psychologically to all the things it has gathered for its own security, it is only then that reality comes into being.

Question: What according to you is freedom?

KRISHNAMURTI: This is really quite a complex question, and if you have the patience let us go into it.

Is freedom something to be attained, or must it be from the very beginning? Is freedom to be achieved through discipline of the mind, through control, through suppression, through conformity, or must it come into being in the very moment of thinking, of feeling? Which does not mean that one must give way to one's desires.

Can freedom be discovered through conforming to the pattern of any particular society, or must freedom be encouraged from the very beginning? Society as we know it now is based on envy, greed, ambition, revenge, on the economic competition for success, on the desire to be something; and in conforming to this pattern, is there freedom? Or does freedom lie outside of this society? Surely, there is freedom only when the mind is no

longer acquiring, possessing, when it has ceased to be greedy, envious. There is freedom only when the mind is not occupied with itself, with its own success, with its own concerns and problems. And does this freedom exist at the end or at the beginning? Everyone says, "Discipline yourself, conform, imitate in order to be free". We are all talking of freedom and at the same time exercising authority, so I think it is important to go into this question very deeply.

Does freedom lie within the field of time, within the field of consciousness, consciousness being the reactions and responses of a particular culture or society, the urges and compulsions of man, collective as well as personal? All that is your consciousness, is it not? The "you" is made up of this consciousness. You are the collective, you are not the individual. You may have a name, a bank account, a separate house, certain capacities, but essentially you are the collective, which is fairly obvious. Being Christian, Australian, Indian, Buddhist, or whatever it is, you have certain superstitions, prejudices, beliefs, therefore you are the result of the collective. One is really not an individual, and it is only when one understands the whole collective influence that there is freedom, and then perhaps the individual comes into being.

We can see that as long as we are conforming to the pattern of society and are merely the product of the collective there can be no freedom, but only greed and conflict, the conflict between groups and between the so-called individuals within the group. Conflict, discipline, the desire for expansion, and so on, are all within the pattern of society, and surely there is freedom only when there is no sense of acquisitiveness, when there is no demand to be psychologically secure, safe, when there is no envy. When we understand this pattern and are therefore free from all the beliefs that society has imposed, whether Communist or Capitalist, Christian or

Hindu, then perhaps there is the true individual, one who is completely alone, not one who is lonely. The man who is lonely is caught up in his self-enclosing activity, completely cut off in his selfishness, his self-centred concern. But I am talking of something entirely different, of the aloneness which is incorruptible, and with that aloneness there is freedom.

Question: You said that it is possible to be unconditioned. Living in this world, how can we come to this unconditioned state and in what way will it transform our lives here?

KRISHNAMURTI: I wonder if we are aware that we are conditioned? That is the first question, is it not? Do you and I know that we are conditioned as Christians or as Hindus, conditioned to a certain way of thinking, to a certain pattern of action, conditioned to the routine of an everyday job and to all the fears and the boredom involved in it? Do we know that we are the product of the innumerable influences of society? The churches, the ceremonies, the beliefs and dogmas, the very words we use, have an extraordinary influence on us, neurologically as well as psychologically.

Are we aware of all this? If we are, then do we not also want to improve, to become better? There is no noble and honourable conditioning, there is only conditioning, yet most of us are seeking a better way of being conditioned. And is it possible for the mind to uncondition itself? I know some people will say it is not possible and will advance various arguments to prove that it is not. But what we are first trying to do is to experience, not theoretically or in any illusory sense, but actually to experience the fact that we are conditioned, and then to see how the mind seeks a better form of conditioning.

The next thing to find out for ourselves, and not depend on some auth-

ority to tell us, is whether it is possible for the mind to be unconditioned. Obviously, if we accept any form of belief with regard to conditioning we are like the man who believes or does not believe in God. Neither the believer nor the non-believer can ever find out what is true. It is only when we free ourselves from both belief and non-belief that we are in a position to find out, to discover.

So, first we must be clear that we are conditioned, which is quite obvious. And if the mind is not capable of unconditioning itself, surely any form of thinking, any reform, any activity, will only produce further conflict, further misery.

Now, being aware that it is conditioned, what is the mind to do? As long as there is a separate entity who observes that his thought is conditioned, there can never be freedom from conditioning, because both the observer and the observed, the thinker and the thought, are conditioned. There is no separate thinker who is unconditioned, for the thinker is the result of thought, and thought is the outcome of conditioning; therefore the thinker cannot uncondition the mind by any practice. When the thinker is aware that he is the thought, that the observer is the observed—which is extremely arduous, it requires a great deal of penetration, insight, understanding—only then is it possible for the mind to be unconditioned.

The questioner wants to know in what way an unconditioned mind will transform the life, the daily activities of the individual. Will it be utilitarian? If the mind is unconditioned, in what way will it be useful to living in this world? Will such a mind help to change or reform the world? What relationship will it have with the society in which it must live? It may have no relationship at all with society, society being the activity of greed, envy, fear, acquisitiveness, and all the moral values based on this activity. A man who is unconditioned

may affect society, but that is not his principal concern.

So, our problem is whether the mind can be unconditioned, is it not? If you really and honestly put this question to yourself, not temporarily, not just while you are sitting here, but if you actually let the seed of this question operate, rather than you operating on the question, then you will find out directly for yourself whether the mind can be liberated from all the influences of society, from the innumerable memories and traditional values which lie in the unconscious, and having unconditioned itself, whether this transformation has any significance in relation to society.

Most of us, unfortunately, never put serious questions to ourselves. We are afraid of putting a serious question to ourselves because it may result in serious action, it may create a revolution in our lives—and I assure you that it does. When you really put a serious question to yourself it brings about an extraordinary response, which you may not desire or wish to be aware of. But you are confronted with a serious question, whether you like it or not, because as the world is being conducted it is divided by nationalities, plagued by wars, misery and starvation, and a totally different approach must be made to find the right answer. The old answers, the old arguments, the beliefs, traditions and dogmas are utterly useless. Whether you are a Christian or a Hindu, a Communist or a Capitalist, is completely irrelevant. It is belief which is dividing the world, belief in nationalism, in patriotism, in the so-called superiority of this race or that; it is belief which divides people into Protestants and Catholics, mystics and occultists, which is all utter nonsense. So a different mind is required, a truly religious mind. Only the mind that loves is truly religious, and it is the religious mind that is revolutionary, not the mind that is weighed down by beliefs and dogmas. When the mind is

choicelessly aware that it is conditioned, in this awareness there comes a state which is not conditioned.

November 12, 1955

III

Most of us, I think, want some authority to mould our lives, our whole being. Because in ourselves we are very uncertain, confused, we turn to others for guidance and try to find the right person or leader to look up to in the conduct of our lives. We think that others know better or know more, and so in our desire to find out if there is a reality, a permanent happiness, a state of bliss, we gradually create authority.

Now, it seems to me that this process is totally wrong, if I may use that word, because if we could find the light in ourselves, then there would be no necessity for any authority whatsoever, for any saviour or master, for any teacher, and that is what I would like to discuss this evening.

This is one of the most fundamental issues in our lives, is it not? We invariably look for a teacher, for a guide, to shape the conduct of our lives; and the moment we look to another for a mode of action, for a way of living, we create authority and are bound by that authority. We attribute to that person great wisdom, great knowledge; our attitude is, "I am ignorant but you know, you are more experienced, therefore tell me what to do." This attitude invariably breeds the sense of fear, does it not? And does it not also bring about the disciplining of oneself according to the authority of an idea or a person?

So, where there is authority created by oneself there must also be the desire to achieve what that authority offers, or what one wants from that authority. Therefore one begins to discipline oneself in order to achieve, through a gradual process of the

mind, what one thinks is true. To me this whole process is totally false, because that which is true, whatever name you may like to give it, cannot come into being through any control of the mind, through any form of discipline, or through following any authority. What we are seeking in this process is essentially self-perpetuation, which is not the search for truth at all. It is merely the continuation of one's own gratification in a more subtle form.

Surely, as long as we follow, imitate, have an authority, the mind can never be free; for freedom is at the beginning, not at the end. This extraordinary thing which may be called truth, love, or what you will, cannot come into being through any form of obedience to authority, and there are different types of authority. There is the authority of another who is supposed to know, and whose authority the so-called individual may reject, but there is also the authority of experience, of memory, which is much more subtle.

Being confused, out of my confusion I look to another, to a teacher, to a book, to an organisation, to bring me peace or to help me find out what is true; but when I am confused my search will also be confused, and my action will be the outcome of this confusion. So what is important, surely, is to free the mind from all sense of authority, from all giving of value to someone else's experience and therefore imitating, following.

Now, is it possible to find this light within oneself and not look to another? I think it is possible, and that it is the only way. There is no other way, and it requires considerable insight, arduous investigation into oneself. The disciplining of the mind, the following of various teachers, the practice of yoga—all these things are empty, utterly futile to a man who is really serious, because there is self-knowledge, the real thing, only through oneself, it cannot be found through another.

