



As the River Joins the Ocean

**Reflections About
J. Krishnamurti**

G.Narayan

As the River Joins the Ocean
by G. Narayan

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edited by
Chandramouli Narsipur

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Editor's Preface

Giddu Narayan was an exceptionally gentle and cheerful human being who, like many others around Jiddu Krishnamurti, unreservedly gave his whole life and energy to the study of the teachings. There were three primary ways in which Narayan perceived his teacher. First, and like most Indians of his generation, Narayan always regarded Krishnamurti to be a World Teacher, one who points the world towards freedom from all illusions, especially the illusion that tempts us to find that freedom through another person. Second, as a man who had spent over thirty years teaching school, Narayan recognized Krishnamurti as a rare and exceptional teacher who shared his insights about exploring different paths to right education with those who gathered around him with the same urgent concern. Narayan's reminiscences are continually imbued with these two perceptions. But the third, mystical perception of Krishnamurti that shines through the reminiscences was as real to Narayan as were the other two. In my association with him, as brother-in-law, dear friend, and wise counselor, I saw that to him Krishnamurti meant all three things at the same time, and these three facets were never ever separate from each other. It is this holistic perception of Krishnamurti that is the common thread in Narayan's writing which makes his reminiscences fascinating and extremely important as historical resource for posterity.

In addition to the biographies of Krishnamurti by Mary Lutyens and Pupul Jayakar,¹ other articles, memoirs, and recollections have been published, and each one, as Narayan said, "has to stand the rigorous test of time." He had either read or was familiar with these works. But as he told me, even if a thousand individuals who considered themselves close to Krishnamurti were to write their memoirs, it would be impossible to answer the question "Who is Krishnamurti?" with certainty. To Narayan, however, this was never a problem. He wrote his reminiscences to clarify his own perception of his teacher—a page a day, at Vasanta Vihar in 1989, three and a half years after Krishnamurti had passed away. They come through as transparently real, original, deeply felt, and important for any student of the teachings. Those who knew Narayan and had met Krishnamurti may get some help from these reminiscences in their quest to find their own answers to "Who is Krishnamurti?"²

In sharing his observations as a silent witness over thirty-five years, Narayan provides the general reader with a brief but sharp introduction to Krishnamurti, within which a barely visible and austere memoir of his own life becomes apparent. More significantly, it becomes clear that from the time he met Krishnamurti to the end of his life, Narayan thought of himself as no more than one of the many serious students of Krishnamurti's teachings.

When the project of this book was discussed, Narayan agreed with me that for archival reasons it was necessary to interpolate some relevant information about his life and family background. These, he sent word to me through his sister Indira, my wife, must only provide narrative continuity and a chronological framework, within which I was free to rearrange his reminiscences. He was emphatic that his observations and descriptions of his meetings with Krishnamurti should be left unaltered or minimally edited. He realized that some names, places, and words mentioned by him in various contexts of his meetings with Krishnamurti would not be familiar to a general reader and that explanatory notes would be helpful. Based

on notes that I took when I last met him in 1995, I have provided both parenthetical interpolations and end notes. Also, I have left 'Krishnaji' as it is wherever it occurred in Narayan's manuscript, but used 'Krishnamurti' when it was mentioned as 'K'.

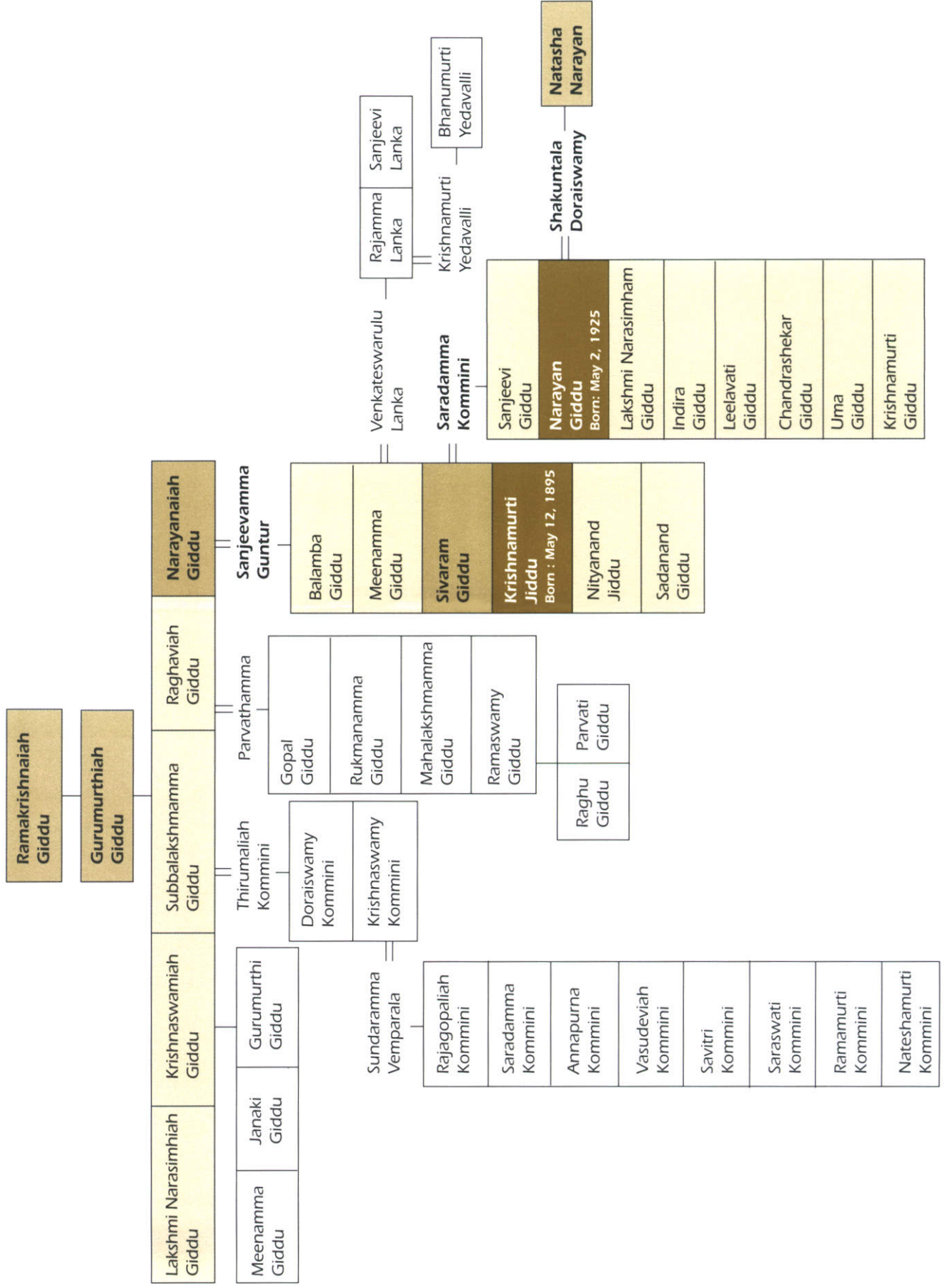
Following Narayan's instructions, I have generally used Dr. S. Radhakrishnan's translations of the Brahmasutra, the Dhammapada, and the Bhagavadgita and his other works to provide meanings and explanations for Sanskrit words and phrases in addition to using English translations of Sanskrit works published by the Ramakrishna Mission and the Ramanashram.

Narayan's meditations have been added to the beginning and ending of each section of the memoirs because they reflect his inner life and show how deeply he was imbued with the teachings.

My hope is that this little book, when read along with other books and the twenty million or more words in the Krishnamurti teachings, may illuminate additional insights into Krishnamurti, who clearly stated in February 1986, "You won't find another body like this, or that supreme intelligence operating in a body for many hundred years."³

I am very grateful to Narayan's mother Sarada, and to his sister and brother Dr. Uma Ramaswamy and Giddu Krishnamurti, as well as to Indira, Natasha Narayan, Pampa Narsipur, Eddie Ani, and friends of Narayan for their active assistance and encouragement in publishing this book. I would like to thank the Krishnamurti Foundation of America and Mrs. Evelyne Blau for their hospitality at Arya Vihara, Ojai, California when we were editing the final manuscript; to Debra Case and Deborah Garber of the Avon Old Farms School Library for extensive use of the school's computers over many months; to Rita Zampese for rare photographs; to James Paul and Kendra Burroughs for expert help in editing, proof reading, and thoughtful comment; to Vikram Parchure for inspired art work and design; and finally to Edwin House for its unwavering interest in keeping its word to Narayan that his reminiscences would be published.

Descendants of Ramakrishnaiah Giddu :



Venkateswarulu Lanka

Rajamma Lanka

Sanjeevi Lanka

Krishnamurti Yedavalli

Bhanumurti Yedavalli

Saradamma Kommini

Sanjeevi Giddu

Narayan Giddu (Born: May 2, 1925)

Lakshmi Narasimham Giddu

Indira Giddu

Leelavati Giddu

Chandrashekar Giddu

Uma Giddu

Krishnamurti Giddu

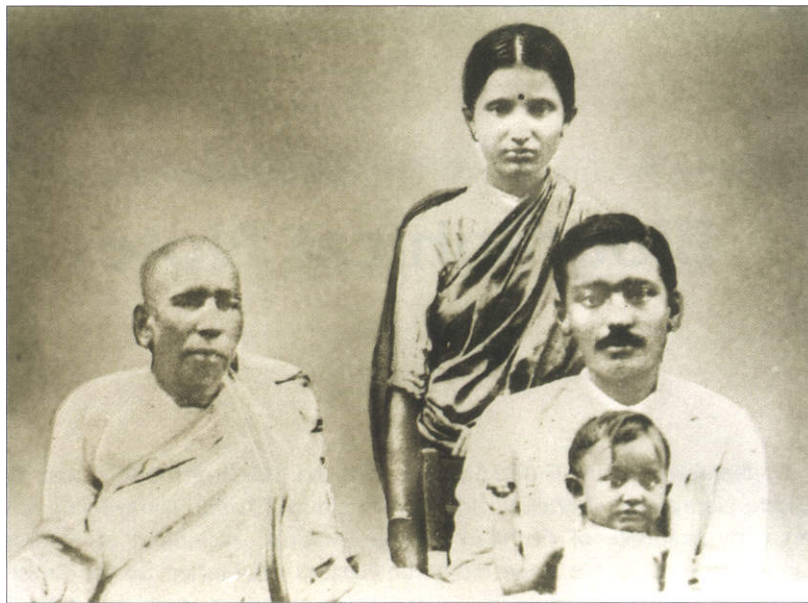
Shakuntala Doraiswamy

Natasha Narayan

Biographical Notes

Narayan's father, Giddu Sivaram, was the oldest of the four sons of Giddu Narayaniah, father of Jiddu Krishnamurti.⁴ Giddu Narayaniah was an early graduate of Christian College, Madras, accredited to Madras University, one of the three oldest universities established by the British in India. After graduation, Narayaniah worked for the British Government of the Madras Presidency, which included present-day Tamil Nadu, half of the state of Andhra Pradesh, and parts of the states of Kerala and Karnataka. He retired as a *tehsildar*⁵ with a monthly pension of Rs. 110, roughly equal in purchasing power to about Rs. 20,000 today, and by Indian standards of the day certainly enough to provide for all the needs of his family and to educate his older son, Sivaram, in medical school. Narayaniah came from a family of Telugu-speaking, English-knowing Velanadu Brahmins. Many in the family had worked for the British government in some official capacity or other during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Narayaniah's older brother, Lakshmi Narasimhiah, spent his entire life in religious study and meditation. He was regarded as a saintly man by many in the Villipuram district of Tamil Nadu. Giddu Ramakrishniah, grandfather of Narayaniah, was Principal Pandit, Saddar Amin in South Arcot District for the East India Company and was noted for his scholarship in Sanskrit and Telugu classical literature and for his deep knowledge of Hindu religious texts and commentaries.

Narayaniah married his second cousin Sanjeevamma, an extraordinary lady of immense generosity and awakened paranormal gifts. They had eleven children, out of which only a girl and four boys, including Krishnamurti, survived. In addition to holding a well-paid government job, Narayaniah inherited and owned farmland, dairy cattle, and a large house in his hometown, Tiruvanmattur in Tamil Nadu, an ancient sacred town well known for its temple to the goddess Muktabal, a manifestation of Adishakti, the female principle. Narayaniah was known for his integrity, fearlessness, and generosity.



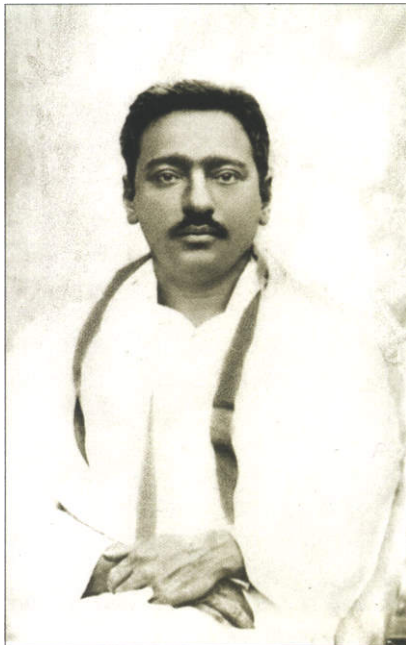
G. Narayaniah (left), G. Sarada at rear, G. Sivaram holding baby G. Sanjeevi, 1923

After retiring from government service, he settled in Adyar, Madras, because he admired Annie Besant and Theosophy and because Besant had offered him a job there as an assistant secretary in the Esoteric section at the world headquarters of the Theosophical Society. In 1911 he readily agreed to the adoption and further education of his two sons Krishnamurti and Nityanandam by Besant. Later on, the family was deeply hurt by adverse publicity generated during and after the decision of lower and the high courts in Madras about the adoption of Jiddu Krishnamurti and Jiddu Nityanand. While his anger was directed towards Bishop Leadbeater, he was unwavering in his respect for Besant. (All this is described in detail in the biographies of Krishnamurti.)

A kind and generous person, Narayaniah helped many aspiring young men and women to obtain school and college education. During the course of his service, he was posted in several major towns in the Presidency. Giddu Sivaram, his oldest son, was born in the town of Cuddapah in 1893. Two years later, Jiddu Krishnamurti was born in Madanapalle. It was said that before his birth, his mother, Sanjeevamma, had a vision in her prayer room as she sat before a painting of Lord Krishna that her husband had specially commissioned (it is still in the family's possession). In this vision, she saw Krishna, with another figure of Krishna within him, and many more Krishnas stretching inward. I am not sure if this has been mentioned in any of the biographies of Krishnamurti.