But most of us are unwilling to undertake the arduous task of looking into ourselves, so we turn to somebody else who will help us out of our confusion, out of our misery, thereby further increasing our confusion and misery. This love, this truth, or what name you will, obviously cannot be found through another. So, can we as individual human beings discover directly for ourselves what is true and what is false? I think it is very important to ask ourselves this question.

To find out for ourselves what is true, must we not put aside all authority? Must we not discard the authority of the book, the authority of the priest, the authority of the Masters, of the Saviours, of the various religious teachers, of those who practise yoga, and all the rest of it? Which means, really, that we must be able to stand alone, without support, without looking to another for any kind of encouragement. It is like taking a journey where there is no guide. Where there is no guide the mind must be extraordinarily alert to every form of deception, and it is only when one has totally put aside all sense of authority, all desire for guidance, that one is capable of looking into oneself without fear. It is fear that makes us turn to others for guidance.

We deeply want to be secure, do we not? We want to be certain that we shall arrive, that we shall gain this state of immortality, of truth, of love, of peace. Because we are uncertain of ourselves and of our capacity to find, we look to another to guide us, and in the very process of looking to another we create authority, which brings into being the practice of discipline, and all the rest of it.

So, can we undertake by ourselves the journey to find out? In the very asking of this question there is the beginning of freedom, and it is only the free mind that can discover, not the mind that is bound by tradition, by authority, by discipline and control. The mind that is free is capable of facing itself completely as it is, and

it is only such a mind that can find out what is true, not the mind that is frightened and therefore follows, imitates.

This evening, instead of answering questions, I would like if I may to suggest that we discuss what I have just said. In discussing together you and I must stick to the point and not deviate or make long speeches. We are trying to find out through discussion, not whether you are right or I am right, or whether we should or should not follow, but the truth of this whole problem of following, and to do this we must not just make statements. We must together investigate the problem, which is very complex, because our whole life is a process of imitation from childhood till we die. Society, tradition, the established values, all make us conform, copy. To function in society, you most obviously conform to the pattern of society, you have to adjust yourself to its values. But the truly religious man is free of society, society being the values of greed, envy, ambition, success, fear.

Now, this evening can we discuss or verbally exchange what each one of us thinks about this particular matter of following, disciplining, imitating? I think it would be worth while if we could discuss it easily, spontaneously, freely, so that you yourself experience the truth of the fact that the mind invents stages as the one who knows and the one who does not know, as the master and the disciple, the leader and the follower. As long as we think in terms of stages, time, achievement, there must be this illusory idea of following somebody. Where there is love, reality, there is obviously not the teacher and the follower; and in talking it over together, can we directly experience this state? I do not think it is very difficult. It is difficult only when we dogmatically or obstinately assert that we must follow, that there must be a compulsion to hold us to a particular pattern of behaviour, other-

wise we shall be lost. Any person who makes such an assertion is obviously not inquiring, he is merely accepting a certain tradition and is afraid to face himself as he is.

So, let us see if we can discuss this matter, and if I may I shall stop those who are not really sticking to the point. We are trying to find out if the mind can actually free itself now, as we are discussing, from this fear of not achieving truth or happiness, which drives it to follow somebody, to set up another as the saviour whom it must obey. This is the whole point which we are discussing.

Questioner: Yes, sir, it can be done if we have the proper authority to help us, just as we have medical authority to tell us what to do and what not to do when we are ill.

KRISHNAMURTI: Just a minute. You have medical authority, but you do not put the doctor on a pedestal, you do not worship him, you do not mould your mind according to his dictates. This is a difficult problem. We are trying to find out how your mind or my mind functions, and whether it can be free from the fear of not achieving an end.

Questioner: Must one lead a solitary life?

KRISHNAMURTI: I am not suggesting that you should lead a solitary life. You cannot live in isolation. But for most of us all relationship is conflict, and as we do not know how to deal with it, we look to somebody to help us.

Questioner: If I am stupid, what then?

KRISHNAMURTI: What actually takes place when I am stupid? Do I ever discover that I am stupid, or am

I told I am stupid? And what is the immediate reaction? I want to be clever, so I make an effort to be more clever, more intelligent than I am; and the moment I demand the more I have already set a goal which inculcates fear in me. Whereas, if I am capable of looking at what I am, at the fact that I am stupid, surely that very looking at what is brings about a transformation of what is. A stupid mind can never be intelligent through trying to be, but the very recognition that it is stupid has already brought a transformation in itself. That is an obvious fact, is it not, sir?

Questioner: It merely means that the mind has a knowledge that it never had before.

KRISHNAMURTI: What do you mean, sir?

Questioner: Previously it thought it was stupid, now it knows it is stupid.

KRISHNAMURTI: Please watch your own reactions. If I realise that I am stupid, the immediate reaction is that I must do something about it, so I strive, I make an effort. Whereas, if I acknowledge I am stupid without trying to do something about it, that very acknowledgment or awareness of my stupidity actually brings a change within, does it not?

Questioner: May I say that it does not entail fear to find joy, peace and security in following the Saviour.

KRISHNAMURTI: All right, why do we follow at all? This is complex, it is a deep psychological problem, so let us go into it simply. Do we follow anybody? If we do, why do we follow?

Questioner: Because the other is much more clever than we are.

Questioner: Sir, may I with great respect and deference ask you please to qualify what you mean by the mind.

KRISHNAMURTI: That is a question which is not to the point, if I may humbly point it out. We follow, do we not? We are following a book, a saviour, a teacher, a guru, an ideal, a standard. Or is this not so?

Questioner: You say, sir, that if we seek truth we may not seek outside authority. What then is the first step?

KRISHNAMURTI: I am going to come to that soon, but first let us see what we actually do. We follow, do we not? Why?

Questioner: Because we are afraid. It seems that there is a certain gratification involved in following.

KRISHNAMURTI: We are not yet discussing the process of following. The fact is that we follow. Why? Please do not answer me. I am asking in order for you to find out for yourself, not to verbalise and tell me. Please, what we are doing here is very important. If we can do this really intelligently it will lead us to great depths, because we are finding out how our minds operate, what our thinking process is.

The fact is that we follow. Why do we follow? Please do not answer me immediately. Investigate, go into it. Why does one follow? There are different types of following. You follow what the doctors say, what your boss in the office says, or you are being dominated by your wife, by your husband, by the neighbour. You follow tradition, the edicts of society, the opinion of another. You follow the beliefs and dogmas of a religious organisation, or you follow what the priests say, what the sacred books say. This is what we are actually doing, and we never question why we

do it. Now, I am asking myself, and I hope you are asking yourself, why does one follow?

Questioner: If through introspection I realise why I follow, then maybe I shall cease to follow and shall act in a way which I feel is correct and free. Yet the freedom which I practise may be harmful to somebody else.

KRISHNAMURTI: Let us go into this slowly, if you do not mind. The fact is that I follow, and I want to know why I follow, the inward nature of it. I want to unearth, open up the psychological factor that makes me follow. One follows in a worldly sense for obvious reasons. Having a job, I know I must do what the boss says. This much is fairly clear. But what we are discussing is, why do I psychologically follow another?

Questioner: Do you feel that you have experienced this freedom?

KRISHNAMURTI: I can answer that question, but it is irrelevant, is it not? If I say "yes" or "no", what value will it have? How can you judge? You can only judge according to your standards, according to your psychological inclination or disinclination. But please, this is irrelevant, it is unimportant. What we are trying to find out directly, each one of us, is why we follow psychologically. If we go slowly, step by step, we shall begin to see the process of our own thinking, what is taking place in our minds, in our hearts, of which we are now unconscious.

Questioner: Are you suggesting that by analysing his experiences the individual can find freedom of expression?

KRISHNAMURTI: No, sir, I am not suggesting that at all. I question the whole accumulation of what we call experience, whether it has any valid-

ity at all, because experience is merely a conditioned response. But I don't want to go into that for the moment.

We are asking ourselves why we follow. Is it habit?

Questioner: I do not follow. I lead the way.

KRISHNAMURTI: Then you are a leader. If you are a leader psychologically, there must be a follower for you to lead, and he who is a leader is also a follower.

Questioner: Sir, don't you realise that to follow a person is not necessarily to be his follower? One is not his follower if one just treats him as a milestone.

KRISHNAMURTI: I am trying to find out why you or I follow psychologically.

Questioner: Are we not seeking personal proof?

KRISHNAMURTI: You are jumping so far ahead.

Questioner: When the intuition is aroused we do not follow, we obey what the intuition says.

KRISHNAMURTI: Please, when we talk about intuition, the inner voice, what do we mean by that? The inner voice may be entirely false. Please, I am not trying to destroy your intuition. I am trying to find out whether intuition is true or false. Surely, until you understand the whole process of desire, conscious as well as unconscious, you cannot rely on intuition, because desire may bring you to certain "facts" which are not facts at all. The unconscious desire to be or not to be something makes you accept or reject, therefore you must first understand the whole

process of your desire and not say, "Intuition tells me this is true."

Let me take a very simple example and you will see it. We all die, fortunately or unfortunately, and my desire for continuity is very strong, as it is in most people. When I hear the word "reincarnation", my intuition says, "Yes, that is true." But is it my intuition, or my desire? My desire to continue is so embedded, so strong, that it takes the form of so-called intuition, which has no meaning at all. Whereas, if I can understand this extraordinary thing called desire, then death will have quite a different significance.

Well, let us come back. Why do you or I psychologically follow another? Are we aware that we are following, not only a person, but a teaching or an ideal? I have set up an ideal of the perfect man, the perfect life, the perfect goal, and I follow that. Why? Please do not merely listen to me, but look at the operation of your own mind. You see, you are probably disinclined to put this question to yourself, because the moment you inquire why you follow, many things in your daily life, your Masters, your teachers, guides, philosophers, your books and ideals can no longer be accepted, they have to be investigated, which means that there must be the freedom to investigate, to find out.

So, why do you have an ideal? Why do you follow? Obviously, you follow in order to reach something. You have guides, have you not? Being confused, you have some teacher—he may be in India, or standing on the platform now, or it may be somebody you know around the corner—who tells you what to do. Please see this. One is confused, miserable, in conflict within oneself, so one goes to somebody.

Questioner: It may be that one has an inferiority complex.

KRISHNAMURTI: It is not a question of inferiority or superiority complexes. I am looking at the fact that I am confused. I am confused and you are not confused, at least I think you are not confused, so in my confusion I follow you—you being the Master, the Saviour, the leader. My choice is made in confusion, therefore whoever I choose is also confused, including the politicians. So, being confused, what am I to do? Surely, I have to understand my confusion and not look to somebody else to help me out of it.

Questioner: But one can follow and still not be confused.

KRISHNAMURTI: Will I follow if I am not confused?

Questioner: One can follow in the sense that one agrees with the other's philosophy.

KRISHNAMURTI: Sorry, you are missing my point.

Questioner: I am not confused.

KRISHNAMURTI: Then you are out of the picture. Sir, this is not a debate. Please take this seriously, it is not a laughing matter. If I am not confused, then I do not need to follow anybody; then I am my own light, something has happened to me which puts me out of this chaos. But most of us are not in that position. We are confused, we have great sorrow, insoluble problems, and we look to somebody to help us out of our confusion; but that very choice is the product of confusion, so the result is greater confusion. This is fairly obvious, is it not?

Now, if I do not follow, if I do not go to another but say, "Let me understand this confusion", then what happens? What happens when I simply acknowledge that I am confused? I

don't rush about looking for someone to help me. I see there is confusion, and I remain with it. I know I have created this confusion and that no one else can resolve it—which does not mean that I am cut off, isolated, but I am fundamentally alone, and my whole attitude is that I am willing to discuss with another. I do not follow any authority because I want to solve this problem of confusion, so I begin to tackle it, to find out what confusion is.

So the problem is, why do we follow? Is it that we are afraid? The Master, the teacher, the priest, or the sacred book says there is a state of bliss, and we want to achieve it; therefore we follow, we practise a system of yoga, and all the rest of it. So, as long as one has an urgent demand to be something psychologically, as long as one wants to arrive at a state in which one will be unconfused, happy, secure, one must obviously follow. Is that not clear?

Please, you are not merely listening to what I am saying, you are being aware of your own confusion, of your own desire to be something.

Questioner: We follow somebody who we think knows more than we do.

KRISHNAMURTI: You see, that is just it. You follow somebody because he is supposed to be more perfect, which means there is a distance, a gap between you and the other. Is this so, or is it a false creation of the mind? When there is love do you say, "He loves more and I less"? There is only this state of being, is there not? You say you follow somebody because you think he knows more than you do. Does he? And what does he know? Do not answer, but please think it out with me. What does he know? If he is really a true person he knows only a very few things, he knows love, which is not to be envious, not to be greedy, not to be ambitious, to do without the "me".

He may or may not be in that state, and you come along and seek something from him. You see a glitter in his eyes, a smile, and you want to be like this man, so your greed is operating. Because you are confused you go to him and say, "Please tell me how you got into that state", and if he also is confused he will tell you, because such a man thinks he has achieved. It is the man who dies every day to everything he has known, experienced—it is only such a man who can have a really still mind and an uncorrupted heart. But let us come back.

Is it not important for all of us, if we are at all serious about these matters, to be aware of our own activities and investigate, inquire into their validity? We follow out of habit, do we not? It is the tradition of centuries. Every religious book tells us to seek and follow, but they may all be wrong and probably are, so I cannot depend on any of them. I must find out for myself, which does not mean I am greater than somebody else, or that I am self-centred, egotistic, proud. I must find out, I must know that I am confused. So I begin, not by following the ideal, the tradition, the Master, the book, the priest, or my wife or husband, but by seeing the fact of what I am.

In myself I am uncertain, I am miserable, confused, unhappy, and I want to find a way out of all this chaos, so I turn to symbols, to examples, to the teachings of certain persons, because through them I hope to get what I want. It is a very simple psychological process, if I am at all alert, aware. And if I am also aware that nobody can help, that help lies everywhere, not in any one particular direction, then as I walk down the street and look at a person, a dancing leaf, a smile, there may be a spontaneous hint which will uncover a great many things. But this is not possible as long as the mind says, "My leader, my teacher will help me", as long as it obstinately clings to a par-

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ticular book or follows a chosen path, and to be aware of this whole process in oneself is the beginning of freedom, of wisdom.

You do not learn wisdom from books, from teachers. Wisdom is the uncovering of the mind, of the heart, which is self-knowledge. That is why it is very important not to accept anything but to understand the extraordinary process of your own thinking. You require great subtlety to find out the ways of the self, and the mind cannot be subtle when it is merely following, disciplining, controlling, suppressing—which does not mean that you must go to the other extreme, to the opposite.

You see, the difficulty in all this is that we do not look at anything simply. The problem is complex, and in approaching a complex problem there must be simplicity, otherwise you cannot solve it. To be simple you must understand yourself, which you cannot do through what a priest or someone else says. You can only understand yourself directly, and it is not a difficult process, it is not a God-given gift reserved for the few, which is all nonsense. If one has the intention to find out what one is thinking, if one is constantly watching every invention of the mind, looking at it, playing with it, being open to every spontaneous reaction, out of this comes self-knowledge, and this is meditation.

But wisdom does not come to a human being who follows, because he is merely an imitator, he disciplines himself out of greed. A mind which is imitative, fearful, which is merely copying, following, can never have self-knowledge, and without self-knowledge everything becomes a prison, does it not? It is the mind that creates the division of the high and the low. In reality there is neither high nor low, there is only a state of being, and to come to that state there must be freedom at the very beginning, not just at the end.

November 16, 1955

This evening I would like to talk about a very complex problem, and I think the understanding of it will depend a great deal on what kind of attention one gives to it. I want to talk about the problem of fundamental change, and whether such a change can be brought about through effort, through discipline, through an ideation. It is fairly obvious that there must be a fundamental, radical change in each one of us; and how is this change to be brought about? Can it be brought about through the action of will, through deliberate thought, through any form of compulsion? And at what level of consciousness does this change come into being? Does it occur at the superficial or at the deeper levels of consciousness? Or does the change come about beyond all the levels of consciousness?

Before we go into this problem I think it is important to understand what it means to pay the right kind of attention. If one is merely thinking in terms of exclusive experience, that is, listening to and accepting what is being said as a method by which to attain a certain result, then this method can be opposed by another method, and so exclusiveness comes into being; and all exclusiveness is obviously evil. Whereas, if one can put aside all such ways of thinking—your method as opposed to my method, or your particular line as opposed to mine—and listen to find out the truth of the matter, then that truth is neither yours nor mine and there will be no exclusiveness. Then you do not have to read a single book or follow a single teacher to find out what is true, and I think it is important to understand this. Basically, fundamentally there is no path to truth, no method, neither your way nor my way. In religious experience, surely, there is no exclusiveness, it is neither Christian, Hindu, nor Buddhist. The moment there is any sense

of exclusiveness, out of this comes evil. So I would suggest that you listen to find out rather than merely to oppose one argument, one ideation or way of thinking with another.

It is obvious, I think, that there must be some kind of radical change, a profound transformation within oneself. How is this change to be brought about? There must be a change in each one of us that will bring with it a totally different outlook, a way of life that is true, not according to any particular person, but true at all times and in every place; and how is this change to be brought about? Will an ideal bring about such a change? The ideal has been established through experience either by oneself or by someone else; and will an ideal of any sort bring about this change, this radical transformation? I think ideals are fictitious, unreal, they are inventions of the mind and have no reality in themselves at all. We hope that through following an ideal the mind will change itself. That is why we all have ideals, the ideal of goodness, the ideal of non-violence, and so on. We hope that by persistently practising, pursuing, submitting to the ideal, we shall bring about a radical change, or at least a change for the better.

Now, do ideals bring about this change, or are they merely a convenient projection of the mind to postpone action? Please, may I ask you not to reject this, but to listen to what I am saying. Most of us are idealists, we have some form of ideal which we have established through habit, through custom, through tradition, through our own volition, and we hope that by conforming to this ideal we shall radically change. But after all, the ideal is merely a projection of the opposite of what *is*. Being violent, I project the ideal of non-violence and try to transform my violence according to that ideal, which creates a constant conflict within me between what *is* and what *should* be.