Giddu Sarada, 1972



Giddu Sivaram

Narayaniah's sister used to visit her brother often in Madanapalle and would see the three boys walking up to a nearby hill. Krishnamurti, as a child of ten, walked rapidly with long steps, swinging his arms. She was impressed with his bearing and general disposition and named him Dronacharya after the great teacher of the Pandavas in the epic *Mahabharata*.⁶

After completing high school in Madanapalle and his undergraduate years at Cuddapah, Sivaram moved to Madras, where his father had retired after the death of Sanjeevamma at Madanapalle. He entered the Madras Medical College, the only medical school in the state at that time. Krishnamurti and Nityananda already adopted by Besant, were now on their way to England. After graduation, Sivaram—now Captain Sivaram and married—worked during World War I as an army doctor for the British in northwestern India (now in Pakistan). He returned after the war to his home

state as an officer of the Indian Medical Service, which was part of what is referred to as the “steel frame” of the British Empire. At this time, very few Indians were recruited into this British-dominated, prestigious service. Sivaram, who had married his cousin's daughter Sarada,⁷ was posted as the district medical officer in many

major district towns in the Madras Presidency. For many years, he also held the Chair for Anatomy at his alma mater and the job of police surgeon (chief medical examiner) of Madras City. Narayaniah spent his last years with Sivaram before passing away at seventy-two at Madras owing to insulin shock following his first insulin treatment for diabetes. Sivaram promptly wrote to Krishnamurti about his father's death. I am told that the family received a reply from Krishnamurti and Nityanand during this period.

Sivaram and his wife, Sarada, were both present when Krishnamurti and Nityananda returned to India after their stay in England during the war years to visit their father—an accurate version of which is related only in Jayakar's biography of Krishnamurti. Narayaniah requested them to visit him again, and they did so. Later Sivaram went and met his brothers at the Theosophical Society. As an elder brother, Sivaram would have liked that his brothers stay with the family, but he was already aware that Krishnamurti had a mission to fulfill, and he kept his opinion to himself.

Sivaram was the father of four boys and four girls. His oldest son, Narayan, so named in memory of his grandfather, was born May 2, 1925, in Chittoor in Andhra, which was then part of the old Madras Presidency. Sivaram retired in 1949 and settled in Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh, where he had last served as the district medical officer and where he had built a large house on the outskirts surrounded by mango and neem trees. He sent his first three children to the best colleges in the state and all three graduated with honors. Sivaram also took care of Sadanandam, the youngest of the four Jiddu brothers, till his last days. Throughout his life, he was deeply interested in Hindu spiritualism and the study of Ayurvedic medicine, and the recipes for his most effective herbomineral remedies, which are still with the family, were occasionally used by Krishnamurti. He hosted many wandering ascetics and monks, and patronized musicians. Like his father, Sivaram helped several young men and women to obtain education. Sivaram died at Chittoor on March 13, 1952, and Narayan informed Krishnamurti of his passing away.

Sarada told her daughter Indira that in one of Sivaram's meetings with Krishnamurti in Madras after 1947, Krishnamurti told his brother that he would take care of his first two sons, Narayan and Narasimham. He was true to his word and kept in close touch with his brother's family and in particular with G. Sarada. Krishnamurti was a source of great support and inspiration to the members of his family, although he insisted that he was not related to them.

His concern for Narayan and his career in education is well known to most people in the three Krishnamurti foundations. Later Krishnamurti arranged for the education of Natasha, Narayan's daughter in England. Krishnamurti also took the initiative to put Uma, Narayan's sister, through graduate education at Pune University. Apart from providing financial support he showed keen interest in her graduate and doctoral education. He would insist that Uma come and see him frequently whenever he was in Vasanta Vihar in Madras. He kept in continuous touch with her from the middle of the 1950s until his last days. Her son Nitya went to Rishi Valley for his school education. Krishna, Narayan's youngest brother, who went to school at Rishi Valley in the fifties, kept regularly in touch with Krishnamurti at Ojai for many years and when he went to see him at Ojai in February 1986, Krishnamurti gave him many of his personal belongings just before he passed away. Krishnamurti helped me and my wife, Indira, numerous times over many years and particularly when he treated and healed our five-year-old son, Ravi, in Rishi Valley, helping him to recover rapidly from the aftermath of a serious head injury.



Rita Zampese

G. Narayan in the main hall of J. Krishnamurti's birthplace in Madanapalle, Andhra Pradesh, India, 1979

Thanks to his frugality and integrity, two qualities that Sivaram valued throughout his life, his family inherited, in addition to the house in Chittoor, fertile tracts of agricultural land in Tiruvanmattur, valuable beachfront land that he had bought on the outskirts of Madras, and a mango grove at Chittoor. Narayan told me that after 1947, he regularly sent his father the verbatim talks reports published by Krishnamurti Writings, Inc. (KWINC), and that Sivaram and others in the family have unreservedly regarded Krishnamurti to be a World Teacher. According to Narayan, two Sanskrit words used by Sivaram to describe his brother were jagadguru (universal teacher) and jivanmukta (liberated individual). Every member in this extended family firmly holds Krishnamurti in the highest regard because each is aware that to have had one such as he born into the Giddu (Jiddu) family is the rarest of rare blessings.

Much of Narayan's early childhood and high school years were passed in beautiful, calm, essentially rural places like Tanuku and Bhadrachalam in Andhra Pradesh, located on the majestic banks of the river Godavari; his college years were spent in Madras. Madras was then a quiet and clean traditional city with many educated people. Most residents generally went about their daily lives undisturbed, yet Madras too experienced the winds of the great struggle for freedom that were sweeping India. Narayan went for some of his vacations to his grandparents and maternal uncles at Chittoor, which was then surrounded by forests. His later love for the rugged rocky hills and quiet villages of Chittoor district sprang from these origins. After high school, he joined Pachaiyappa's and then Loyola College in Madras, and graduated in 1945 with an



Rita Zampese

The Giddu family home in Madanapalle, Andhra Pradesh where J. Krishnamurti was born in 1895

undergraduate degree in mathematics. He also won the college's prestigious Gold Medal for English writing. He then went on to obtain his master's degree in economics followed by a degree in law from Madras University. He was an outstanding college tennis player for four years and at Loyola won the intercollege tennis championship several times. By attending many free concerts of Carnatic music in Madras, Narayan developed a life-long love of chanting and singing, which he shared with Krishnamurti during numerous occasions in later life.

Rita Zampese



G. Narayan with Pupul Jayakar

Although Narayan was aware of his father's relationship to Krishnamurti, Sivaram did not give that relationship any special importance. Krishnamurti was speaking to large audiences in Adyar and later at Vasanta Vihar in the thirties, and both Sarada and her elder brother, the late K. Rajagopal, have told me that Sivaram regularly met Krishnamurti either in the Theosophical Society or at Vasanta Vihar whenever he was in Madras. Though Narayan was aware of Krishnamurti's name, as it was mentioned to him by his parents during his early life, his first philosophical studies during his college years focused on Hinduism and Buddhism. During Narayan's high school and early college years, Krishnamurti was away from India and in the United States. Although Narayan had seen issues of the *Star* magazine at home, including the one which featured the famous Ommen speech,⁸ and had read that speech, Narayan was uninfluenced by his family relationship with Krishnamurti when he went to meet him at Madras at the age of twenty-two. Krishnamurti was fifty-two at that time and had been out of touch with his brother and his family for over ten years. From the seed of this momentous meeting, there flowered an enduring relationship between the World Teacher and his steadfast student that lasted half a century.

Brahmacharya

The Rivulet

Meditation 1

*Freedom and order go together.
Without order there is no freedom.
Order is different from discipline, which is externally
imposed even when it is self-imposed.
You cannot have order if you are not free to watch
and if you are not free to listen.
If the bird is not free it cannot fly.
Every living being must have freedom
and that includes man.*

*To find out what freedom is,
you cannot depend on others to tell you.
Nobody can give you freedom and order.
It requires awareness which is passive but alert and needs
total attention.*

*Everyone aspires for freedom or for enlightenment—
call it mukti, moksha, or nirvana.
It is the spirit of the quest, not the word, that matters.*

Freedom can exist when there is no motive.

In 1947 I was a student at Loyola College, located on Sterling Road in Madras. I was cycling after a game of tennis and saw a billboard which announced forthcoming talks by J. Krishnamurti at Vasanta Vihar. I found out that he was staying in a house on the Sterling Road. My father, Dr. Sivaram, who was a physician then working in Nellore as a district medical officer, had told me that Krishnamurti was his younger brother and that they had not met for many years. I went to the house where Krishnamurti was staying in my tennis kit and had to wait for some time as he had gone for a walk.

I was standing on the threshold of the main door of that house, and when Krishnamurti returned from his walk, I introduced myself as the son of his brother Sivaram. It took Krishnamurti some time to remember his brother. He asked me to come up with him to the first floor. We sat down and he asked me many questions about his brother Sivaram and his many children. [In 1985, to my surprise, before he left India for the last time, Krishnamurti pointed out to me that I was in tennis kit when I came to see him for the first time. There were many other members of the Krishnamurti Foundation [KFI] in Vasanta Vihar when he made this remark.]

The next day I went to see Krishnamurti, and among several things, I asked him about the Buddha and the *sangha* [the Buddhist monastic order]. According to legend and tradition, there were sixty-three disciples of the Buddha who were enlightened during the Buddha's lifetime. Krishnamurti said that there were not so many but only two or three who may have attained enlightenment.

I wrote to my father at Nellore. My father came and I took him to Krishnamurti. He could not recognize my father, as they had not met for many years. Some snacks were offered. After some time, my father asked Krishnamurti whether he was self-realized. Krishnamurti did not give a specific answer.

My father then asked Krishnamurti, "What is the self?" Krishnamurti answered that it was a bundle of memories. My father responded by asking if that was all. To this Krishnamurti replied that there was nothing more to the self. The discussion came to a sudden end, as Sivaram was thinking of *atman* and Krishnamurti's approach was that of the self as a projection of thought which is conditioned and limited. The conversation ended there. They held each other's hands, and soon my father and I left. I took my father to Madras Central Railway Station and saw him off to Nellore. This was the last time that Sivaram saw his brother Krishnamurti.

This is the essential difference between the Hindu and the Buddhist approach, which is hard to reconcile. In Buddhism, and according to Krishnamurti, the word *self* is always used with a small *s*. In Hindu thought the word *Self* is used with a capital *S* to indicate Godhead and is also used with a small *s* to indicate the ego, egotistic attitude, and self-centered activity. Subsequently, Sivaram read some of Krishnamurti's talks to understand the teachings. He was happy doing that and told me that Krishnamurti's mind was pure and cleansed.

Narayan completed his master's degree in economics and obtained a degree in law from Madras University, where he formed a few life-long friendships both in law school and on the tennis courts. He was ranked as a state-level tennis player. After working as a lawyer for a year at Chittoor, he traveled to Bombay to work as a

legal secretary to the president of a company, a job that Achyut Patwardhan, whom he had met through a mutual friend, helped him to find.⁹

I saw Krishnamurti for the second time in Vasanta Vihar in 1949 and attended one talk. Krishnamurti said that I could come and see him at anytime I wanted. I met him again in early 1952 at Vasanta Vihar. I went to see him again briefly to tell him of my father's illness. After my father's death, I took my first job in Bombay as a legal secretary to a managing director.

*

It has been raining heavily in the last two days.

[Narayan is writing in 1991 and describing the Valley School, Bangalore.]

The walls of the house are wet and the weather is cool. There are many monkeys, but you don't see them today. They have taken shelter under the big trees of Haridwanam. They are huddled in the big branches of the big trees. They eat up the fruit and buds in the trees, and nothing remains for human beings.

I met Krishnamurti again in Bombay in late 1952. I was working in Bombay and lived in Andheri, a suburb. He was staying in Ratansi Morarji's house on Carmichael Road.¹⁰ There was some difficulty getting into the house. The lady at the entrance asked me if I had an appointment with Krishnamurti and I said yes. It was after five o'clock in the evening. Fortunately Krishnamurti came out of his room and saw me standing there. He took me inside and said that he had just returned from his evening walk.

Krishnamurti went to the windows and drew the curtains. The sun was just setting in the western sky above the waters of the sea. It was a glorious sight with the full disc of the sun slowly sinking into the Arabian Sea. I felt a sense of beauty and peace.

The room was well furnished and had an elegant look. We sat on the floor facing each other. After some conversation about my stay in Bombay, Krishnamurti asked me if I would like to go and teach in the Rishi Valley School in Andhra Pradesh, in which case he would talk about it with the principal when he visited Rishi Valley. I had visited the school in 1948 when I went to play a tennis tournament in Madanapalle. F. Gordon Pearce was the principal.¹¹ An Englishman, he was a well-known educationist in India and Sri Lanka, and was associated with the public schools [the British term for private boarding schools] and the scout movement in India. His wife, Anasuya Paranjpe, was the daughter of an Indian Theosophist from Varanasi [Banaras].

I went back to my residence in Andheri. That night, as I was sleeping, I had an interesting experience. My chest region was diffused with light, mingling white and blue with a great sense of calmness. I awoke and stayed quiet and went back to sleep. Again the light with a blue tinge spread all over the chest and there was no thought. Only a feeling of beauty. It was a unique experience, though it lasted only a few minutes.

There is a difference between experience and experiencing. The former is rooted in the past, with the latter gathering knowledge and cultivating memory.

Experiencing has a quality of the present not colored by the past. The experiencer is absent while experiencing, and so there is a freshness and renewal.

*

I decided to go to Rishi Valley,¹² and although I was trained to be a lawyer with a master's degree in economics, I had also studied mathematics and had a degree in that subject. I had played a lot of tennis while at the university in Madras. All this would be useful in my future profession as a schoolteacher.

Rishi Valley is surrounded by hills on all sides, and there are a few villages. The climate is dry, and rainfall is below ten inches per year. The hills are of ancient origin and made of granite. The peak in the west is called Rishi Konda [*Konda* means hill in Telugu]. Two adjoining other hills are Bodi Konda and Thena Konda. The sunsets are marvelous with myriad varying colors as the sun sinks behind Rishi Konda. One could see the vast expanse of the blue sky and all colors of the spectrum from violet to red. Frequently there are swallows briskly flying in circles and a distant eagle in its lonely flight. It is a valley of great beauty with mango, tamarind, and other trees such as the neem and the coconut, planted by the villagers and the school. Horsley Hills to the northwest of the valley is more than four thousand feet above sea level and is the summer capital of Andhra Pradesh. It is the favorite spot for students to go on a hike. It took one three hours to walk from Rishi Valley to the top of Horsley Hills through the countryside.

In the evening students and teachers assembled and walked up to sit in a special place on a hill near the guest house and watch the setting sun for ten minutes. They observed silence and were dressed in white for the evening. Although he did not participate in the setting-sun activity known as *Asthachal*,¹³ Krishnamurti was happy that at the end of the day students and teachers were able to sit quietly together in the evenings.