We think conflict, effort is neces-

sary to bring about this change. Such effort obviously implies discipline, control, constant practice, adjusting oneself to what *should* be. Most of us are accustomed to this way of thinking, and our activities, our outlook and our values are based on it; the what-should-be, the ideal has become extraordinarily dominant in our lives. To me this way of thinking is completely erroneous, and since you are here to find out what the speaker has to say, please listen to it, do not reject it.

I feel that a radical change can come only when there is no effort, when the mind is not trying to become something, not trying to be virtuous—which does not mean that the mind must be non-virtuous. As long as there is effort to achieve virtue there is a continuation of the self, of the "me" who is trying to be virtuous, which is merely another form of conditioning, a modification of what *is*. In this process is involved the question of who is the maker of effort and what he is striving after, which is obviously self-improvement; and as long as there is effort to improve oneself, there is no virtue. That is, as long as there are ideals of any sort there must be effort to conform, to adjust to the ideal, or to become this ideal. If I am violent and I have the ideal of non-violence, there is a conflict, a struggle going on between what *is* and what *should* be. This struggle, this conflict is the state of violence, it is not freedom from violence.

Now, can I look at what *is*, the state of violence, without making an ideal of the opposite? Surely, I am only concerned with violence, and not with how to become non-violent, because the very process of becoming non-violent is a form of violence. So, can I look at violence without any desire to transform it into another state? Please follow patiently to the end what is being said. Can I look at the state which I call violence, or greed, or envy, or whatever it is, without

trying to modify or change it? Can I look at it without any reaction, without evaluating or giving it a name?

Are you following all this? Please experiment with what I am saying and you will see it directly, now, not when you go home.

Being violent, can one look at this state which one has called violence without condemning it? Not to condemn is an extremely complex process, because the very verbalisation of this feeling, the very word "violence" is condemnatory. And can one look at this feeling, at this state which one has called violence, without giving it a name? When one does not give it a name, what is happening? The mind is made up of words, is it not? All thinking is a process of verbalisation. And when one does not give this feeling a name, when one does not term it as violence, is there not a profound revolution taking place in the attention one gives to this feeling?

Let us look at it differently. The mind divides itself as violence and non-violence, so there are supposedly two states: the state which it wants to attain, and the state which is. There is a dualistic process going on, and I feel there can be a radical change only when this dualistic process has altogether ceased, that is, when the totality of consciousness, of the mind, can give complete attention to what is. And the mind cannot give complete attention if there is any sense of condemnation, any desire to change what is, any form of distraction as verbalisation, naming. When attention is complete, then you will find that such attention is in itself the good, and that the good is not this effort to transform what is into something else.

I think this is perhaps a very difficult explanation of a very simple fact. As long as the mind wishes to change, any change is merely a modified continuity of what is, because the mind cannot think of total change. There can be total change only when the

mind pays complete attention to what is, and attention cannot be complete if there is any form of verbalisation, condemnation, justification, or evaluation.

You know, when a question is put, most of us expect a gratifying answer, we want to be told how to get there, or what to do. I am afraid I have no such answer; but what we can do is to look at the problem, go into it together and discover the truth of the matter, and in considering some of these questions let us bear this in mind. To look for an answer which will be gratifying, to want to be told how to get there or what to do, is really an immature way of thinking. But if we can examine the problem, go into it together, in the very unfolding of the problem we shall discover what is true, and then it will be the truth which operates, not you or I who operate on the truth.

Question: Being both a parent and a teacher, and seeing the truth of the freedom of which you speak, how am I to regard and help my children?

KRISHNAMURTI: I think the first question is whether one really comprehends deeply that freedom is at the beginning and not at the end. If as a parent and a teacher I really understand this truth, then my whole relationship with the child changes, does it not? Then there is no attachment. Where there is attachment there is no love. But if I see the truth that freedom is at the beginning, not at the end, then the child is no longer the guarantee, the way of my fulfilment, which means that I do not seek the continuation of myself through the child. Then my whole attitude has undergone a tremendous revolution.

The child is the repository of influence, is he not? He is being influenced, not only by you and me, but by his environment, by his school, by the climate, by the food he eats, by the

books he reads. If his parents are Catholics or Communists, he is deliberately shaped, conditioned, and this is what every parent, every teacher does in different ways. And can we be aware of these multiplying influences and help the child to be aware of them, so that as he grows up he will not be caught in any one of them? So what is important, surely, is to help the child as he matures not to be conditioned as a Christian, as a Hindu, or as an Australian, but to be a totally intelligent human being, and this can take place only if you as the teacher or the parent see the truth that there must be freedom from the very beginning.

Freedom is not the outcome of discipline. Freedom does not come after conditioning the mind, or while conditioning is going on. There can be freedom only if you and I are aware of all the influences that condition the mind, and help the child to be equally aware, so that he does not become entangled in any of them. But most parents and teachers feel that the child must conform to society. What will he do if he does not conform? To most people conformity is imperative, essential, is it not? We have accepted the idea that the child must adjust himself to the civilisation, the culture, the society about him. We take this for granted, and through education we help the child to conform, to adjust himself to society.

But is it necessary that the child should adjust himself to society? If the parent or the teacher feels that freedom is the imperative, the essential thing, and not mere conformity to society, then as the child grows up he will be aware of the influences that condition the mind and will not conform to the present society with its greed, its corruption, its force, its dogmas and authoritarian outlook; and such people will create a totally different kind of society.

We say that some day there is going to be a Utopia. Theoretically it

is very nice, but it does not come into existence, and I am afraid the educator needs educating, as the parent does. If we are only concerned with conditioning the child to conform to a particular culture or pattern of society, then we shall perpetuate the present state with its everlasting battle between ourselves and others, and continue in the same misery. But if there is an understanding of this problem of right attention, which begins not with the child but with the parent and the teacher, then perhaps we shall help to bring about an unconditioning of the mind, which is not a hopeless task. It is a hopeless task only if you as the parent or the teacher feel that it is impossible. But if you perceive the necessity, the urgency, the truth of all this, then that very perception does bring about a revolution within yourself, and therefore you will help the child to grow into an intelligent human being who will put an end to all this misery, strife and sorrow.

Question: All life is a form of ceremony, and the ritual in a church is a divine form of the ceremony of life. Surely you cannot condemn this totally. Or are you condemning, not the ritual itself, but only the corruption that arises from the rigidity of the mind?

KRISHNAMURTI: Whether they are divine or not divine, I wonder why we are so fond of ceremonies, rituals, why they are so important to us? To me the whole ceremonial approach to life, the church and its ceremonies included, is totally immature and absurd. Ceremonies have no significance, they are vain repetitions, though you may give divine significance to the ceremonies of the church. To say, "Ceremonies are my way and not your way" is to breed evil, so let us look at it dispassionately to find out the truth of the matter.

There is the daily repetition of going to bed, getting up, going to the

office, doing certain things, but would you call it a ceremony? Do we give extraordinary meaning to all this, a divine significance? Do we regard it as something from which to get inspiration? Obviously not. There are various daily actions which may become habitual, but perhaps we have thought them out intelligently and are not caught in them. But when we perform ceremonies, the rituals of the church, and so on, do we not look to them for inspiration? We feel good when the ceremony is going on, we feel a certain sense of beauty and we are quiet. The repetition dulls our minds. The ritual absorbs us, it temporarily takes us away from ourselves and we like that feeling, so we give extraordinary meaning to all this. These are simple, obvious facts. Ceremonies are also used for exploitation, to control people, to bring them to a sense of unity which they do not feel. The present society is a society of disunion, but in the church, in rituals, through vain repetition people are temporarily . . . (*Interruption*).

Please, would you mind sitting down? This is not a discussion. I am talking, I am not attacking, so please do not defend. I am showing you what is. You can take it or leave it. It does not matter to me.

Questioner: What you are saying is not the truth.

KRISHNAMURTI: Please, if you think ceremonies are necessary, perform them. But if you are willing to examine the whole issue, let us go into it, and you will see how the mind is caught in habits, in vain repetitions, in sensations, in obedience to some authority. A mind that is caught in habit is obviously not free, and such a mind cannot find out what is true.

Through habit—I am not for the moment talking about physical habit—the mind seeks a sensation, it becomes psychologically attached to a particular form of ceremony from

which it derives a certain satisfaction, a sense of security. Such a mind is obviously not free, and it cannot discover what is true. It is only a free mind that can discover, not the mind that is clogged with beliefs, dogmas, fear, with the constant demand for security.

Throughout the centuries every religion has had some kind of ceremony, some kind of ritual to hold the people together, and in ceremonies the people themselves find a certain ease, a forgetfulness of their tiresome daily existence. Their everyday life is boring, and religious rituals, like the processions of kings and queens, offer an escape. But the mind that is seeking escape cannot find that which is timeless, immortal.

It does not matter which church says that ceremonies are divine, they are still the inventions of the mind, of the human mind that is conditioned. It is not a matter of my path as opposed to your path, nor are there people who are going to arrive at the truth through ceremonies, while others will arrive by a different way. There is only truth, not your way and my way. To think in terms of your way and my way is false because it tends to exclusiveness, and what is exclusive is evil.

Question: We have been taught to believe in personal immortality and in the continuation of the individual life after death. Is this real to you also?

KRISHNAMURTI: Is there personal immortality after death? Is there continuity of the "me" with its accumulation of experiences, knowledge, qualities and relationships? Does all that continue when I die? And if it does not continue, then what is the value of this whole process? If the cultivation of character, with its struggles, joys and miseries, merely comes to an end at death, then what significance has life?

Now, let us look into it. It is not

a matter of what I believe and what you believe, because beliefs have nothing to do with the discovery of truth. A mind that is caught in belief, whether it is belief in reincarnation or in God, is incapable of discovering or experiencing what is true. I think it is really important to understand this, if you will bear the repetition, because the mind is taught, conditioned either to believe or not to believe, which is obviously what is happening in the world. The Communist does not believe in immortality, he says it is all nonsense, because he has been taught, conditioned not to believe, so he fulfils himself in the State, which for him is the only good. Others believe in the hereafter, and they are hoping for some form of resurrection or reincarnation. So when you ask me, "Do you also believe?", I am afraid that is not the question at all because, if you will pay attention, we are going to find out the truth of the matter.

Does the "I", the personal "me", continue? What is the "me"? Various tendencies, traits of character, beliefs, the accumulation of knowledge, experience, the memory of pain, of joy and suffering, the sense of *my* love, *my* hate—all this is the "me" of the moment, and realising that it is a very transient "me" we say that beyond it there is the permanent soul, something which is divine. But if that thing is permanent, real, divine, it is beyond time and therefore does not think in terms of dying or having continuity. If there is the soul, or whatever other word you may give to it, it is something beyond time, and you and I cannot think about it because our thinking is conditioned. Our thinking is the outcome of time, therefore we cannot possibly think of that which is beyond time. So all our fear is the product of time, is it not?

Again, this is not a matter of my way and your way. We are examining, trying to find out what actually is. And can we look at what is without introducing the belief in something

beyond, something which we all want, something super-permanent, a so-called spiritual entity which is timeless? We want to know if we shall survive, and we ask this question primarily because we are frightened of death. So what do we do? We try to have immortality here in our property, do we not? Our whole society is based on this. Property is yours and mine to be handed on to our children, which is a form of immortality through our children. We seek immortality through name, through achievement, through success, we want the perpetuation of ourselves, the endless fulfilment of ourselves. Knowing that we are going to die, that death is inevitable, we say, "What is beyond?" We want a guarantee that there is continuity, so we believe in the hereafter, in reincarnation, in resurrection, in anything to avoid that extraordinary state which we call death. We invent innumerable escapes because none of us wants to die, and all our questions concerning personal immortality are put in the hope of finding a way to avoid that which we fear. But if we can understand death there will be no fear, and then we shall not seek personal immortality either here or in the hereafter. Then our perception, our whole outlook will have undergone a complete revolution. So belief has nothing to do with the discovery of what is true, and we are now going to find out what is true with regard to death.

What is death? Can one experience it while living? Can you and I experience what death is, not at the moment when through disease or accident there is a cessation of all thinking, but while we are living, vital, clearly and fully conscious? Can you and I find out what it means to die, can we enter the house of death while we are sitting here looking at the whole problem?

What is it to die? Obviously, it is to die to everything that one has accumulated, to every experience, to

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every memory, to all attachments. To die is to cease to be the self, the "I", is it not? It is to have no sense of continuity as the "me" with all its memories, its hurts, its feeling of vengeance, its desire to fulfil, to become. And can there be the experiencing of this moment when the self is not? Then surely we shall know what death is. The mind is the known, the result of the known, the known being all the experiences of countless yesterdays, and it is only when the mind frees itself from the known, and so is part of the unknown, that there is no fear of death. Then there is no death at all. Then the mind is not seeking personal immortality. Then there is the state of the unknown, which has its own being. But to find that out the mind has to free itself from the known. You may have innumerable beliefs which give you comfort, a sense of security, but until there is freedom from the known there will always be the gnawing of fear. That which continues can never be creative. Only that which is unknown is creative, and the unknown comes into being only when the mind is free from the idea of the perpetuation of the known.

You see, the difficulty with most of us is that we want some kind of continuity, and so we invent illusory beliefs. After all, beliefs are merely explanations, and we are satisfied with explanations. But explanations have very little meaning except to a man who wants some form of security, and to find out what is true the mind must reject all explanations, whether of the church, of the priests, of the books, or of those who want to believe.

When the mind is free of all explanations, free of the known, you will find the unknown is death, and then there is no fear. That state is totally different and it cannot possibly be conceived of by a mind that is conditioned in the known. When the mind is free from the known, the unknown is.

November 19, 1955

This evening I would like to discuss what is perhaps rather a complex problem, but I think we can make it quite simple. You see, our minds are full of conclusions, knowledge, experiences, they are crowded with the things that we know. And is it possible to free the mind from the known? The known is made up of the facts, the struggles, the sorrows, the greed of everyday living, as well as the accumulated experience of man through centuries; and is it possible for the mind to recognise these facts that make up the known, and yet be free of them so that some other state may come into being?

When one's mind is full of conclusions, assumptions, experiences, filled with the happiness, the travail, the sorrows that have pursued one all through life, there is then no freedom to look at anything new. If, for instance, in listening to what I am saying you have assumed certain things about me—that you know and I do not, or that I know and you do not—or your mind is shaped, conditioned by what you have read so that you listen with a preconception, a conclusion, a background, then your mind is not simple; and it seems to me that one needs great simplicity to find out if there is something which is not a mere product of the mind.

If the mind is functioning all the time only within the field of the known, as it does with most of us, we find this area so limited, so narrow and petty that the mind begins to invent ideals, imaginations, delusions through which it escapes from the actual. Most religions offer such an escape, and the so-called religious person is full of fantastic ideas, beliefs and dogmas.

So the mind functions all the time within the field of the known, does it not? That is an actual fact which we are not seeking to deny or put aside. And the question is whether

such a mind is capable of investigating or receiving something which is not merely an experience or a conclusion of the known. One cannot forget the road by which one travels, the name of the street in which one lives, and so on, that would be too absurd. But the mind gets used to the known and develops habits, it gets caught in certain conclusions, assumptions, postulates, and so we think in this area all the time; therefore the mind is never free to be really simple, and we think that the more we learn, read, pray, or practise a particular kind of meditation, the better we shall be able to find something beyond.

So the question is, can the mind, being the residue, the result of the known, of knowledge, of experience, free itself from the known and find something beyond? I would like to discuss this with you, if you will, because I think it is an important question. When we talk about religious experience, we mean going beyond the self, the "me", the known, do we not? Or perhaps most of us do not think in those terms at all. But it seems to me that the more thoughtful, alert and aware we are, and the more deeply we go into this question, the more obvious it is that any real revolution can come into being only through the religious person; and the religious person is not one who believes, who follows certain dogmas or practises a particular form of meditation. To me, the religious person is one who is aware of the known and does not allow the known to interfere with his search into the unknown.

This is what I would like to discuss with you this evening, and I hope the problem is clear.

Questioner: Why is it more important or more vital to be concerned with the unknown, however real, than with the known, which is both real and present?

KRISHNAMURTI: I have insisted in

all my talks that the mind must be free from the known to find something which may be called the unknown. If I have preconceived ideas, assumptions about you, surely I do not understand you. Now, can the mind be freed of all these assumptions, beliefs, dogmas, habits of thought? To put it differently, can the mind be made simple so that it is capable of a completely new experience, not an experience based on the old, an experience which is projected? Can the mind be open to the unknown, whatever that is, and yet be aware of the known, of the present fact? Is the problem clear? If it is, then let us discuss it. I think this is an important problem to understand, because if we do not understand this problem we shall be going around in circles thinking we are experiencing something very real when it is merely a projection of our own desire, and therefore living in an illusory world of our own imagination.

So, a religious man is one who is inwardly free from the known, is he not?

Does all this mean anything to you? After all, we have been brought up as Christians, Hindus, Moslems, Buddhists, or what you will, with certain dogmas, traditions and beliefs, and the mind is so conditioned by its background that all its experiences are consciously or unconsciously the outcome of this conditioning. As a Hindu I may have visions of the various gods which the Hindu culture has imprinted on me, just as you who have been brought up as Christians may have visions of Christ, and so on. Such a vision we call a religious experience; but actually, psychologically, what is taking place? The mind is merely projecting, in the form of an image, a symbol, the quality of the background it has inherited, is it not? Therefore the experience is not real at all, but the conditioning is a fact.

Now, can a mind on which have been imprinted the culture, the traditions, the dogmas of Christianity, of

Hinduism, or of Buddhism, know its conditioning? Can it be aware of and free itself from this conditioning, so that it is able to find out if there is something more than the mere activity of the mind which is always functioning within the field of the known?