There are dry crops such as peanuts and *ragi* [a cereal crop, a staple food of South Indian farmers, rich in protein and malt] and a few acres of rice grown in the valley. The campus is spread over nearly four hundred acres with a majestic banyan tree, tall and vital and approximately some three hundred years old, and inhabiting its center were parrots, small owls and a few other varieties of birds. There is a big owl on the eastern side of the campus where there is a rock cave up another hill, which was also home for a few monkeys. These low-lying hills are used by students for day hikes and picnics. Recently the valley has been declared a state bird preserve, as many more varieties of birds have returned to it due to the excellent environmental research and renewal, and successful afforestation work begun in the eighties by the Rishi Valley Education Center.¹⁴

The local legend says that a sage lived in Rishi Konda around two hundred years ago who prophesied that a great being would come to the valley and start an educational institution of great value and renown. The villagers passed the word around and saw the fulfillment of that prophecy in the life and work of J. Krishnamurti.

Narayan joined Rishi Valley in 1952, and his sister Indira joined him in 1954. He taught tennis and mathematics, and participated in chanting, hiking, and taking

pastoral care of the students. He lived in a thatched cottage opposite the guest house and went for walks with Krishnamurti when he visited the school. He was an active participant in the discussions with Krishnamurti. He left Rishi Valley in 1956 because he felt that Pearce was not taking the school in the direction that Krishnamurti was urging Pearce to explore. He spent two years in Madras doing some writing and helping his mother build a house. His return to Rishi Valley in 1958 coincided with his friend Dr. Balasundaram's, taking over the principalship from Pearce.¹⁵ Narayan, having found Rishi Valley to be the right place to begin his life-long vocation as a schoolteacher, took an energetic part in many discussions with Krishnamurti about education and the teachings at Rishi Valley, Vasanta Vihar, and Rajghat, some of which have appeared in books such as *Life Ahead*, *Think on These Things*, *Krishnamurti on Education*, and *Tradition and Revolution*.

Meditation 2

*Classical educationists believed in stamping the child
with knowledge that was acquired over the past,
and conditioning the student
into a particular mold.*

*Rote methods were followed with rewards and punishments
to produce conformity in the child.*

*Progressive educators interested merely in drawing out
inherent skills and talents
developed methodology based on superficial research
to bring new approaches to learning.*

*Others using the garden analogy
and believing that all that the child's mind really needed
was nurturing,
stressed art and music
over intellectual and emotional development.*

*Still others advocated pragmatism
and emphasized only the need for a healthy development
of the total personality for the child.*

*Any intelligent teacher will pick up whichever approach
suits the occasion and the environment.*

*But what about the holistic approach that some scientists
and philosophers have talked about?*

Grihastha

The Stream

Meditation 3

What is education?

*If it were the acquisition of knowledge and experience
and the building up of memory,
it would be a limited process.*

*Intuition is helpful in education,
but it is the result of desire.*

*When one does something right,
a few days later one may feel that one had an intuition
about it. One may find that it is based on desire, fear, or
a variety of pleasures.*

*Intuition is the product of emotion
unable to express itself in normal language
since language is at the material level.*

*It is especially so in the case of men and women
who are rather sentimental and romantic.*

*All thinking, including intuitive thinking,
is still the response of memory and experience.*

*Because it is part of thought, it can never be all-inclusive,
and so it is limited and narrow.*

*If insight is not intuition based on acquisition of knowledge
and experience,
then what is it?*

Alertness and observation are necessary.

*Hurts and images that one has built about oneself
have dissolved,
and calmness prevails.*

*Insight in education is to perceive something instantly
which must also be logical, rational, sane, and true.
To have insight into the whole process without analysis
is to see the false as the false,
leading to right action.*

Krishnamurti visited Rishi Valley every year and talked with students and teachers. He walked a distance of nearly three miles every evening on a dirt road from the school to the mouth of the valley. Some of us accompanied him on these walks.

In discussions with teachers, Krishnamurti was talking about the immediacy of enlightenment, and when asked if it was “now or never,” he replied that that phrase had a sense of gloom. I repeated that it was of the present. Krishnamurti was delighted that I appreciated the sensitivity of language and experience. He said by way of a joke that he would give me Rs. 500 as salary. I was not earning half of it as a teacher.

Krishnamurti was with us at dinner, and I wanted to talk about challenge and response.¹⁶ Krishnamurti stated that there was a gap between challenge and response, the latter occurring after the challenge with a time gap. But there was a possibility of a challenge and a response happening simultaneously. If the response is adequate there is no residue left, as the challenge has been fully met. If not adequate, the residue is there in the form of anger, frustration, etc. There is also a response before a challenge. It is like a car getting ready to turn before it begins to turn; so does the mind begin to turn before the body does.

These are two important statements. First, if the response is adequate to the challenge, there is no residue. This is intelligence. Second, the response can happen before the challenge. This is foresight and long vision that comes through passive alertness.

Then Krishnamurti said that there is a state of mind where there are no problems at all, not even the existence of a problem. Is this a state of creativity and a high level of energy? Because most of us have problems, worries take away lots of energy due to conflict. Some of us are asleep and wake up only when there is a problem or a series of problems. Again we go to sleep, to wake up again if there is a problem or a crisis.

Then Krishnamurti asked, “What happens to a man in alert passivity?” We were silent.

He answered, “The residue of thought is dissolved, and the mind is silent in a state of great energy.”

Is there a problem in such a state of mind?

*

Once in Rishi Valley in the 1950s there was a lot of noise while we were discussing upstairs in the Old Guest House¹⁷ which had been built long ago by Shri Rajagopala Ayyangar.¹⁸ All of us came out and went downstairs and saw a large cobra killed by the gardeners. Krishnaji was rather upset that the cobra had been killed. He sat down on the ground and touched the scales of its skin for a couple of minutes. He said that he would have preferred that the gardeners had left it alone because it would have gone away.¹⁹

*

During the 1960s, the drought was severe and Rishi Valley had four or five consecutive drought years. The land was parched and dry. Only dry crops could be grown. Most farming in the valley was confined to peanuts and *jonna* [maize].

Krishnamurti came to Rishi Valley in November/December. We took him for a walk, and he saw the condition of the land. Some of the mango trees were very dry and their leaves were withering. The mango, like the tamarind, the neem, the banyan, and the peepul, is a hardy tree that can last many years in a drought if its taproots have found deep underground water sources.

Krishnamurti said that that night there had to be a downpour and heavy rain so that the earth would rejoice and the leaves turn green. We looked up and there was not a trace of a cloud, and we went back to our rooms with some hope. That night after eight there was heavy rain and it lasted for many hours. We knew that Krishnaji's wish was being fulfilled by nature gods. It also rained after a few days.

*

When Krishnaji stayed in Vasanta Vihar,²⁰ there were public talks attended by an average of nearly four thousand people. There were many trees and the garden was well maintained. In the evenings the weather was warm and pleasant as it was November and December. There were many Theosophists attending the talks; the society's headquarters were just a kilometer away.

Madhavachari was the host at Vasanta Vihar for years. Besides being the KWINC's official representative in India, he was the secretary of the Foundation for New Education.²¹ He was an austere and disciplined person. We ate our meals at Vasanta Vihar at one end of a big hall, which was used for discussions twice a week. Around two hundred people attended these discussions with Krishnamurti, usually at 7:30 A.M. There were many people visiting Vasanta Vihar, either to meet Krishnaji or to buy books at the KWINC's bookstore. There were not many invitees during the 1950s at Vasanta Vihar either for lunch or dinner. We used to sit cross-legged on the floor and ate at a low table. Madhavachari managed affairs at Vasanta Vihar in a competent way. Krishnaji wanted me to do small things, and sometimes I would run errands for him. Sometimes there would be an argument whether a clothesline, probably used during rainy days or on days when there were no discussions, should be hung in the main hall used for discussions where Krishnamurti also dined. After some years it was removed by Madhavachari. Thank goodness.

One day, Madhavachari—he was called Mama [maternal uncle] as an endearment—took me aside and told me that Krishnamurti was a different personality when he sat on the dais and spoke to us as the World Teacher, and then a normal human being like any one of us at other times. Mama said that the higher power was what some called a manifestation and that some thought was Lord Maitreya.²² I had heard of some elderly Theosophists having this same opinion. Mama said that I should not take Krishnaji seriously when he talked to me personally. Mama repeated this to me again, implying that Krishnamurti had a dual personality and that he, Mama, had the same opinion. It was uneasy for me at this time to think of Krishnaji as a dual personality, since for me he was a transformed person with a new mind, or with an enlightened mind as the Buddhists would call it.

I mentioned this idea to Krishnaji in the morning after his bath. He said that he would talk about it at lunchtime later when he came to the hall. There were three of us at lunch. Krishnaji turned to Mama and said, "Sir, the chap who talks under the tree is now talking to you." This came as a thunderbolt to Mama. So the concept of a dual personality for Krishnamurti was shattered. It was a clarification that Krishnamurti's personality was whole and integrated. There may be a different way of looking at the personality of Krishnamurti.

Krishnamurti lived his teachings, and yet he said that the teachings were far more important than the teacher. He stressed that one has to be a light unto oneself and not be dependent on a guru in spiritual matters. *Choiceless awareness* and *passivity* were the key words, and to live this way without a sense of fear would unfold human consciousness. He said that the word is not the thing, and when the word takes over, it would lead to symbols and cult formations, with one cult fighting another and causing disintegration.

On another occasion, Achyutji told me that when he was walking with Krishnaji and asked him how it was that although he was no specialist (scientist or psychologist) he was able to meet the problems of specialists, converse with them, and clear their doubts, leading to clarification and shedding light on their problems. Krishnamurti met the scholar and the scientist, the housewife and the *sannyasin* [wandering monk living an austere life], the engineer and the doctor; people from different walks of life came to him to resolve their problems. And yet Krishnamurti never studied for any profession. Krishnamurti answered that his consciousness had merged with that of Maitreya and there was no Krishnamurti as an ego left behind. So he had access to the universe of knowledge and scholarship, and moreover his thinking came out of clarity.

Krishnaji might not have used the expression "Maitreya" if he was talking to a youngster or somebody from the West. That he was an incarnation of Maitreya Bodhisattva was appreciated by people who knew him for a long time and also by Buddhist scholars. The concept of the Bodhisattva is an extensive and integral part of Buddhism, and their view is explained in detail in many Buddhist books and larger encyclopedias. During the period 1927-1930, Krishnamurti had mentioned in a poem that he and his beloved are one, and there is no separation. The imagery is that of the river joining the ocean. Is it a state of love and ecstasy or a full movement of life in the present?

Some people feel that the consciousness of the Bodhisattva, however extensive and universal, is slightly lower than that of the Buddha which is infinite and all-encompassing. This distinction, interesting as it is, has not received much significance. The Bodhisattva is an embodiment of compassion, and his mission is to set man unconditionally free, free from ignorance, sorrow, and suffering. The Bodhisattva does not rest till his goal is achieved, till man shakes off his burden of sorrow and bondage.

*

One day I went with Krishnamurti from Vasanta Vihar to Elliot's Beach,²³ a distance of over three kilometers. As we turned round the corner near the beach, I

thought about miracles and how they happened. Krishnaji caught my thought and said that he would tell me a story.

A few days ago a gentleman had come to see him. His wife had broken her leg at the knee joint and it was not possible to set it right, as something fleshy was in the joint and it was decomposing. The man was very concerned and came to see if Krishnaji could heal her and restore the leg. Otherwise the doctors would have to amputate. Krishnaji agreed to see her though he was not sure of the outcome. But the man was keen and brought his wife the next day. She had to be carried in on a stretcher. She was brought up the steps in Vasanta Vihar and Krishnaji came out of his room. They met on the verandah, and from the stretcher the lady caught Krishnaji's eyes. Their eyes met and in an instant the woman got up and walked away. The husband was grateful that his wife could walk again.

Krishnaji turned to me and said, "Old boy, I thought they were pulling my leg."

But the next day the daughter of the woman came to see him and told Krishnamurti, "Do you know what you have done? It is a miracle!" She put a flower garland round his neck, a traditional gesture of regard in India, and expressed gratitude for the help rendered her mother.

I asked him as we walked along if it was a faith cure.

Krishnaji said, "No."

Then I asked, "How did it happen?"

"Somewhere something clicks," said Krishnaji. We reached the beach and Krishnaji walked very fast, and I followed him.

I asked him what it was that clicked.

Krishnaji said, "Energy passes."

This was healing energy, but Krishnamurti would not own the miracle. There was no self to possess or own this. Sometimes, when someone in a small group pressed him to talk about it, he would say that the healing quality was in his hands right from his boyhood days. Krishnamurti was rather shy and asked me not to talk about it—his miracles—as it was not his function to heal the sick, the lame, and the blind. If it gained publicity, there would be a queue of men and women waiting to be healed.

*

I went to play in a tennis tournament at Madanapalle in 1948 while I was a student at Madras University. After the game, a man in robust health came and sat next to me and introduced himself as Dwarak from Rishi Valley. He said that he wanted me to go with him to Rishi Valley ten miles away to see the place and the banyan tree. I said that I would go with him next morning. He drove me to Rishi Valley in his small car. On the way, he narrated to me his life story.

He had a congenital heart condition and could barely walk across the hall. His parents brought him to Krishnamurti, either at Madras or Bangalore, and Krishnamurti touched him every day. Krishnamurti laid his hands on his chest and then removed them with long sweeping motions. The pain became intense in the first few days and then gradually subsided. Dwarak also went to Poona at

Krishnaji's suggestion, and he had two to three weeks of healing passes altogether from him. He was completely cured and was fit to undertake work. This had happened more than ten years ago. Now he was a healthy young man looking after the estate in Rishi Valley. Subsequently Dwarak went to Bombay, as he was offered a job there. He said that he owed his life to Krishnaji, as there was no known treatment or cure for his ailment in any known system of medicine.

Jamnadas Dwarkadas, an elderly friend of Krishnamurti, told me that Krishnamurti used to magnetize his rings.²⁴ He would hold them for some time and give them back. Mrs. Jayalakshmi, Krishnamurti's host in Madras during 1969-73 told me that he held her bangles for some time and gave them back to her.²⁵ There was a healing quality to these magnetized jewels, and they were never kept on the floor.

*

Krishnaji fell ill in 1959. He had a bacillary infection which affects the urinary tract and was confined to bed at Vasanta Vihar. Dr. Sivakamu came to see him every day.²⁶ She was of the same age group as Krishnamurti and had retired from work as a hospital director. She prescribed a preparation which contained streptopenicillin, as Krishnamurti was allergic to penicillin. I was asked by Mama to sleep in an adjoining room to look after him for two or three weeks at Vasanta Vihar. The medicines weakened him, and on some days he could not even get up from bed. He had to go to Bombay to give scheduled talks in a week's time. He had already stayed in bed for more than ten days.

One evening Krishnamurti told me that this could not go on and he had to do something to get well. Surprisingly he improved from that day onwards, and in four days he regained his health. Though a bit weak, he managed to travel by air to Bombay and give the talks scheduled to start in a couple of days. Krishnamurti suffered from an allergy to dust and pollen, which led to bronchitis and a persistent cough. He suffered from bronchitis and allergy more in places where there was pollen in the air, such as in Rishi Valley, and was much better in places like Madras with its sea breeze. Did he cure himself? Or, was his guardian angel looking after him? I don't know.