I think the question is clear by now, so let us discuss it.

Questioner: Whatever may be one's conditioning, there is experience going on which is real, and that experience is not related to one's conditioning. Such experience gives one proof that certain things are true.

KRISHNAMURTI: Please go slowly. Do not assume that you are right and I am wrong, or that you are wrong and I am right. This requires thorough going into, investigating.

Is there experience apart from my conditioning which gives me proof that something which others have said is true? That is, I see my conditioning, but besides this conditioning I experience something which proves to me that my conditioning is right. Now, is there experience apart from and unconnected with my conditioning? If I am a Buddhist, for example, and I experience a vision of the Buddha, or of the Buddhistic state, is that experience unconnected with my conditioning as a Buddhist? Yet such an experience convinces many people that their conditioning is right, that what they believe is true. If I happen to be a Communist and do not believe in gods and all the rest of the nonsense, obviously I do not have that experience at all. I may have visions of a wondrous Utopian State, but not of the Buddha or the Christ. It is the background or conditioning that creates the image, the vision, and this experience only convinces me further that what I believe is true. So when we dissociate experience from the background of our thinking, surely that division is without validity, it has no meaning.

Questioner: What would be the nature of an experience which was not resulting from the background of the mind?

KRISHNAMURTI: That is right, sir, surely that is the question. What kind of experience is it that is free of the background? And can there be such an experience? We cannot assume anything. If we are going to find out the truth of the matter there must be no assumption, no sense of obedience to any authority.

The question has been asked, what kind of experience is it that is not dictated by the background, that is not the outcome of the background? Now, can one describe this experience? I am not trying to avoid the question. Can you or I communicate to another this experience which is not the outcome of the background? Obviously not. First we must see the truth of the fact that all our experiences are dictated by the background, and not imagine that we are experiencing something dissociated from the background.

May I here suggest that those of you who are taking notes should not do so. You and I are trying to experience directly, now, the thing we are discussing, and if you take notes you are not really listening to what is being said. If you take notes you are doing so in order to think about it tomorrow. But thinking about it directly, now, will have much greater significance than thinking about it tomorrow, so may I suggest that you do not distract others and yourself by taking notes.

If one is to find out whether there is an experience which does not arise from the conditioning of the mind, must one not first see the truth of the fact that all experience is at present either the outcome of one's background, one's conditioning, or the reaction of that background to challenge? Do you see this fact? Are you conscious of the fact that your mind is conditioned as a Christian, as a Socialist, a Communist, or what you

will, and that all your experiences and reactions spring from this conditioning? That is so, is it not?

Questioner: Whether one is a Christian, or belongs to some other religion, is largely a matter of destiny.

KRISHNAMURTI: Please do not introduce words like destiny. That is off the main subject, it is not what we are discussing for the time being. Not that we cannot discuss it another time, but we must restrict ourselves to the point.

Questioner: By the word "experience" do you not really mean understanding or knowledge?

KRISHNAMURTI: Those three words, experience, knowledge and understanding, are related to each other, are they not?

Questioner: But they are not the same.

KRISHNAMURTI: No, of course not, sir. They are related to each other. If I want to understand not only what you are saying but the totality of you, I must not have a preconception about you, I must not have a prejudice or retain in memory either the injuries you may have caused me, or your pleasant flatteries. I must be free of all that in order to understand you, must I not? Understanding comes only when I can meet you anew, not through the screen of experience.

This is a sufficiently complicated question, so do not let us make it more complicated. If it is clear what we mean by understanding, and what we mean by experience and knowledge, let us go on.

I cannot understand if my mind reacts according to the limitation of my conditioning. Surely, this much is fairly simple. And is one aware that one reacts according to one's condi-

tioning? Are you aware of the fact that as a Christian, a Communist, a Socialist, or whatever you may happen to be, you defend certain beliefs, religious or non-religious? Are you aware that your mind, being the residue of the past, is limited, and that whatever it may choose or experience is also limited?

Questioner: Is spontaneous love or affection dependent on the background?

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, do we know what spontaneous love is? Do you and I know love which is not the outcome of a conditioning, of a motive, of a social morality, of a sense of duty or responsibility? Do we know love in which there is no attachment? Or is it that we have read of such a state and we want to be in that state?

Coming back to the point, are we aware, you and I, that our minds are so complex, so conditioned, that there is in us nothing original, if I may use this word without being misunderstood? Are we capable of original understanding, of experiencing something uncontaminated, untouched, pristine, or are we mere gramophone records repeating what we have read, or what our background instigates? Are not fear and desire dictating some fancy, some imagination or hope? And can one be free of all this? One can be free, surely, only when one is aware that one's visions, hopes, beliefs are the outcome of one's own desire and are based on one's particular conditioning.

Is it clear up to this point?

Audience: Yes.

KRISHNAMURTI: Now, what do you mean by yes? Please do not be impatient or laugh it off. Have you merely accepted an explanation, or are you directly aware of the fact that you are conditioned, apart from

the explanation? Do you see the difference between the two?

Audience: Yes.

KRISHNAMURTI: Please go slowly.

Questioner: *Would it be that as we become more aware of present things it creates the incoming of a new force?*

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, I am not talking about the incoming or outgoing of a new force. What I am talking about is very simple. Do you know that you are conditioned? And when you say "yes", does this statement reflect merely the verbal understanding of a verbal explanation, or are you aware that you are conditioned? Now, which is it?

Questioner: *I am aware that I am conditioned.*

KRISHNAMURTI: Please be patient. This is important.

Questioner: *If I am conditioned, can I be aware that I am conditioned?*

KRISHNAMURTI: Can I be aware that I am nationalistic, that I have certain beliefs, dogmas, prejudices? Can I know this? Surely I can, can I not? So, do I know that I have assumptions, prejudices, certain experiences which are the outcome of my conditioning, and that my mind is therefore very limited? Am I aware of this, not theoretically but actually? Am I directly experiencing the fact that my mind is conditioned?

Questioner: *One can only say that one was conditioned.*

KRISHNAMURTI: Do you mean that before you came to this meeting you

were conditioned, and now you are not conditioned?

Questioner: *We can know that we had an original experience only after we have had it, when the mind is again full of the known.*

KRISHNAMURTI: Please, this is a very complex problem, but if you will go slowly into it you will see for yourself the whole significance of what we are talking about. As human beings we are not creative, our minds are burdened with memories, sorrows, greed, dogmas, the nationalistic spirit, and so on. And is it possible for the mind to see all this and extricate itself? Surely, the mind can be free only when it knows that it is not free, that it is conditioned. Do I know this, am I directly experiencing this conditioning? Do I really see that I am prejudiced, that I have many assumptions? We have assumed that there is or is not God, that there is immortality or annihilation, that there is resurrection or reincarnation, and many other things; and can the mind be aware of all these assumptions, or at least of some of them?

Questioner: *When you say "we", do you mean that your mind as well as ours is conditioned by these traditions and greeds which have moulded us? What do you mean by "we"?*

KRISHNAMURTI: It is a way of speaking. We are looking at the mind, yours and mine. Let us stick to this for the moment.

Questioner: *As long as we are satisfied, what is the problem?*

KRISHNAMURTI: As long as you are satisfied, as long as you say it is perfectly all right to be a Christian, a Hindu, or a Communist, it is not a problem.

Questioner: Then we have to be dissatisfied.

KRISHNAMURTI: No, it is not that you have to be dissatisfied. But you are dissatisfied, are you not?

Audience: Yes.

KRISHNAMURTI: You see, the problem of dissatisfaction or discontent is quite different. If I am not satisfied I want to find some way to be satisfied, so I do not accept the present state, the present condition.

Questioner: Do you imply that verbalisation is a bar to understanding, to direct experience?

KRISHNAMURTI: Obviously, because the whole process of the mind is verbalisation. I may not use a word, I may have instead an image or a symbol. If I have a symbol in my mind, the Hindu or the Christian idea of reality, of God, or what you will, even though I do not verbalise or put it into words, that symbol prevents the understanding of the real.

Please, let us not go into these various points, even though they are related, but let us stick to one thing. Can you and I know, while sitting here, that we are conditioned? Can we be conscious, fully aware of that fact?

Audience: Yes.

Questioner: What has all this got to do with the primary need of every human being, which is food, clothing and shelter?

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, we all need sufficient food, clothing and shelter, each one of us, but there are millions, practically the whole of Asia, who have not got them. An equitable distribution of the physical necessities

is prevented by our psychological greed, our nationalism, our religious differences. Psychologically we use these necessities to aggrandise our own selves, and if we go slowly into this thing we are discussing you will yourself answer this question instead of asking me. What we are trying to do here is to liberate ourselves from each other so that you and I are original individuals, real human beings, not the mass of the collective.

So, if that is understood, can we say, "I know I am conditioned"?

Questioner: Yes, I know I am conditioned, and I must do something about it. Now, how do I free myself?

KRISHNAMURTI: The lady says that she knows she is conditioned, conditioned in the known. She knows her prejudices, her assumptions, her conscious and unconscious desires, urges, compulsions, and knowing all that she asks, "What can I do, how am I to break through it?" Is that what most of you are asking too?