One day in Madras, I asked Krishnamurti if he would try some Ayurvedic medicine from my mother. She had learnt it from my father and according to my mother, *suvarna bhasmam* [powdered herbominerals with a gold base] would be good for him. Krishnamurti agreed and said that Triambak Shastri, an eminent Ayurvedic physician from Varanasi, had told him many years ago that a touch of gold would be good for him as a general tonic for his system. Krishnamurti took gold medicine which was cooked and cured by a special process by my mother. He said that it was doing him a lot of good. Krishnamurti was in Madras for a week and he took a *lehyam* [medicinal cream for internal consumption] with the gold medicine prepared from many herbs and cooked in melted butter. *Lehyam* is generally sweet and good for the system.

Subsequently Krishnamurti left for London and wrote to say that he had stopped taking gold medicine, as it was causing too much energy and his pulse

was beating a little louder sometimes due to the medicine. I told my mother about Krishnamurti's letter, and she agreed that the medicine should not be taken for more than a fortnight or three weeks continuously. She asked me to write to Krishnamurti and find out if his appetite had improved after taking the medicine. Krishnamurti wrote to me that he had no appetite for some twenty-five years and just ate the right kind of vegetarian food to maintain his body in good health. Someone told me that this is an attribute of a Bodhisattva or Jnani (seer).

My sister Chinnamma had withdrawn from life after a serious attack of smallpox.²⁷ Some people thought that she was possessed, a traditional explanation in India. When I reported this to Krishnamurti, he asked me to bring Chinnamma to see him. On three successive mornings Krishnaji met her at Vasanta Vihar. Chinnamma was very shy about seeing him. Her behavior and withdrawal remained as before. Krishnaji said that she was not possessed but withdrawn. If a spirit possessed her, it would have left her on the third day unable to bear Krishnaji's presence and personality. It was strange for me to have been a witness to all this but my mother told me that she saw a similar incident in the presence of a swami at a temple of *Anjaneya*.²⁸

My elder sister Sanjeevi had a good degree in mathematics from Madras University.²⁹ Her son, Padmanabham, was studying at the Bangalore University. He suffered from a heart condition when he was barely sixteen years of age [in 1967]. The pulmonary artery was very swollen, and the surgeon at Vellore Christian College Hospital opened his chest and declared the condition inoperable. The doctor advised that the boy should rest, as he might not live long—probably only a few months. No doctor could help him. Padmanabham was taken by me to Krishnaji, who kindly consented to help him. Krishnaji gave him passes; he got well and was able to attend the university. Although my sister does not agree with me, I believe that from year to year, Padmanabham was kept alive by Krishnamurti's giving him passes and the healing touch. In fact Padmanabham studied at the Bangalore University from 1969 through 1972 and took his BA in English and even completed his first year of the MA degree. He was aware that he was kept alive by Krishnaji from year to year. During 1972-1973 Krishnamurti did not come to India, and Padmanabham's health became critical. He was admitted to a hospital in Bangalore. After a few days, to the great grief of his parents, his sisters, and others, he died at twenty-two.

I was in London then [1973] and went to Brockwood Park in Hampshire to see Krishnamurti and meet my friends and to be with my wife, Shakuntala, and daughter, Natasha, at the school. Krishnaji came directly to me in the hall and said, "I am sorry for the boy, Narayan. I could not go to India this year." There was no further comment. It was a moving scene and I could barely move my limbs. I felt Padmanabham had found his deliverance. The next day I attended the talks and left for Worcester, where I had a teaching job.

*

Mrs. R's brother lived in Bangalore. The retina was detached in one of his eyes and there was considerable difficulty in seeing. The other retina had the same kind of trouble, and doctors were not able to help him. Krishnaji touched

him and gave him passes for nearly a month. Not only did the retina get fixed, but the part in his hair, which Krishnamurti had touched, turned black while the other part of his hair was gray.

An older friend of mine, probably Achyutji, told me that Krishnamurti was not concerned with healing the sick body. His main interest was to heal the sick mind of its constant chattering, fears and hopes, ignorance, and suffering.

*

Narayan had married Shakuntala, who had come from Bangalore in 1963 to teach English in Rishi Valley because of her interest in Krishnamurti's teachings. Later, in the seventies and eighties, she taught at Brockwood Park. They had a daughter, Natasha, in 1966. Krishnamurti helped Narayan to go to England in 1966 to study for a diploma in education at Oxford University. He returned in 1967 to teach in Rishi Valley, but in 1968, at Achyutji's suggestion, he went to Hyderabad for a year to be a headmaster of a day school. The impending split between Krishnamurti and KWINC had come into the open in India, and Vasanta Vihar was made unavailable by KWINC. A Krishnamurti Center was set up in Madras in 1969 to make sure that alternative arrangements were available for Krishnamurti when he visited Madras for his much-awaited talks and discussions. Mrs. Jayalakshmi and some leading citizens of Madras like Chief Justice Ananthanarayanan and UN Undersecretary C. V. Narsimhan were the moving forces in the setting up of this center, which was housed in Mrs. Jayalakshmi's residence close to Vasanta Vihar. Narayan, who returned from Hyderabad to Madras in 1969 to manage the center, did an efficient job helping to arrange for Krishnaji's talks under a vast *pandal* (thatch-covered tent) and other related work. Narayan stayed in Madras with his family for two years.

*

I used to go and see Krishnaji whenever he was packing during his last two days at Rishi Valley and Vasanta Vihar. He packed his own suitcase and did not generally ask for assistance. Everything was arranged in an orderly fashion. Krishnaji did it slowly, with every garment nicely folded.

On one of those days as I entered his room, I found Krishnamurti standing, his whole body quivering and shaking like a tender branch. I wondered what it was. Yet another year the same thing happened at Vasanta Vihar. Now I asked him why he was quivering and shaking.

"It is like an earthquake, old boy. I will not speak to you further about this," he said.

Either he was shaking off all the karma he had collected so that he was cleansed or it had some connection with the "process". Obviously this happened whenever he left one place and went to another town or city. Krishnaji also used to bow down and thank the house where he had stayed for some time. He did it unobtrusively and few noticed it, as he did it when he was alone.

*

The whole family left for the United Kingdom in 1971 after Narayan and Shakuntala decided that they would like to return to teaching. Narayan accepted a position to teach advanced mathematics in a grammar school at Worcester, and

Krishnaji helped Shakuntala and Natasha to settle down at Brockwood Park. Narayan spent seven years teaching mathematics in England. He taught first at the Royal Worcester grammar school for a year or two and then went on to Michael Hall, at Forest Row in Sussex. This was one of the schools that belonged to the group run under the educational philosophy of Rudolf Steiner.³⁰ From all accounts, Narayan was happy in England and would often go to Brockwood to see his family. Later, in the mid-eighties, Shakuntala left Brockwood and moved to work at Michael Hall.

Narayan attended and participated in some of the discussions at Brockwood and spent time with Krishnamurti when he visited England. Dorothy Simmons, the principal, was a close friend of Narayan's. He visited many countries in Europe during his stay in England and regularly attended the Saanen Talks. He traveled to the United States for the first time in 1975.

*

I was teaching in England in 1975, and my wife, daughter, and I went to Ojai, California, and stayed at Arya Vihar. My Indian friends Sunanda and Pama Patwardhan were also there.³¹ We went for long walks with Krishnamurti and had small group discussions. Krishnamurti asked me what I did in teaching mathematics. I replied that I taught slowness and sequence emerging in a pattern and order. At one end there was a solution, but the whole flow was one of mathematical perception and logic. Much of mathematics is visual intelligence. In some situations it ends up in a formula which is the end of mathematical logic which sometimes would be a dead end.

We discussed pleasure, and Krishnamurti said that the state of pleasure could never be joy or ecstasy because pleasure was always bounded by pain. I asked him about the pursuit of "wise pleasure," which some Greek philosophers such as Cyraenias had talked about. Krishnaji's answer to my comment was "my hat" and he dismissed the idea of wise pleasure.

Next to Arya Vihar where the Krishnamurti library, study center and some guest rooms are located, there is the Pine Cottage which figures extensively in the biographies. This had been rebuilt with an exquisite hall. Krishnamurti stayed in a room in Pine Cottage. There is an old gnarled pepper tree—not be confused with the pepper bush which produces pepper in India—under which Krishnamurti sat in his younger days, and this tree was sanctified as Krishnamurti had his first enlightenment and vision under this tree. There are two granite statues of Nandi [the sitting bull which is the vehicle for Shiva]³² at the entrance to the cottage. They were beautifully carved and sent from India by Mrs. Jayalakshmi. Natasha was about nine years old. Staying in Arya Vihar, we had close access to Krishnamurti. Sometimes we went for long walks in this enchanting valley with him. Natasha and I were taken to Disneyland by a friend who fell in love with Natasha.

There were about ten or twelve of us at Arya Vihar, and Krishnaji joined us for lunch. Pine Cottage and Arya Vihar were both in an orange grove, and the fresh fragrance of the flowers and oranges was invigorating. The sun shone in the blue sky. Sunanda and Pama were also staying at Arya Vihar, and on one

occasion we did some chanting of Sanskrit verses from ancient Hindu religious texts together with Krishnamurti.

*

Around 11:00 A.M. one day, Krishnaji sent for Sunanda and me to come and see him. When we walked into Pine Cottage, he was wearing a bathrobe and sitting in his bed with his legs outstretched. Probably he had just finished taking his bath.

He turned towards us and said, “Buddha is now here; ask questions.” I was amazed to see Krishnamurti’s face transforming itself. There was tremendous light in his eyes and there was a glow on his face, and a subtle transformation was taking place. The room was surcharged with beauty emanating from Krishnamurti.

Krishnamurti said, “What is the essence of my teaching? Tell me.”

With some hesitation I said, “You are the world.”

He accepted it and asked, “What else?”

We were too hesitant and shy to talk any further.

Krishnamurti added, “The observer is the observed.”

As we could not converse any further, Krishnamurti said that we could leave. His extraordinary face and beauty are still fresh in my memory. The brightness of Krishnamurti’s face and eyes has remained with me with a timeless quality. Was the Buddha really there? Or was it a way of speaking?

Later on I thought I could have added “choiceless awareness” as an important aspect of his teachings. A Zen monk later told me that the phrase “the observer is the observed” was a priceless jewel in the arts of meditation and living. “You are the world” is an extensive insight encompassing all life and nature; and “the observer is the observed” is a nondualistic approach and perception in which there is no duality and therefore no conflict. Together, both the insights formed an integral, whole and indivisible insight.

Meditation 4

*Man is concerned with immediate problems
—working for a living, and putting up with the pollution,
violence, and corruption that are constantly around him.
Corruption really means breaking up, and man observes this
endless fragmentation of society.*

*Throughout the world,
powerful governments and societies
produce a glut of soldiers, politicians, priests,
and all sorts of specialists
to condition and control the minds of human beings.
The result is fragmentation and mediocrity
in vast numbers of people who are wholly concerned
with their little problems from day to day.
They are always in a state of worry, fear, and anxiety.*

*Is it possible to deny this direction, to develop foresight
to meet challenges of life without getting crushed by them?
You can only grasp the whole when you see
that the little is not important
and observe that it is you
who have made the little so important.*

*One has to deny the little—that is, that which is false
—to be able to see the need
for a larger, longer, and deeper vision.
The little can never contain this vision
because the vision is life itself.*

Vanaprastha

The River

Meditation 5

*To face a fact, one must see if a fact really is one.
Fact is what has already happened
or what is actually happening.
There is no such thing as an essential fact
as distinct from an ordinary fact.*

*What is it that prevents us from seeing a fact?
Fear is one reason,
and observation shows
that fear cripples intelligence.
Fear is always with reference to something; in relationship
or the dark or the unknown, and so on. Some fears are
based on real danger to physical existence.
But many fears are irrational and projected by the mind.
Delusion is one result of many fears and leads to neurosis
and disturbed states of mind.
Mental health may be lost
and the attention of specialists may be needed.*

*But each problem, however serious
contains its own solution.
Careful study—which means
remaining in a state of observation with ease—
reveals the nature of the problem.
This leads to the understanding of
the structure of the problem.
This unfolding of a problem is only possible
if the environment is favorable.
When such an unfolding takes place,
its very flowering without any residue of thought
will suggest a solution.*

When I was teaching in England (1971-1977), I had made friends with some Buddhist scholars. One was Dr. Walpola Rahula, a senior monk from Sri Lanka. He was a member of the Theravada school. I used to visit the Buddhist Center in London, and one day Dr. Rahula gave a talk there. Although he was a Theravada scholar, he was conversant with the Mahayana school of Buddhism. He wrote a book, *What the Buddha Taught*.³³ Rahula visited many universities in the U.S.A. and lectured about Buddhist thought. Another lady Irmgard Schloegel, was from the Buddhist Society in London. She had spent more than twelve years in Japan in a Zen monastery. She presided over some of the meetings of the society and was well regarded in Buddhist circles in London.

At Krishnamurti's invitation, I took them to Brockwood Park³⁴ for two weekend discussions. There were other invitees too, and some of Brockwood's students were also present. The school provided hospitality, and we enjoyed our stay. There were discussions in the morning and the evening with time for a lunch break and some rest. We walked on the grounds, which were well kept with green lawns and well-trimmed hedges and flowering trees.

The discussions ranged on a wide variety of topics: karma, free will, consciousness, passive awareness and some aspects of Buddhist thought. After some time the discussion became fresh and invigorating, as there was no particular subject and one could not discuss from knowledge and memory. It was observation and direct insight without the process of thought. Dr. Rahula was a keen participant in these discussions.

At the end of the meetings, Rahula asked a direct question. "I am going away this afternoon. Please tell me what is truth; tell me now."

Krishnamurti said, "You want to know truth in one minute, sir? It is compassion and there is no illusion in it."

The answer was brief and explosive, and we sat in stunned silence. These were the closing words of the dialogue.



Rita Zampese

G. Narayan and J. Krishnamurti in dialogue at Rishi Valley School, 1979

During my years in England as a teacher, I went to Saanen in Switzerland for many years to attend Krishnamurti's talks. Some of us rented a chalet for the season. Krishnamurti stayed in Chalet Tannegg in Gstaad up the winding road to the hill. He was looked after by friends like Vanda Scaravelli and Mary Zimbalist. Mary was Krishnamurti's hostess and his secretary. She was the widow of the renowned film director Sam Zimbalist. She was wealthy and generous, and traveled with Krishnamurti in the U.S.A., England, and Europe for twenty-five years. A special tent was put up for Krishnamurti's talks to accommodate three thousand people who came from many different countries in Europe and from India and U.S.A. The greenery, the gardens, and the wooden chalets made the scenery fascinating. Gstaad, a village adjacent to Saanen, was the center of fashion and wealth. The Swiss were traditional and steeped in their own culture, which was conservative and stable. The three linguistic groups—German, French, and Italian—as well as the original Swiss all lived in peace with each other. There were many regular sports and contests as well as winter sports and musical gatherings and concerts of well-known performers like the violinist Yehudi Menuhin.