Audience: Yes.

KRISHNAMURTI: All right. Let us go step by step, and please follow this a little patiently. I am aware that I am conditioned, and my immediate reaction to that awareness is that I must be free from conditioning, so I say, "How am I to be free? What is the method, the system, the process by which to be free?" But if I practise a method I become a slave to the method, which then forms another conditioning.

Questioner: Not necessarily.

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, let this idea float around a little bit. Being aware that I am conditioned, that I am greedy, I want to know how to get rid of it. The question of how to get rid of it is prompted by another form

of greed, is it not? I may practise non-greed day after day, but the motive, the desire to be free from greed, is still greed. Go slowly, please. So the "how" cannot solve the problem, it has only complicated the problem. But the question can be answered totally, as you will presently see for yourself.

If I am fully aware that I am greedy, does not that very awareness free the mind from greed? If I know a snake is poisonous, that is enough, is it not? I do not go near the snake. But we do not see that greed is poison. We like the pleasant sensation of it, we like the comfortable feeling of being conditioned. If we were trying to free the mind from conditioning we might be anti-social, we might lose our job, we might go against the whole tradition of society, so unconsciously we take warning and then the mind asks, "How am I to get rid of it?" So the "how" is merely a postponement of the realisation of the fact. Is this point clear?

What is important, then, is why the mind asks for a method. You will find that there are innumerable methods which say, "Do these things every day and you will get there." But in following the method you have created a habit and to that you are a slave, you are not free. Whereas, if you see that you are conditioned, conditioned to the known, and are therefore afraid of the unknown, if you are fully aware of this fact, then you will find that that very awareness is operating, is already bringing about a measure of freedom which you have not deliberately tried to achieve. When you are aware of your conditioning, actually, not theoretically, all effort ceases. Any effort to be something is the beginning of another conditioning.

So it is important to understand the problem and not find an answer to the problem. The problem is this. The mind, being the result of time, of centuries of conditioning, moves and

has its being in the area of the known. This is the actual fact, it is what is happening in our daily lives. All our thinking, our memories, our experiences, our visions, our inner voices, our intuitions, are essentially the outcome of the known.

Now, can the mind be aware of its own conditioning and not try to battle against it? When the mind is aware that it is conditioned and does not battle against it, only then is the mind free to give its complete attention to this conditioning. The difficulty is to be aware of conditioning without the distraction of trying to do something about it. But if the mind is constantly aware of the known, that is, of the prejudices, the assumptions, the beliefs, the desires, the illusory thinking of our daily life, if it is aware of all this without trying to be free, then that very awareness brings its own freedom. Then perhaps it is possible for the mind to be really still, not just still at a certain level of consciousness and frightfully agitated below. There can be total stillness of the mind only when the mind understands the whole problem of conditioning, how it is conditioned, which means watching, off and on, every movement of thought, being aware of the assumptions, the beliefs, the fears. Then perhaps there is a total stillness of the mind in which something beyond the mind can come into being.

November 23, 1955

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I would like this evening to discuss the problem of time, for if we could really understand this problem I think it would answer many of our questions and probably put a stop totally to this endless desire to find, this urge to discover what is true. To me the search for truth through time has no meaning, and if we could understand the desire, the drive to

find, then perhaps we should be able to look at the problem of time in a different way altogether.

We think that there is a gap or an interval between what is and what *should* be, between the ugly and the beautiful, and that time is necessary to achieve that which is beautiful, that which is true; so our endeavour, our everlasting search is to find a way to bridge this gap. We pursue *gurus*, teachers, we control ourselves, we accept the most fantastic ideas, all in the hope of bridging the gap, and we think that a system of meditation or the practice of discipline is necessary in order to arrive at that which is the absolute, the real, the true. This is what I would like to go into, and I hope you will discuss it with me after I have talked a little.

Now, we accept this process, do we not? All the religious teachers and the sacred books prescribe it, and all religious endeavour is based on it: I am *this*, and I must become *that*. But this process may be entirely false. There may be no gap at all, it may be purely a mental one, a totally unreal division created by the mind in its desire to arrive somewhere, and I think it is very important to understand this. We assume that truth must be achieved through time, through various forms of effort, but this assumption may be utterly illusory, and I think it is. It may be that all we have to do is to perceive the illusion of it, to see, not as a philosophical idea but as a factual reality, that there is no arriving through time, that there is no becoming but only being, and that we cannot be if there is any attempt to achieve an end. To understand, to perceive that, whatever that other state is, it cannot be found or realised through time, we must be capable of thinking very simply and directly, and it seems to me for most of us this is the difficulty. We are so used to making effort to achieve through practice, through discipline, through a process of time, that it has never

occurred to us that this effort may be an illusion.

Now, this evening can we think of this problem entirely differently, and not be concerned with the "how"? Can we look at it as though there were no *gurus*, no teachers, no disciplines, no systems of yoga, and all the rest of it? Can we wipe away all these things and perhaps see directly that which may be called truth, God, or love?

One of our difficulties is that we have accepted this idea that we must make effort through time to achieve, to become, to arrive. Has this idea any reality, or is it merely an illusion? I know that the teachers, the *swamis*, the *yogis*, the various philosophers and preachers, have maintained that effort is necessary, the right kind of effort, the right kind of discipline, because they all have an idea, as we also have, that there is a gap between ourselves and reality; or they have said reality is in us, and having accepted it we ask, "How am I to get to that reality?"

So, can we put aside all assumption, all conception of an end to be achieved through effort, through time? If that whole process is seen to be false, then is there not a state of being, a direct, instantaneous perception without any intermediary? This is not to hypnotise oneself, it is not to say, "I am in that state", which has no meaning at all and is merely the outcome of assumptions and traditions.

Can we go into this problem together?

Questioner: Is physical effort also illusory?

KRISHNAMURTI: What do you think, sir?

Questioner: What do you mean by time?

KRISHNAMURTI: Please, just a minute. May I suggest that we listen to each other and not merely be occupied with our own particular question. This gentleman asked if physical effort is also illusory. Need he ask that question? If we did not make an effort physically, what would happen? It is obvious, is it not? So, either he was asking the question sarcastically, or he was really inquiring where physical effort ceases and the other thing begins in which there is no effort at all.

Psychologically we are making effort, are we not? Our whole desire is to be something psychologically. We want to be virtuous, inwardly peaceful, we want a mind that is silent, a richness of life. That being our psychological urge we consider it essential to make tremendous inward effort, so we become very serious about this effort. If a person makes such an effort and maintains it constantly, if he conforms to an ideal, to a goal, to the so-called purpose of life, and so on, we call him virtuous; but I wonder if such a person is virtuous at all, or is merely pursuing a glorified projection of his own desire?

Now, if one could understand this psychological urge to become, then perhaps physical effort would have quite a different meaning. At present there is conflict between the psychological urge in one direction and physical effort in another. Many of us go to the office every day and are perfectly bored with the whole thing, because psychologically we want to be something else. If there were no psychological urge to be something, then perhaps there would be an integration, a totally different approach to physical activity.

What were you saying, sir?

Questioner: I was interested to find out what you mean by time.

KRISHNAMURTI: Chronological time

is obvious; it exists, it is a fact. But I am using this word "time" in the psychological sense, the time which is necessary to close the gap between me and that which I want to be, to cover the distance which the mind has created between me and that which is God, truth, or what you will. Though the mind has invented this psychological time and insists that it is necessary in order to practise various forms of discipline, in order to achieve bliss, heaven, and all the rest of it, I am questioning—and I hope you are also questioning—its validity, I am asking whether or not it is an illusion.

If there were not effort to arrive, to achieve, to become, we are afraid that we would stagnate, vegetate, are we not? But would we? Are we not deteriorating now in making this effort to become something? The actual fact is that through effort, through time we are trying to bridge the gap between what *is* and what *should* be, which creates a constant battle within ourselves, and this whole process is based on fear, on imitation, not on direct perception or understanding.

So, one of our difficulties is that the mind, which is obviously the result of time, has invented this gap which perpetuates desire, the will to be something; and seeing that desire is part of the process we try to be desireless, so again there is this effort to be, to become.

Now, I am questioning this whole issue, which we have accepted and according to which we live. To me this way of living has no meaning. There is a state in which there is direct perception without effort, and it is effort that is preventing the coming into being of that state. But if you say, "How am I to live without psychological effort?", then you have not understood the problem at all. The "how" again introduces the problem of time. You may perhaps feel that it is necessary to live with-

out effort, that it is the true way to live, and the mind immediately asks, "How am I to achieve that state?" So you are again caught in the process of time.

I do not know if it has happened to you, but there are moments of complete cessation of all effort to be something, and in that state one finds an extraordinary richness of life, a fullness of love. It is not some far-away illusory ideal, but an actuality which is perceived directly, not through time.