One year I was invited to stay in a room in Chalet Tannegg for a month. One evening when we were going for a walk down the hill, Krishnamurti turned to me and asked what I was reading these days. I said I was studying the Madhyamika philosophy propounded by Nagarjuna, the great Buddhist monk who lived in Nalanda in the third century B.C.³⁵ I was quiet and Krishnamurti asked me what Madhyamika philosophy was all about. I replied that according to Buddhist thought the great sages called the Bodhisattvas have three great qualities: *karuna* [boundless compassion], *prajña* [clarity] and *upaya* [skill in communication].



Giddu Narayan

Rita Zampese

Krishnamurti said that he had wanted to talk about this on the previous day but somehow the conversation went in a different direction.

The next day in the tent at Saanen, Krishnamurti spoke about compassion and linked it with looking and listening (*prajña*). It was a great talk and shed new light on what I was reading. Looking and listening with total attention is life energy that leads to ever-new skills in living and in action (*upaya*).

*

There was a long series of dialogues between Krishnamurti and Dr. David Bohm, the well-known theoretical physicist famed for his book on quantum theory. It lasted over many meetings at Brockwood and London and led to the publication of a book titled *The Ending of Time*. I was an observer at some of the meetings and occasionally took part in the dialogue if I had something to say.³⁶

In books written by Krishnamurti, such as *Krishnamurti's Notebook*, *Krishnamurti's Journal*, and *Krishnamurti to Himself*, and in the biographies,

different from his published talks, discussions and speeches, there is the mention of a “process.” The process was a state of pain, sometimes intense and sometimes gentle, that Krishnamurti had to go through, it seemed, and this affected his neck and head. It first appeared in Ojai, California, under the pepper tree and sometimes was so intense that Krishnamurti lost his normal consciousness. It happened at other places too [such as Ootacamund in the Nilgiris Mountains] and sometimes in the middle of the night when he was alone. Sometimes it happened when he was with people, and if the pain was bearable, he would carry on with his conversation. It was a mystery. In 1980 Bohm asked Krishnamurti what the “process” was all about. Many of Krishnaji’s friends wanted to know why he had to go through so much pain. Krishnamurti was shy at first, but David Bohm questioned him again as to what the process was.

Krishnamurti answered, “The process is the movement of the Unknown cleansing my brain cells.”

Turning to me, he said in the same breath in an undertone and almost in a whisper, “Also I have done some healing.”

I am not sure if the cassette player/recorder could have recorded this. There appeared to be some connection between “cleansing the brain cells” and the healing that Krishnamurti had done. Krishnamurti said on different occasions that the healing power was in his hands. He did not claim that he owned it. Pain and suffering were taken on by him as he did a lot of healing, and the compassionate movement of the Unknown cleansed his body and brain so that he could carry on with his mission.

*

During the discussions Krishnamurti also said that total insight would lead to transformation or mutation of brain cells. Some years he used the word “transformation” and sometimes he called it “mutation,” using them as synonyms. If brain cells have undergone mutation, one could live, say, for four hundred years. In his case it would not have been possible to live beyond the normal span of human life, as he traveled incessantly and had to acclimatize himself to different conditions of climate, food, people, and going from place to place.

An admirer of Krishnamurti, Aldous Huxley wrote the foreword to *The First and Last Freedom*. His book *The Perennial Philosophy* is read by scholars all over the world. Huxley was an international figure who took drugs under medical supervision to experiment with layers of consciousness, supersensory perception, and expanded consciousness. He wrote about it in his book *The Doors of Perception*.

Huxley was a good friend of Krishnamurti, and they met many times. A British national who lived in the United States for many years, he visited Krishnamurti once in Vasanta Vihar. Huxley was keenly interested in enlightenment and was conversant with Hindu and Buddhist philosophy. Krishnaji described him as a man with an encyclopedic mind. Huxley wanted to put aside all his knowledge and erudition in order to have an original experience. Krishnaji told me that that was why he had regard and affection for Huxley. Later

I read in the papers that Huxley was afflicted with cancer of the throat, which is very painful. He is reported to have said, "As I am free, I do not mind the pain." Thus I have heard from Krishnamurti. This is truly a remark of a liberated mind.

*

Varanasi on the banks of the river Ganga [Ganges], regarded by both orthodox and conservative Hindus as the holiest of all holy cities (*thirthas*), is possibly the most ancient and continually inhabited city in India. It is a very busy place with small lanes and large crowds. It is the home of the Banaras Hindu University, the Kashi Vidyapith, and the Sanskrit University. The Theosophical Society's Indian headquarters with its second largest campus in India is located here. The Rajghat School campus, built in 1932 for Krishnamurti on the banks of the river Ganga, is on the periphery of the city and includes the point of confluence of the holy rivers Ganga and Varana, the latter flowing into the former. The guest house where Krishnamurti stayed was built in the 1930s and is on the bank of the Ganga with pathways leading down to the river's edge. In ancient days, it is said that the Buddha used to walk from Varanasi (then known as Kashi) along the banks of the Ganga, cross over at Rajghat to take a path to the Varana, cross the Varana, and then walk on to Sarnath. Sarnath is known from ancient times as the place where the Buddha gave his very first sermon immediately after his enlightenment at Bodh Gaya. Emperor Ashoka Maurya built a *stupa* [memorial] to the Buddha in the second century BC at Sarnath, which is visited by tourists and thousands of Buddhist pilgrims from all over the world. So it is considered a holy stretch of land. On one occasion we walked three or four miles all the way from Rajghat to Sarnath. This road is known as the Panchakrosi road. Sarnath is renowned for its Buddhist shrines, and many of the monasteries and temples were built by various nationalities: Sri Lankans, Tibetans, and Chinese. There is a well-known Institute for Tibetan Studies owing allegiance to the Dalai Lama. Its head Rimpoche [the title for a Tibetan lama] is a member of the Krishnamurti Foundation India, which manages the Rajghat School and other KFI institutions in Varanasi and elsewhere in India.

In addition to the school at Rajghat, there is also a women's college and a rural center. The school campus by itself covered over three hundred acres with the Ganga being one of its boundaries from Adi Keshav Ghat³⁷ almost up to the bilevel railway bridge. The river Varana also forms a part of the school's boundaries. The rural center is located on the other side of the Varana after it meets the Ganga.³⁸ Vasanta College for women, originally founded by Besant in 1916 in Varanasi, was moved to Rajghat and housed in its rebuilt campus with its buildings located right on the banks of the Ganga. Madhavachari supervised its entire construction. The hostels for its boarding students were built on the campus of the school.

The rural center across the Varana trained about a hundred youths of the neighborhood in modern agricultural methods, horticulture, and related subjects. A road ran from Varanasi right through the campus, separating the hostels of the school and the college, and stopped on the edge of the Varana, from where one could catch a ferry boat to the rural center. One could also walk on a small bridge

and cross over to Us-Paar (the area on the other side of the river). Many serious students of Krishnamurti's teachings lived on the Us-Paar side. There is a rural primary health center, an agricultural school, and a rural primary school in this area. The school campus is full of trees including a large banyan tree, and a path that runs around the perimeter of the school and the college campus on which Krishnamurti used to go for his long evening walks. One sensed sanity and peace on the campus. The assembly hall for the school, which is at the center of all the classrooms that house the primary and junior schools, is considered a masterpiece in twentieth-century neo-Indian architecture; it was the work of Sir Surendranath Kar, who designed many buildings at Shantiniketan for the Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore.

*

Krishnamurti visited Rajghat School almost every year whenever he was in India. He gave talks and had discussions in the beautiful and spacious assembly hall. The book *Krishnamurti at Rajghat* features many of these talks. Many discussions with the school's students are featured in *Life Ahead, Think on These Things*, and *Krishnamurti on Education*. Smaller group discussions with teachers and invited scholars were held in a large room in the guest house where Krishnamurti stayed. This is located just west of Keshav Ghat, the last ghat on the Ganga.

One afternoon we sailed from Rajghat to Hanuman Ghat, a distance of about a mile. Krishnamurti joined us. There was a resplendence, and though there were some clouds, the sun was bright without being hot. The river was majestic. We passed small boats, got down at Hanuman Ghat, and walked up the steps. There were many devotees taking baths and offering prayers and worship. As we passed on from the steps to the road that led to it from the city, there were beggars sitting on either side of the narrow road. I was walking next to Krishnaji.

There was a *sadhu* [one who has taken to the life of a wandering ascetic and is engaged in religious studies] sitting on the side of the road, a young man with a dark complexion. Probably he had been sitting the whole day; his eyes were closed. He looked a bit severe and was practicing austerities, dressed in a loincloth, his body smeared with ashes and his long hair tied up in a knot. Krishnaji stood in front of him and watched him for a couple of minutes. He probably wanted the *sadhu* to open his eyes, but the man would not. Krishnamurti looked at him again and said in a whisper, "Let us move on." I think Krishnaji wished the *sadhu* to come out of his ascetic practice, as it was leading him nowhere. Already the *sadhu* looked a bit weak and emaciated. We walked on, and very few noticed this incident.

*

During the 1950s Krishnaji gave a full one-hour talk in Varanasi at the school. At the end of the hour, a venerable monk, rather dignified, got up and asked Krishnamurti what he thought of the threefold path.³⁹

Krishnamurti answered without a gap, "Sir, what I do is my love, and that is my knowledge."

The threefold path of *jnana yoga* [earnest and meditative study], *bhakti yoga* [devotion and humility], and *karma yoga* [duty without expectation of recognition or reward] were enshrined integrally in that one statement of Krishnamurti's. It was a stunning experience.

Once Achyutji told me of an incident that happened in Rajghat. There was a Jain *muni* [an ascetic monk who follows the strict teachings of Jainism, a religion that took root in India around the same time as Buddhism] who had undergone many austerities, including plucking the hair of his head from its roots. He had lived this austere and ascetic life in search of God and Truth. Many years had gone into this *sadhana* [earnest and prolonged spiritual effort], and he was getting on in years, having lived a righteous life for many years. He had no other purpose in life except to find Truth and God. Someone spoke to him about Krishnamurti, and so he came to Rajghat. The monk prostrated himself before Krishnamurti [a traditional way in India of showing one's highest regard]. Achyutji arranged an interview with Krishnamurti. As the monk only knew Hindi, Achyutji became the translator.

After a brief discussion, the monk reached a state of high energy. As the discussion went on, the monk reached a state of *ananda* [spiritual ecstasy] and tears rolled down his cheeks. And as he bent in front of Krishnaji, his tears touched Krishnaji's feet. He was grateful for the great experience. The monk said he owed it to Krishnamurti. He added that the experience was due to Krishnaji's grace, presence and blessing and he was not sure if he would have that state of bliss again. He would like to have it permanently as part of his being through Krishnamurti's blessings and awaited an answer.

Krishnaji asked him as to who was asking this question; was it the one who wanted to grab the experience?

Then the monk went again into a state of *samadhi* [absorption of the self in the infinite], and *ananda*. He sat quietly for some time.

The monk recognized that it was his ego that wanted the permanence of this experience and understood that experiencing is only possible when the ego is absent. It was a moment of *moksha* [liberation from the cycle of birth and rebirth after the death of one's last bodily existence into absorption in the infinite] that could not be recalled. The monk was quick to recognize this; he got up, prostrated before Krishnaji and left the room accompanied by Achyutji who was the witness to the truth and the transmission of what had happened between Krishnaji and the monk.

Achyutji added that though he was present, he was not fortunate to experience the bliss that the monk went through.

"Probably," said Achyutji, "the current passed through Krishnamurti and the blessed monk."

Meditation 6

*Choiceless awareness begins with awareness of
the very process of thought
that begins, moves, and ends
and starts all over again without any stop within our brains.
The brain is the most intricate instrument that we have.
Observation of the thought process within its structure
can only take place if there is no choice and no duality.
Duality will lead to conflict.*

*Only in that state of choiceless awareness will problems
unfold themselves without resistance.
In this seeing and listening, the brain observes itself and
energy is released for observing deeper layers of
consciousness. This is spontaneous though arduous but the
emptying
of the brain of its contents
is the beginning of meditation.*

*That which is new
requires space for understanding.
Blossoming is a unitary process in the ever-present and is
different from the experiencer
with his experience from his past.
Blossoming explodes into the present
without the bondage of the past.
Thought, ever clever, slips into spaces between
and breaks up what is really one into two.
It is the product of the past, and its approach is to
continue one in the grooves of conditioning.*

Seeing through this is an act of intelligence.

Sanyas

The Sea

Meditation 7

*What is not expressed in a conversation
is sometimes more important than what is expressed.
To pose the right question is to open a conversation
that can lead to further comprehension of a problem
in a state of listening.*

*This is another act of intelligence, which is quite different
from an act of the intellect or an act of intuition.*

*This act of intelligence can focus on a problem
without disturbance from the distraction
caused by moving thoughts.*

*Staying with a problem without choice
is in itself watchfulness.*

*It will reveal the nature of the issues in a problem
without volition.*

*Quiet observation is what follows,
and there is a release of energy and scope
for further dialogue and insight.*

*The awakening of this intelligence
in the teacher and the child
is one aim of a Krishnamurti school.*

Narayan lived and worked in England from 1971 till early 1977. When Balasundaram retired in 1976, Krishnamurti and the KFI invited Narayan to return to India and resume responsibility of the Rishi Valley School as its principal. He took over Rishi Valley in March 1977. Later he became the first director of the Rishi Valley Education Center, a position which he retained, along with the principalship, till 1987. In 1980 the school hosted the annual meeting of the Indian Public Schools Conference for the first time, and heads of over fifty leading schools in India were educated about the unique nature of the school and Krishnamurti's educational approach. Narayan actively assisted in the organization and founding of two new KFI schools, the Valley School in Bangalore, and The School in Madras. He persuaded the government of Andhra Pradesh to lease one hundred and fifty acres of dry scrubland behind the school's dining hall for afforestation, which has revived wildlife around an artificial lake on the campus. Tree planting took on a momentum of its own, and this created the core for the afforestation of the entire valley, to evolve later into a bird preserve. He organized fund-raisers and conferences of KFI and KFA school educators, and energized the Rural Education Center. At several conferences he spoke on the educational paths that KFI schools were exploring in the various educational centers. He visited England, the United States, and Saanen, Switzerland, to be with Krishnamurti during the talks and discussions. He located suitable land on the Palamaneru-Punganoor road in Chittoor and began working on a retreat center for the KFI. He brought in to the valley many highly educated teachers seriously interested in Krishnamurti's teachings, many of whom (including the current principal of Rishi Valley School) have settled down to move the school into its next phase. Shakuntala wanted to continue working at Brockwood and take care of Natasha, who had joined it for high school. It was also in this period that Narayan became friends with many serious people involved deeply in Krishnamurti's teachings like Mary Zimbalist, David Bohm, Friedrich Grohe, Mary Lutyens, Erna Lilliefelt, Evelyne Blau, S. Takahashi and many others. His life was now one with the life of Rishi Valley and it remained so till he retired as principal in 1988.

*

In 1980 Krishnamurti visited Sri Lanka at the invitation of Dr. Adhikaram and others who had been listening to him for years.⁴⁰ Sri Lanka is mainly a nation of Theravada Buddhists, although there are large segments of Hindus, Muslims, and Christians. Krishnaji stayed at the government's guest house in Sri Lanka for four weeks, gave talks at Colombo, and held group discussions. He also gave interviews. Many members of the KFI went to Sri Lanka. Adhikaram arranged for us to stay in rooms provided by the Ramakrishna Mission in Colombo.⁴¹ We stayed in well-maintained rooms in a three-storied building near the Indian Ocean. There were many monks staying there and there was also a Hindu temple in the mission's compound.

Adhikaram went every morning to the guest house to see Krishnaji. He had his lunch with Krishnamurti and took him to the venue of the talks. At the invitation of President Jayawardene and Prime Minister Premadasa, Krishnamurti went and visited both of them.

Often we were invited to lunch together at the government guest house with Krishnamurti. Present at one of the lunches was the vice-chancellor of Sri Lanka University. He showed the greatest respect for Krishnaji and for Adhikaram

whom he had succeeded at that post. He stated that Adhikaram was his model and guide.

As the conversation proceeded during lunch, the vice-chancellor turned to Krishnamurti and asked him what was the result of so many years of education in the KFI schools in India and abroad. After all, Krishnaji was talking about the “new mind,” and they felt that the teachings must have penetrated the minds and hearts of its students. They felt there should be some enlightened students.

Krishnaji replied without a pause, “Not one single new mind, sir.”

Krishnaji felt that after fifty years of educational work in these schools, the students were still only interested in their careers, joined the rat race, and were sucked up in a competitive and corrupt society.

I felt like going and hiding under the table, as many of us who were involved in educational work at the Krishnamurti Foundation schools in India and abroad were present.

*

Krishnamurti talked to students two or three times a week in the mornings after breakfast for over half an hour. The bigger boys sat at the big hall in Rishi Valley built of granite and designed like a *mantapam*.⁴² Senior boys and girls did not take part in the dialogue and were already growing slightly cynical, thinking of their studies and impending examinations more than of Krishnaji’s talks. The junior boys and girls were alive and put many questions to Krishnaji. They were spontaneous and it was a delight to watch them.

Vinayak, an eight-year-old boy, asked Krishnaji if he had seen God.

Krishnamurti asked him if he had seen the rays of the sun reaching the earth from moment to moment and how it lighted the whole earth, its color and richness, supporting all life forms, including human beings.

*

Krishnamurti would sometimes ask students to sit cross-legged with a straight back before he began his talk. One senior student asked Krishnaji why he should sit in that posture and not in his own way. Before Krishnaji could reply, a nine-year-old girl answered that if one sat with a straight back, there was a gathering of energy and one could pay attention and learn without too much effort. We were stunned by her answer. Krishnaji asked the boy if he understood what the girl had said, since there was no need for further explanation. Krishnaji suggested that the students should sit for a few minutes with eyes closed, not move their eyeballs, and then listen to various sounds and to silence.

*

While going for a walk that evening and talking about music, Krishnamurti pointed out that in group chanting⁴³ like the ones we had heard in Rajghat School and at Vasanta Vihar, recited by learned Vedic⁴⁴ scholars, there was no pause between two notes and there was continuous chanting without a gap. The whole chant was enveloped in silence and the chanting blended with silence.

Turning to me, Krishnamurti asked why senior boys and girls were cynical and not participating in the discussions. I said that they were concerned with



G. Narayan with a student at Rishi Valley School, 1979

examinations, future studies, and finding a career and were under strong pressure from society to train themselves for successful careers. Parents were only interested in success and a well-paid job, and the students slowly lost their initiative and spontaneity. Influenced by society, which was corrupt and ruthlessly competitive, and frightened by the specter of poverty and unemployment in India, they sought only achievement and success.

I remembered Plato asking whether it was possible to educate students in a corrupt society. Krishnaji also felt that the older boys were cynical and already conditioned by society.

I mentioned to Krishnaji that no new mind would emerge from Rishi Valley or any KFI school.

Krishnamurti said to me with a smile that a new mind may emerge from one of these schools. Though he was anxious, there was no despair. So there was a silver lining to the whole cloud of our educational effort.

*

We were going for a walk with Krishnamurti and just leaving the old guest house. An alumnus of the school who was studying in a college in Madras and who had just come to Rishi Valley that afternoon, came running to me. He said that there had been a continuous downpour in Madras⁴⁵ for several days and some streets were waterlogged. He said that he knew that Krishnaji was going to Madras in a few days for the talks at Vasanta Vihar. As Krishnaji's talks were always held in the open inside Vasanta Vihar, he was worried that it may become difficult due to the unusual monsoons and heavy rains that year.

I conveyed this news to Krishnamurti, who was waiting at the corner of the guest house for me to join him on his walk. He looked at the student and then asked me to tell him that he had a contract with the rain god and that they would be able to hold talks in the open at Vasanta Vihar. There was subtle humor; Krishnamurti said it smilingly, and the student noticed it. But I think Krishnaji meant it.

Krishnaji left for Madras a few days later. I attended all his talks at Madras. The weather was fine, and it did not rain during the talks. The listeners could return home without any inconvenience and at their own pace. The weather was fine even for several hours after the talks, sometimes even into the night. And it was the monsoon season!

What kind of contract was there between Krishnamurti and nature? It could not be a coincidence, since the talks were spread over a month, with Krishnaji giving them only during the weekends. Varuna [the Hindu god of rain] had certainly cooperated with Krishnaji.

*

I used to enjoy playing tennis with students in the evening. There was a line-marker [the person responsible for ground maintenance of the courts and for basic coaching] who was the best player in the school and quick on his feet, and students loved to play with him.⁴⁶

One day after playing a strenuous set of tennis with the marker, I developed a sprain around the waist, which would normally heal in three or four days. My walk showed that I suffered from pain around my waist, and the next day at the morning talk with Krishnaji, I sat cross-legged on the floor with others in the assembly hall, with obvious discomfort. Krishnaji noticed this and after the talk asked me what was the matter with my waist. I said I had a sprain. Later I took some magazines to him at the guest house. Krishnaji walked towards me and pressed my waist with his fingers. As I went down the stairs to go back to the school, I noticed that there was no pain and I had been healed. I was surprised at the healing touch. Krishnamurti asked me in the evening how I felt. I replied that the sprain had vanished and that I could play tennis. Krishnaji said rather gently that the healing quality was in his hands.

*

When Krishnamurti fell ill in 1959 in Vasanta Vihar, I stayed there to help to take care of him. I was sitting in a chair and thinking of thought-reading while he was lying down. Krishnamurti said, "I will tell you a story."

There was a dog owned by an Italian lady. When she went for a walk the dog went with her. She noticed something in its behavior. If the lady paused and admired a bunch of flowers or a tree, the dog went round and hugged the tree. When the lady admired the beauty and the quietness of a lake, the dog tarried near the lake. This was happening frequently and the lady wondered if the dog was reading her thoughts, so she reported this to one of the members of a faculty of a local college. The professors agreed to see the dog the next day. She took the dog and waited for them to arrive. When they did, the dog was let into the room. There were five or six professors. When the German professor thought silently in German, "Go to the corner of the room," the dog did so. When another professor thought silently in Italian, "Go under the table," or "Go round the room," the dog did so too. Other professors chipped in, and all their thoughts were read. The dog seemed to understand many languages and followed the directions given by the professors. After some research and observation, they discovered that the dog was catching the thoughts of human beings before they were verbalized and given a form. Differences in various languages did not matter as the dog was meeting the feeling before thought was born and crystallized into language.

It was strange that Krishnaji caught my thought about thought-reading before it was verbalized and told me this story. Krishnaji could read others' thoughts.

A few years later, a student in Rishi Valley named Kumar came to me once and asked me if Krishnaji could read the thoughts of others. He had heard from someone that this was so. I suggested to Kumar that he ask Krishnaji himself when Krishnaji went for his walk.

The next day Kumar went up to Krishnaji while he was on his walk and asked him if he could read other people's thoughts.

Krishnamurti said yes to Kumar but he added that he did not do it, as it was just like reading other's letters and would be an intrusion into the privacy of the individual.

*

Shri R. Venkataraman came to see Krishnamurti every year at Vasanta Vihar.⁴⁷ He was then past seventy and a minister of the cabinet at the central government in New Delhi.

One time as he was walking with Krishnaji along the corridor to the dining rooms, he said to him, "There is a self-effulgence coming from you. I noticed it. I was walking behind you." Krishnaji said nothing and smiled.

Another year at the dining table Venkataraman said, "I told Indira Gandhi that my eyes were going feeble and I am not able to read all the files sent to me."

Krishnaji listened sympathetically and asked him, "Is it all worth it?"

Venkataraman nodded, "Yes."

At another time, Mrs. X entered the large dining room at Vasanta Vihar when Krishnamurti and Mary Zimbalist were having breakfast. She told him that he was not consistent. She probably meant that his teaching was not consistent.

Krishnamurti replied, "Consistent... to be consistent is to be mechanical." Soon after, Mrs. X left the room.

Once Krishnamurti had asked me years ago whether his teaching was consistent. I told him that I thought so. He said that there was an undercurrent of unity in his teachings, which could be discerned by one who studies it with some care. The interconnectedness could be seen in the flow of understanding.

Many years ago, in Rishi Valley, Krishnamurti asked Balasundaram to take a holiday and rest, as he was overworking and tired. When Krishnaji asked him once again to take a holiday, Balasundaram replied that Krishnaji should also take a holiday, as he was traveling frequently and working hard. Krishnaji said, "I have this body and that consciousness. That is all. But you have thoughts and all that follows from them, like worry and anxiety."

Balasundaram grasped the difference and saw in Krishnamurti a liberated human being with a great deal of energy and freedom from thought.

*

V. Ganesan⁴⁸ told me of an interesting event. Professor Swaminathan was editing the complete works of Mahatma Gandhi and as his eyesight was rather weak he had to wear thick glasses. He reported this matter to Krishnaji when he met him at Madras. Krishnamurti put his fingers on his eyes and waved the fingers up and down in circles. Swaminathan felt much better, and his eyesight was strong enough to complete his work as chief editor of the monumental work of ninety volumes.

*

We took long walks with Krishnaji in the early days in Madras, Bombay, and Rishi Valley, and later in Ojai and Brockwood.

While we were walking one evening in Bombay, the road was full of traffic, with buses, cars, cycles, and pedestrians. Krishnaji was walking on the edge of the road and there was no pavement. A bus went past him rather speedily, barely six inches from Krishnaji. He jumped back and, looking at the driver, said, "Hey, you are not going to kill me." We continued walking, but Krishnaji walked on the extreme left, with some of us walking on his right to protect him from speeding buses on Bombay's roads.

On another day we were walking along a road. Suddenly, water used for cleaning came in a downpour from the third floor of a building next to the road barely three feet away and right in front of Krishnaji. We just managed to escape it. Krishnamurti looked up at the lady who had just thrown down the water, standing on the third-floor balcony. She looked at Krishnaji and smiled, and Krishnamurti smiled back in return. We continued our walk. Though we narrowly escaped getting wet with dirty water, Krishnaji was neither angry nor upset.

In 1969 when Vasanta Vihar was not available for his stay or for the talks, Krishnaji stayed with Mrs. Jayalakshmi and sent me to Vasanta Vihar to get his personal belongings, like the sandalwood studs he wore with his kurtas. The assistant there refused to hand them over and said that he was only an assistant and could not do anything.

When Krishnamurti heard this from me, he said, "What the heck does he mean? They are my personal belongings." We telephoned, the person there relented, and I was able to fetch the buttons in a small, pretty box.

*

Krishnamurti narrated this story in Rishi Valley. Once he had walked deep into the woods and hills around Ojai. As he turned a corner, he saw a brown bear with her cubs. They were less than fifty yards away. The bear sent up her cubs into a tree nearby and faced Krishnamurti ready to move. Krishnamurti watched the bear for a few seconds and walked back step by step with his face turned towards the bear, saying, "Yes, lady, you win." He walked back to Ojai from the mountains and reported the matter to the warden of the forest, whom he met on the way. The warden scolded Krishnaji for going that far alone and exposing himself to danger, which would get him (the warden) into trouble. Krishnaji added that bears with cubs were dangerous and would sometimes attack without provocation.

*

There was an incident in Varanasi early in the morning when Krishnaji was doing *asanas* [yoga exercises]. A black-faced langur monkey came to the window and watched him and would not leave. Krishnaji got up after doing the *sarvangasana* ["entire body" *asana*] and shook hands with the langur monkey and suggested that he leave then. The fur on the monkey's paws was soft and so was his skin. The langur left obviously delighted by getting attention from Krishnaji.

There was a creeper with blue flowers adjacent to the dining hall in Vasanta Vihar. It was specially planted and was growing far too slowly. Krishnaji stood

in front of it after lunch for a few minutes, felt its leaves, and whispered in soft tones. We did not disturb him and walked away. This was a daily event for three weeks during December 1984. To our great delight, the creeper grew fast, flourished, and put forth beautiful big flowers.

I had heard Professor Schumacher talk a few years ago about tender loving care and the response of grapevines somewhere in Europe, which yielded an abundance of grapes—two or three times the normal yield.

*

During Krishnaji's last visit to Rishi Valley in 1985, there was a hoopoe bird⁴⁹ visiting him every day. Sometimes Krishnaji would open the window of this room and the bird would come in. There was some communion between Krishnamurti and the bird. If the window was closed, the bird would tap on the glass pane wanting to be let in.

One day in the afternoon discussion meeting at the guest house with Krishnamurti, the bird came and went on tapping at the glass pane. Krishnaji went to the bird and spoke to her gently, saying that he had a meeting and she could bring her children later. The bird flew away merrily.

On the last day before Krishnamurti was to leave Rishi Valley, the bird came again and went to Krishnaji's room. Krishnaji warned her that he was going away the next day and that the room would be closed, and she should not enter while he was gone, as it would be cleaned up and locked the next day.

*

Krishnaji told us a story that once when he was in retreat somewhere in the Ranikhet Himalayas, he was asked if he wanted to see a tiger. If so arrangements would be made for a tiger sighting with a goat tied up below a tree as bait and with a *machkan* [seating platform] for him high up on the tree. Krishnaji did not agree. He walked into the forest the next day. As he walked on, there was a sudden quietness. Birds and monkeys were utterly quiet. There was danger. Krishnaji's body refused to move, though the mind wanted to go further into the forest. Then the ominous quiet was broken by the chirping of birds and cries of small animals. The danger was gone and the tiger had passed.

As he walked back, he felt the forest still again. As he looked up, he saw langur monkeys on the tops of trees watching him intently, probably to see what kind of man he was.