You see, this opens up another issue. Is knowledge necessary to that perception? To build a bridge I must have the "know-how", I must be able properly to evaluate certain facts, and so on. If I know how to read I can turn to any book which gives the required facts, but what we do is to accumulate knowledge psychologically. We pursue the various teachers, the wise people, the sages, the saints, the *swamis* and *yogis*, hoping that by accumulating knowledge, by gathering virtue, we shall be able to bridge this gap. But is there not a different kind of release, a freedom, not from anything or towards anything, but a freedom in which to be?

Is this all too abstract?

Audience: No.

Questioner: We are already free if we realise that we are one with God.

KRISHNAMURTI: Please, sir, that is an assumption, is it not? The mind assumes in order to arrive. A conclusion helps one to struggle towards that conclusion. Whether we say, "I am one with God", or "I am merely the product of environment", it is an assumption according to which we try to live. You see, that is what I mean by knowledge. You may say, "I am one with life", but what significance has it? This whole layer of assump-

tions, gathered through one's own effort or from the effort of others, may be totally wrong; so why should one assume anything? Which does not mean that one must have an empty mind.

Questioner: Is there not in all this a certain fear of desire itself?

KRISHNAMURTI: Is there fear of having desire? Let us go into this a little bit. What is fear? Surely, fear comes only in the movement away from what *is*. I am *this* and I do not like it, or I do not want you to find out about it, so I am moving away from it. The moving away from it is fear. There is desire, the desire to be rich and a hundred other desires. In fulfilling or in not fulfilling desire there is conflict, there is fear, there is frustration, agony, so we want to avoid the pain which desire brings but hold on to the things of desire which are pleasurable. This is what we try to do, is it not? We want to hold the pleasure which desire brings and avoid the pain which desire also brings. So our conflict is in accepting or clutching the one while avoiding the other, and when we ask, "How am I to be free of sorrow, how am I to be perpetually happy and at peace?", it is essentially the same problem.

Questioner: Sir, will you tell us what is a better method to attain oneness beyond the mind?

KRISHNAMURTI: Please, you are not listening to what I am saying. This desire to be one with everything is the same problem as wanting to be successful in the world, is it not? Instead of saying, "I want to have money and how am I to get it?" you say, "I want to realise God, or truth, or oneness, and how am I to do it?" Now, both are on the same level, one

is not superior to or more spiritual than the other, because both have the same motive. Do please listen to this. One thing you call worldly, the other you call unworldly, spiritual, but if you examine the motive, it is essentially the same. The man who pursues money may look up to the man who says, "I want to be spiritual, I want to achieve God", because wanting to be spiritual is considered virtuous, but if you go into this matter seriously you will see that the two pursuits are intrinsically the same. The man who wants a drink and the man who wants God are essentially the same, because they both want something. One goes to the pub and gets a drink immediately, while the other has this time interval, but there is no fundamental difference between them.

This is very serious, it is not a laughing matter. We are all caught in the same struggle. And is it possible to have this extraordinary sense of completeness, of reality, this fullness of love, not tomorrow, not through time, but now? Can there be direct perception, which means awakening to all the false thinking, to the pursuit of the "how" and seeing it as false?

Questioner: Sir, is not time necessary to this perception?

KRISHNAMURTI: Is not time necessary to perceive what *is*? You see, we all assume this, it is the accepted thing, and this is what I have been questioning. Sirs, this is not a matter of "yes" or "no", of saying "You go your way and I go mine." It is not at all like that. We are trying to understand the problem, we are trying to go into it very deeply. We are not making any assumption, any dogmatic or authoritarian assertion, but are trying to feel out this problem, and we can feel it out only when the heart is not obstinate. You may investigate, but if you are obstinate,

that obstinacy prejudices your investigation.

The lady says she feels time is necessary. Why? Do you understand what we mean by time? Not chronological time, but the time created by desire, by our psychological intentions and pursuits. You say that time is necessary to realise truth, and you have accepted it as the inevitable process. But someone comes along and says this process may be unnecessary, it may be utterly false, illusory, so let us find out why you think it is necessary.

Questioner: I think time is necessary for the realisation of freedom.

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, please go into it slowly, deeply, and you will see. Why do we think time is necessary? Is it not because we regard truth as being over there while we are here, so we say this distance, this gap must be covered through time? That is one of the reasons, is it not? The ideal, the what *should* be is over there, and to arrive at that I must have time, time being the process which will bridge the gap. Are you following all this?

Questioner: No, sir, not quite.

KRISHNAMURTI: Let me put it differently. Where there is the desire to become, psychologically there must be time. As long as I have an ambition, either for worldly things or for the so-called spiritual things, to fulfil that ambition I must have time, must I not? If I want to be rich I must have time. If I want to be good, if I want to realise truth, God, or what you will, I must also have time. Is this a fact or not? It seems such an obvious thing. Surely that is what we are all doing, it is what is actually taking place.

Questioner: Nothing happens without time.

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, this is really a very complex problem, it needs deep investigation, not mere assertions which we reject or accept. That has no value.

Questioner: The mind is free of time altogether, is it not?

KRISHNAMURTI: Is it? Is that not an assumption?

Sirs, what is it we are talking about? What are we trying to find out? You see, we are all suffering, we are living in relationship, which is pain, an endless conflict with society or with another. There is confusion, and a vast conditioning of the mind is going on through so-called education, through the inculcation of various religious and political doctrines; Communism, like Catholicism, completely binds the mind, and the other religions are doing the same thing in a minor form. Seeing the extraordinary discontent of man, his unfathomable loneliness, his sorrow, his struggle, being aware of all this, not just theoretically but actually, one wants to find out if there is not a different way of living altogether. Have you ever asked yourself this question? Have you asked yourself whether a saviour, a teacher, a *guru*, or a discipline is necessary? Will these things rid man of all sorrow, not ten years later, but now?

Questioner: Time is the crux of the problem, and to me time seems inevitable.

KRISHNAMURTI: It is not a matter of how it seems to you or to me. A hungry man does not think in terms of time, does he? He says, "I am hungry, feed me." But I am afraid most of us are not hungry, so we have invented this thing called time, time in which to arrive. We see this whole

process of human misery, conflict, degradation, travail, and we want to find a way out of it, or a method to change it, which again implies time. But there may be a totally different state of being which will resolve all this turmoil, and which is not a theoretical abstraction, a mere verbalisation or imitation.

Questioner: Why does love appear to be a burden?

KRISHNAMURTI: Is that what we are discussing? Sirs, please, if we can understand at least this one thing, then all these talks will have been worth while and you will not have wasted your time coming here in spite of the rain. Can we really see that there is no teacher, no *guru*, no discipline, that the *guru*, the discipline, the method exist only because of the division between what *is* and what *should be*? If the mind can perceive the illusion of this whole process, then there is freedom; not freedom to be something or freedom from something, but just freedom.

Questioner: We are not ideal beings. We must learn to love.

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, is love, goodness, or beauty something to be achieved through effort? Let us think about it simply, shall we? If I am violent, if I hate, how am I to have love in my heart? Will one have love through effort, through time, through saying, "I must practise love, I must be kind to people"? If you have not got love today, through practice will you get it next week or next year? Will this bring about love? Or does love come into being only when the maker of effort ceases, that is, when there is no longer the entity who says, "I am evil and I must be-

come good"? The very cognition that "I am evil" and the desire to be good are similar, because they spring from the same source, which is the "me". And can this "me" who says, "I am evil and must be good" come to an end immediately, not through time? This means not being anything, not trying to become something or nothing. If one can really see this, which is a simple fact, have direct perception of it, then everything else is delusion. Then one will find that the desire to make this state permanent is also an illusion, because effort is involved in that desire. If one understands deeply the whole desire for permanency, the urge to continue, sees the illusion of it, then there is quite a different state which is not the opposite.

So, can we have direct perception without introducing time? Surely, this is the only revolution. There is no revolution through time, through this misery of perpetually wanting to be something. That is what every seeker is doing. He is caught in the prison of sorrow, and he keeps on pushing, widening and decorating that prison; but he is still in prison because psychologically he is pursuing the desire to be, to become something. And is it not possible to see the truth of this and so be nothing? It is not a matter of saying, "I must be nothing", and then asking how to be nothing, which is all so grotesque, childish and immature, but of seeing the fact directly, not through time.

Questioner: There is a famous saying, "Be still and know God."

KRISHNAMURTI: You see, that is one of the extraordinary things in life: you have read so much that you are full of other people's knowledge. Someone has said, "Be still and know God", and then the problem arises, how am I to be still? So you are back again in the old game. Be still, full stop. And you can be really still, not verbally but totally, completely, only when you understand this whole process of becoming, when you see as illusion that which now is a reality to you because you have been brought up on it, you have accepted it, and all your endeavour goes towards it. When you see this process of becoming as illusion, the other is, but not as the opposite. It is something entirely different.

Surely, this is not a matter of acceptance. You cannot possibly accept what I am saying. If you do, it has no meaning at all. This demands a direct perception independent of everybody, a complete breaking away from all the traditions, the *gurus*, the teachers, the systems of yoga, from all the complications of trying to be, to become something. Only then will you find freedom, not to be or to become, which is all self-fulfilment and therefore sorrow, but freedom in which there is love, reality, something which cannot be measured by the mind.

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