*

Two great musicians lived in Rishi Valley for a few years.⁵⁰ One was Palghat Mani Iyer. He was considered the greatest *mridangam* player of all time. [The *mridangam* is the most ancient concert percussion instrument in India.] He was drawn to Krishnamurti who had regard for him and was delighted by his drumming. Mani Iyer did not know English and so he read Tamil translations of Krishnamurti's talks. Many were drawn to his style of drumming, and he spent half his time giving performances in different parts of India. Top musicians wanted him to accompany them when they were singing or playing an instrument like the *veena* or the violin. He always wore simple South Indian dress, a white

dhoti, and a white *jubba* [collarless half-sleeved shirt] and was a very alert person. While he was in Rishi Valley, he went to Kerala for Ayurvedic treatment and passed away in a hospital there.

It was due to Mani Iyer that M. L. Vasanta Kumari, a well-known vocalist of South India, joined the staff of the Rishi Valley School, where she brought the students to a high level of attainment in singing classical music. Vasanta Kumari also traveled a great deal giving concerts in different parts of India and went abroad on several occasions. She and Mani Iyer together gave concerts many times for Krishnaji at Vasanta Vihar and at Rishi Valley. He had a keen appreciation of South Indian classical music and held both Mani Iyer and Vasanta Kumari in high esteem. They came to live in Rishi Valley because they were drawn to Krishnaji, whom they considered to be a great sage.

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Krishnamurti lunched with us at the Old Guest House in Rishi Valley, but his dinner was served in his room by Parameshwaran [his long-time chef in India]. We never disturbed him after he returned from his evening walk around seven. He had his dinner before eight and went to bed by nine-thirty. In 1982 many members of the Foundation were visiting Rishi Valley, and some of us took our dinner at the guest house. We talked rather softly and finished our dinner by eight-thirty so that we did not disturb Krishnaji, who was staying in his room adjacent to the discussion hall.

One evening as we were dining, Krishnaji entered the room around seven-thirty and asked for his dinner to be brought into the dining room, and he sat with us to eat. All of us were feeling cheerful after the evening walk with Krishnaji.

One of us asked Krishnamurti what his educational objectives were. We were not sure whether he would answer us, as he did not think in terms of aims and goals.

To our great surprise, he enumerated the following as his educational aims.

1. Global outlook: Krishnamurti explained that this meant a vision of the whole as distinct from the part, and that it should never be a sectarian outlook but always a holistic outlook free from all prejudice. He said that only a global approach could solve our problems, placed as we were at the end of the twentieth century, with unknown dangers from nuclear energy and hazardous wastes, population growth, environmental pollution, and wars. He said that a sectarian outlook would invariably lead to bigotry and violence.

2. Concern for man and the environment: Krishnamurti said that man was part of nature, and if nature was not cared for, it would boomerang on man. There was need for afforestation and conservation of soil. Ecologists were pointing out that the destructive nature of man had led to the disappearance of many species in the biosphere. Man was suffering and was confused. There were conflicts of all kinds, leading to violence and wars. He said that only right education and deep affection between people, which was needed everywhere would resolve many human problems.

3. Religious spirit, which includes the scientific temper: Krishnamurti told us that the religious mind is alone, not lonely. It is in communion with people and

nature. He said that the religious spirit is young and innocent and can explore into the present with creative zeal. While the scientific mind goes from fact to fact and observes, the religious mind alone could comprehend the fact and go beyond it from the known to the unknown. He said that only the nonsectarian and nondenominational religious spirit would bring about a new culture.

There was a radiance in the dining room as he spoke to us till 9:00 P.M.

When we dispersed at 9:30 P.M., we felt that it had been a rare evening, as Krishnaji usually never came out of his room after his dinner. We felt that Krishnamurti was giving a new holistic direction to those of us involved in education.

*

Early in the morning Krishnamurti did *yogasanas*. He learnt them from Desikachari and other yoga teachers. I have seen him in earlier years doing *sarvangasana* and *shirsasana* [headstand] for more than thirty minutes each. He did breathing exercises in the evenings. B. K. S. Iyengar was also one of his teachers. Breakfast was at eight-thirty, and Krishnaji would ask about world news and some of us would supply relevant details. He did not read the morning papers nor did he listen to the radio. The only magazine he read was *Time*. In the early years he read *Newsweek* and *Reader's Digest*. He was a slow reader. He read detective fiction, thrillers as he called them. He carried a book of collected poems and liked Keats and Shelley. When he wanted the root meaning of a word, he referred to an etymological dictionary.⁵¹ In some dialogues, he would keep a dictionary beside him, and some of us would refer to the dictionary and look up meanings for him.

In India, after interviews, he would take a long, hot bath with oils applied to the head and body—known as an oil bath in India.

Lunch was at 1:00 P.M. and was leisurely. There would be some discussion, as six or seven people would be invited to eat with him. After resting in the afternoon, he would go for long walks after five in the evening. Once in Varanasi he had sunstroke and had to protect himself from the sun. Krishnamurti would always carry a large white umbrella when he walked to the assembly halls to give his morning talks in Varanasi and Rishi Valley.

*

Krishnamurti also learnt *pranayama* [slow, rhythmic breathing], which he did either in the morning or in the evening. He wrote in the morning or in the afternoon after two hours of rest. Sometimes, I am told that he also wrote on long-distance flights from one continent to another.

After he returned from his evening walk, he went straight to his room. Nobody went to see him after that time.

Krishnaji usually ate his dinner alone in his room. Sometimes Parameshwaran, his chef, served his food. I think he went to bed at half-past nine in the night.

In Rishi Valley, he slept in a small room. Later on, the large verandah adjacent to the small room, open and supported by stone pillars and a roof, was converted into a large room. This is where he slept from then on till his last day

in Rishi Valley in 1985. The large glass windows of this room with their floor-size curtains looked impressive. This is the window that the hoopoe bird pecked at to be admitted. Krishnaji sometimes spoke to the bird and the bird wanted to come with her young sons. I saw the bird pecking at the window more than once because the door to the room was generally shut during meetings so the bird could not come in through it. Krishnamurti was this bird's friend.

*

He maintained good health until he died at ninety years of age. He had to keep fit because he traveled to so many places in a year, with occasional retreats in Ojai or in the Himalayas. Once he went up to Ooty in the Nilgiris Hills in Tamil Nadu for rest and retreat. In spite of the care he took to look after his body, he had many bouts of hayfever and bronchitis over the years. Pollen caused hay fever and a dry cough. He died from cancer of the pancreas, which brought him terrible physical pain, and he had to be given morphine and other painkillers.

He passed away at Pine Cottage, Ojai. Mahesh Saxena, secretary of the KFI in 1986, who was present at the cremation told me that Krishnamurti's face was lit with a smile that brightened his face. He had a lively look. In the crematorium, Maheshji received a small bit of burnt bone. It was like a crystal, and he gave it back to the warden of the crematorium. The ashes were flown to India and England from the U.S.A. In India they were to be immersed in the Ganga and taken to its source at Gangotri and to the sea. Some of the ashes were kept in the U.S.A. and in England. In India, three of us, including Dr. Krishna, took the ashes to Adyar beach and went in a catamaran out into the Bay of Bengal. There we cast the pot containing his ashes into the waters. Later on, we took some ashes to Rishi Valley, and after going up to the top of Rishi Konda, we dug a deep hole and buried the pot with his ashes.



Adyar Beach, Chennai, India on the occasion of the scattering of the ashes of J. Krishnamurti at sea, February 1986

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Krishnamurti had stated in 1927 when he left the Theosophical Society that his mission was to set man unconditionally free. He also said truth is a pathless land and that you cannot come to it by any path whatsoever.

*

Speaking at a meeting in Ojai, California, he read one of his poems in 1927.

I am the truth,
I am the law,
I am the refuge,
I am the guide,
The companion and the beloved.

As the last words were uttered, there was a sprinkle of light rain that seemed like a benediction, and spanning the valley and shining out was a perfect rainbow.

*

To fulfill his mission, Krishnamurti traveled all over the world. He visited many places in India including Bombay, New Delhi, Madras, Varanasi, and Rishi Valley. He established schools in Rishi Valley, Varanasi, Madras, and Bangalore. These schools are well known throughout India and abroad and are flourishing educational institutions.

In India he gave public talks and private interviews. He took part in discussions. He healed many people of physical ailments, though he did not want to talk about it. He gave public talks in other parts of the world like Switzerland, England, and the U.S.A. He established schools at Brockwood Park in England and at Ojai in the U.S.A., both of which are flourishing.

The archives at Ojai, Brockwood and Madras together have all the transcripts of his talks, and tapes from 1962, at many places.⁵² During his life he traveled to three continents of Asia, Europe, and America every year. He also went to Australia.

In his later years this must have been taxing. Changes of climate and food must have affected his health, though he took great care of his body and all his hosts took good care of him.

Krishnamurti was keen and anxious that at least a few people close to him should be transformed individuals. As this enlightenment did not take place, he was questioning his close associates why it had not happened and whether something was missing in his teachings. This concern was great and palpable. The compassion he showed and the passion with which he spoke to them was powerful. For some, it was too much to bear and was difficult to comprehend the Master's anguish. The self hides in all of us in many ways.

Krishnamurti narrated stories at lunchtime on many occasions. The two I remember clearly are given below.

Two Zen monks were walking along to reach the next town. On the way they came across a river which was in spate. A girl was sitting on the bank of the river, unable to cross, and asked the monks to help her. One monk picked her up and carried her on his shoulders across the river.

The two monks then walked along, and after some time the second monk asked the first how he could have carried the girl on his shoulders, since the monastic rules did not allow any monk to touch a woman.

The first monk replied, "I have left that girl behind on the river's bank, and you are still carrying her in your mind and thoughts." He was a monk with maturity who didn't worry about traditional rules and who acted as the situation demanded.

*

One of the students in a Zen monastery who wanted to achieve enlightenment quickly sat cross-legged on the floor for hours without attending to his duties like wood chopping or assisting in the kitchen. The Master noticed it and sat in front of the monk with two small granite stones, one in each hand. He started rubbing one stone against the other, making a big noise. The student woke up from his reverie and asked the Master what he was doing. The Master replied that he was trying to convert the two stones into mirrors by rubbing them against one another.

The student monk laughed and said that the Master could not convert stones into mirrors by rubbing them.

The Master replied curtly, "If you can sit cross-legged and achieve *nirvana*, neglecting your duties, the Master can certainly produce mirrors by rubbing two stones together."

The monk got up quietly, bowed to the Master, and left to attend to his daily duties.

Meditation 8

*An empty mind contains the scientific spirit.
It has the twin qualities of alert pliability
and passive alertness.
It is free of prejudice and is prepared to look
into any matter based on facts.
When a conversation has led to discussion
and on to dialogue, there begins a looking
with the same intensity and at the same level
and at the same time.
This is the basis for relationship and communion.
When a group of people are in this state, which is warm,
open, and insightful, participatory consciousness begins
and new light is shed on myriad issues.
This leads to a release of energy
and transforms consciousness, however small the duration.
It can heal wounded minds,
and new perception takes place.
Since nothing is excluded in awareness,
there is an ever-widening perception.
Terms like "global outlook," "you are the world,"
and the true meaning of the "religious spirit"
become meaningful
and lead to a spirit of nonattachment.
The act of looking and listening
is a sensitive and subtle source of energy.
It is life that moves on
and is gently overcoming many difficulties.
For example,
global outlook is not merely a cliché
but an everlasting and ever-fresh insight that helps one
to see through the conditioning that leads one to sects
and groups based on ideas and ending in conflict.
There is greater understanding
of suffering as a universal condition.
One sees that it is not life
that divides the observer from the observed.
There is clarity and light.
Then contradiction and conflict between thinker and thought
cease.*

Silence

The Ocean

In 1987 Narayan handed over his job as director of the Rishi Valley Education Center to Dr. Radhika Herzberger, who had been in Rishi Valley working with him as director of studies.⁵³ He remained principal of the school till 1988, when he took a year's sabbatical to travel and to prepare for retirement. That year he visited England, the United States, Thailand, and Japan as a guest of Mr. S. Takahashi. In the U.S.A., he was requested to open the now-famous inaugural biannual dialogues at Ojai. In Japan he met with Buddhist scholars.

In 1989 he decided to move from Rishi Valley to Vasanta Vihar, where he planned to stay and help the Krishnamurti Study Center and the educational work of the KFI. In early 1990 he became ill and went to Bangalore to stay with his sister Sanjeevi. He was treated as an outpatient for mild clinical depression by doctors at the National Institute of Mental Health Sciences. He stayed with his mother and his sister Indira in Bangalore till the end of 1990 and appeared fine. I spent three happy months with Narayan going for walks and talking about Krishnaji and the teachings. Again in early 1991 he had an attack of depression and had to go for a new mode of treatment. As both his sisters Sanjeevi and Indira had made plans to rejoin their families in the U.S.A. and to leave India at this time, Narayan needed a place where he could be helped to settle down in Bangalore.

It was at this juncture in April 1991 that his old friend Balasundaram, who had taken over the Bangalore Education Center of the KFI for a year, in consultation with Pupul Jayakar and Achyutji, came to assist and help Narayan to relocate in a small cottage on the campus of the Valley School. During the rest of that year and all the way through 1996, Narayan lived with astonishing austerity in this barely furnished place. Dr. Satish Inamdar, who had taken over the Valley School in 1992, took a great deal of interest in Narayan's welfare. For several years Narayan traveled regularly to Madras for KFI meetings, and went to Nepal at the invitation of Netra Bantawa for rest and relaxation. He visited Rishi Valley. He wrote articles. He worked on his reminiscences. During my visits to India in 1992, 1994, and 1995, I spent many happy weeks with him and Indira at our family home in Bangalore. We went for walks, we chanted, we attended weddings, and Narayan met many people. His daughter, Natasha, visited him several times.

In 1996 his health began to fade gradually, and yet Narayan remained alert and awake despite the undercurrent of stress from his so-called depression, which he went through stoically for short periods and which his doctors had failed to alleviate. His advice to me during these years was never, ever to rush to psychiatrists or psychologists for any problem of the mind, and quoting Krishnamurti, "to use common sense." This meant, he explained, that one had to keep in close touch with family and friends, take long walks, travel to new places and meet new people, do breathing and yoga exercises, take an interest in other people, listen to music, and study and meditate on the teachings. Otherwise one would become dependent on prescription drugs since doctors knew only how to treat symptoms because they were caught in their dry clinical therapies and never went into deeper causes. He told me that sometimes he sensed that a spiritual process of annihilation of the self might be going on, which doctors diagnosed at their superficial level as a treatable problem of the mind.

When Indira met him in June 1996, he spoke with enthusiasm to her about his reminiscences being published as a book. He also told her calmly that he would probably not last until her next visit in 1997. With equal calm, he told his sister Uma

that he was not afraid of death and that his future lay in Krishnamurti's teachings. Some of his poems are in fact about death and were written as far back as 1962.

In September 1996, he fell down in his bathroom and had a hip fracture. Although he was treated and had successful surgery, his body had simply become too frail to recover. He declined rapidly and passed away on October 4, 1996, at 4:32 P.M. on the campus of the Valley School. Natasha was informed and was able to reach Bangalore in time from London to be with him before his death. Many friends attended his cremation in Bangalore. Natasha, Uma and her husband, Ramaswamy, and Subbu, the manager of the Valley School estate, who had taken great care of Narayan over many years, went to the sacred river Kaveri at Srirangapatnam, eighty miles southwest of Bangalore. They immersed his ashes in the river at a special place known as Paschimavahini. Twelve days later, there was a memorial service in Indira's house in Bangalore. Many of his friends and some students from the Valley School and the Rishi Valley School, including Balasundaram and Inamdar, old colleagues Meenakshi, Naidu, Mishraji, and Kumaraswamy, attended the memorial service. Vedic chanting was arranged. Students of Valley School and Rishi Valley School chanted some of his favorite chants. Most of his personal belongings were given away. The Krishnamurti Foundations sent their condolences to G. Sarada and to Natasha. An obituary appeared in a local newspaper. Obituaries appeared in the *KFI Bulletin* and the *Newsletter* of the KFA. As this news reached many parts of the world, he was deeply mourned by relatives, friends, and his students.

Narayan has passed into a realm about which we know little, but about which he meditated a good deal. It is a blessing to have been given the opportunity to edit this little book about one steadfast student of the teachings of Krishnamurti.

Notes

In the traditions of India there are four stages of life [ashramas in Sanskrit] through which all human beings pass in some way or another:

Brahmacharya [ages 1-18] is the time when one is a student leading a disciplined, chaste, and humble life completely absorbed in the joy of learning. One is acquiring skills that are necessary for a vocation which must be in harmony with one's talents and inclinations.

Grihastha [ages 18-50] is the time of being a householder leading a balanced life with a life-long spouse as a full partner. This is the time of life to beget and raise children and fulfil obligations towards family and society. One achieves worldly success in their chosen work and enjoys physical and mental life to the fullest.

Vanaprastha [ages 50-70] is the time to retire from active life of the householder, turn in the direction of self-knowledge, share worldly wisdom with the young and while continuing to fulfil required obligations, and remain detached from the ups and downs of day to day life. This is also the period to give up bodily and worldly wants and desires, learn to be satisfied with bare material necessities and remain free from emotional bonds and demands. It is time to pursue religious studies and seek the company of the wise.

Sanyas [ages 70-100] is the final period of life when one must retire with one's partner to a quiet place far away from one's communal living and lead an austere life of great physical and mental discipline amidst individuals of a like nature in a state of contemplation and meditation. When death becomes inevitable, one is ready to meet it with strength, equanimity, and humility.

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¹*Krishnamurti: The Years of Awakening*, by Mary Lutyens (1975)

Krishnamurti: The Years of Fulfilment, by Mary Lutyens (1983)

Krishnamurti: The Open Door, by Mary Lutyens (1988)

The Life and Death of Krishnamurti, by Mary Lutyens (1990)

Krishnamurti: A Biography, by Pupul Jayakar (1986)

²Lutyens, *Krishnamurti: The Years of Fulfilment*, chap. 20.

³Lutyens, *The Open Door*, p. 149.

⁴The Telugu name transliterated in English as Giddu or Jiddu is pronounced with a soft initial consonant as in *giant* or *joy*. The family had used *G*, hence Giddu Narayaniah, but this spelling was legally changed to *J* by Annie Besant after Krishnamurti's and Nityananda's adoption. She felt that the letter *J* was phonetically more appropriate than the *G*, which in her view was usually pronounced hard, as in *go*, whereas the pronunciation of *J* could never be ambiguous.

One meaning of Jiddu in Telugu is “kitchen grease”, and in the southern part of Andhra Pradesh some villages were named after kitchen functions or food. Hence Jiddu or Giddu was the name of an ancestral village and became the family name.

⁵A *tehsildar* is equal in rank and status to an administrative and revenue officer of a large subdivision of a county in England or the U.S.A.

⁶The *Mahabharata* is one of the three great Sanskrit epics of Hindu India (along with the *Ramayana* and the *Bhagavatha*) and the longest poem in all of the world languages.

⁷G. Sarada, now past ninety, wife of Sivaram, lives in Bangalore with her youngest daughter, Uma Ramaswamy, and her son-in-law, E. A. Ramaswamy. Sarada was married in 1917 when she was eleven. Educated by her father-in-law Narayaniah, who hired home tutors for her, she became an avid reader of Telugu and English books. She also learnt to read Tamil. She bore nine children, eight of whom survived. She took care of Narayaniah during his last few years and cared for many relatives throughout her life. She took great care of two of her children who went through long periods of depression. She is a lady of great energy and clarity without whose support her family would never have survived and prospered. After her first meeting with Krishnamurti and Nityananda in 1922, she met Krishnamurti for the second time in 1952. It was a dramatic meeting, and thereafter she met him from 1953 till 1986 at Vasanta Vihar in Madras and in Rishi Valley. She attended Krishnamurti’s talks and discussions in Madras and Bangalore for more than thirty years and has been an avid reader of his writing. Well read in Hindu epics, mythology, and several classics of English literature, her knowledge of Ayurveda comes from extensive study of the Indian Materia Medica and her association with Sadanandaswamy, a sage who frequently visited the family. He taught Sivaram and Sarada ways of making and administering rare medicines made of herbs and precious metals. Krishnamurti took some of her medicines once in a while whenever he was visiting Madras. Krishnamurti enjoyed his numerous meetings with her, at when they usually discussed spiritual and family matters. Krishnamurti once told Narayan and Uma that their mother was far more intelligent than all her children! Members of the Krishnamurti Foundation America (KFA), the Krishnamurti Foundation India (KFI), and the Krishnamurti Foundation Trust (KFT) who have met her, have expressed their high regard for her. Her ethical insights into perennial questions of right and wrong are remarkable and original.

⁸Krishnamurti’s *Truth Is a Pathless Land* speech at Ommen, the Netherlands, on August 3, 1929, dissolving the Order of the Star.

⁹Achyut Patwardhan, popularly known as Achyutji, was a famous figure in India from the thirties through the eighties. His contribution to the freedom struggle is long and legendary and his close association with Krishnamurti for over fifty years is incomparable. This association led to his complete renunciation of any participation in politics when India became free to the consternation of leading figures like Nehru and Jayaprakash Narain. He was expected to become part of the central government with Nehru and represent the moral voice of the youth of the country in rebuilding India as a democratic and secular nation. An incisive scholar and a brilliant speaker in English, Marathi, and Hindi and deeply concerned about

the poor and downtrodden, he was active in many social service endeavors. Chiefly responsible for the flowering of the Rajghat Education Center after 1948, he was the main driving force who obtained large gifts of land and funds for the founding of the Sahyadri School of the KFI. He was an endearing personality, warm and friendly to all, and possessing a rare and remarkable empathy. Narayan met him in the late forties through some of his tennis friends at Madras who had been Achyutji's compatriots in the freedom struggle. He was a very close friend of Narayan and gave him unqualified support and encouragement.

¹⁰Ratansi Morarji was an early friend of Krishnamurti who hosted him in Bombay many times from the 1930s to the 1950s.

¹¹F. Gordon Pearce, a life-long Theosophist, was the founder of the Scindia School in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, before World War II. He was known throughout India and Sri Lanka as an original educator and a writer of a new kind of history text books. His wife Anasuya, came from a Theosophist family from Varanasi. Her elder sister Malathi Naoroji was part of the Krishnamurti group during the days of the Order of the Star and appears in the biographies. Pearce was a member of the Foundation for New Education. He founded Netraghat School, Bihar, and the Blue Mountains School in Ootacamund, Tamil Nadu. During his principalship of Rishi Valley School, he gave the school its "international persona and the Public School ethos," to quote Achyut Patwardhan. Having been more or less closed for almost four years after the retirement of its first and founding principal, Subba Rao, in 1948, the school had just been reborn. Subba Rao, regarded as a revolutionary educator in those times, had originally moved the school from Madras to its new campus in 1930. Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy, a former president of India, was a student at the school during this period. Attempts by Krishnamurti and the newly formed Foundation for New Education to find energetic heads from 1948 were unsuccessful till the arrival of Pearce from Sri Lanka in 1952. Pearce was at this time regarded as a maverick and a legend in the public school movement in India. Rishi Valley's neglected physical plant needed improvement and modernization but the new principal had to gather a devoted band of teachers and a diverse and talented student body, both of which he quickly accomplished, supported by a core body of parents who had some interest in Krishnamurti's approach to learning. Krishnamurti's just-published book *Education and the Significance of Life* made a profound impression on Pearce and his teachers. Rishi Valley was at that time remote from cities and towns and located in starkly rural surroundings with austere living conditions. Its threadbare finances could only provide salaries barely enough for a hand-to-mouth existence even after they were given free board and housing, which was usually a barely furnished room. This monastic situation continued for more than twenty years during and after the departure of Pearce but did not seem to matter to those who came to learn how to teach.

¹²Krishnamurti visited and stayed in Rishi Valley for four to five weeks a year almost without a break all through the fifties to the eighties. His arrival at and departure from Rishi Valley and the absorbing talks and discussions were major events in the life of the school, as his presence also brought visitors and serious listeners from all over the world.

¹³Asthachal (the setting sun), the evening routine of the Rishi Valley School, was begun in 1936 in Scindia School, on Gwalior Fort in Madhya Pradesh, by Pearce, who introduced it to the Rishi Valley School in 1952. Since then it has been introduced in other residential schools in India such as Sanjiwan Vidyalaya at Panchgani, Maharashtra and two other KFI schools.

¹⁴Rishi Valley Education Center is on the school campus and is where adults can stay and study the teachings of Krishnamurti. There are modern guest accommodations and an extensive library of books and tapes available for study.

¹⁵Dr. Balasundaram, a young scientist from the Indian Institute of Sciences, Bangalore, was deeply interested in Krishnaji's teachings; he remained principal from 1958 to 1976. He worked very hard to provide the school with excellent academic standards, modernized facilities, and sound finances. He expanded the building program, built the beautiful assembly hall, and established an outstanding dance and music center. He also brought the school an international flavor because a number of outstanding teachers interested in Krishnamurti's teachings came from all over the world to work in Rishi Valley. Many teachers who worked with Balasundaram during his headship went on to become principals of KFI schools and other leading residential and day schools in India and abroad. Balasundaram made Narayan the assistant principal, and Krishnamurti put him on the Foundation for New Education and later on the Krishnamurti Foundation India. He was the first secretary of the KFI and played a crucial role in the courts in Madras in the seventies to regain possession of Vasanta Vihar from KWINC for Krishnamurti's stay and his talks.

¹⁶This phrase was current in the educational world in the 1950s after the publication of Toynbee's theory about the rise and fall of civilization in his monumental *Study of History*.

¹⁷The Old Guest House was one of the first buildings built in Rishi Valley in 1930-1932. It is located between the great banyan tree and the Asthachal hill. This building now houses the Krishnamurti Study Center and Library. For more than thirty-five years, Krishnaji stayed in a small room on its western side. Discussions with teachers and others were held in a room adjacent to his room. Later a verandah on the other side of his room was converted into a large room for Krishnaji, and the discussions room was enlarged. Krishnaji ate his lunches in the small dining hall attached to a kitchen in the building. There were a few guest rooms in the building on the first floor.

¹⁸Rajagopala Ayyangar, a Theosophist and a retired railway engineer was a very close friend of the first principal, Subba Rao, and Madhavachari. He built the guest house to accommodate Krishnamurti. Popularly known as *thatha*, meaning grandfather in Telugu, Tamil, and Kannada, Ayyangar often camped out in the Valley in a tent for years, cleared bushes, built roads, dug wells, planted trees, constructed bridges, farmed rice and other dry crops, grew vegetables, established a dairy, created sewage and water supply systems, and designed and built the basic buildings of the Rishi Valley School. He was on the Rishi Valley Trust and its successor, the Foundation for New Education for some forty years.

¹⁹Rishi Valley is in a geoco region—with rocks, thorny bushes and dense scrubland—that is a natural habitat for the cobra and other snakes. (A detailed description of the geography of Rishi Valley is available in the book *Birds of Rishi Valley*, published in 1991 by the Rishi Valley Education Center.) The king cobra is considered a sacred reptile by the Hindus and is usually never killed, but in the last sixty-seven years others snakes, like the Russell’s viper and the krait were killed in Rishi Valley. Only one person in the valley, in the early fifties, has ever been fatally bitten by a snake. Achyutji once told me that when Ayyangar began his monumental work for Rishi Valley, Krishnamurti told Ayyangar that although the natural surroundings and habitat for wild animals were being disturbed and their lives were disrupted, there need be no fear for anyone who came to work or live in Rishi Valley because there would be complete protection from wild animals to those who lived in harmony with the valley, as long as the animals were left alone. When I was a teacher there I came upon snakes sunning themselves on my verandah. Left alone they soon went away. Narayan remarked to me that that was exactly what Krishnamurti had meant by his assurance to Ayyangar. Achyutji once told me in Varanasi that many thousands of ascetics and holy men continued to live in rocks and forests in remote parts of India without any fear of cobras. Because they were knowledgeable about herbal antidotes for snake venom, they grew bushes around their abodes to which snakes were allergic, or kept a mongoose as a pet.

²⁰Vasanta Vihar, located on Greenways Road in Adyar, Madras, is the name of a large house with spacious rooms, a discussion hall, with guest rooms, a vegetarian kitchen and a spacious dining hall, with a compound encircling it with its grounds filled with trees, footpaths, a pond, and a vast, open area under the trees for Krishnamurti’s talks. It was built in 1935 for Krishnamurti’s use and became the Indian headquarters of Krishnamurti Writings, Inc. Currently it houses the headquarters of the KFI. It was where Krishnamurti stayed in Madras for a month or more normally during December/January, except during the period 1969-1973. During the period 1953-1990 and all through his stay in Rishi Valley, Narayan was a guest at Vasanta Vihar whenever he was in Madras.

²¹The Foundation for New Education took over the Rishi Valley Trust in the early 1950s and with it the responsibility for management of the Rishi Valley School, the Rajghat Besant School, the Vasanta College, and the Rajghat Rural Center till its functions were taken over by the KFI in 1970.

²²In a dialogue with Narayan in 1981 he explained to me a history of the name “Maitreya.” This name first occurs in the third canto, chapters 1 and 2 of the Sanskrit epic *Bhagavatha* (circa 900 BC) whose traditionally accepted author is identified as the sage Vyasa, who also had authored the *Mahabharata*. After this we come across Maitreya in the canons of Mahayana Buddhism (circa 100 BC to 200 AD). In many books and ancient texts of Mahayana Buddhism, there is a suggestion that the Maitreya Buddha would be born as the eighth human Buddha (world teacher) after the seventh, Gautama Buddha. Col. Olcott, a Buddhist and a co-founder of the Theosophical Society with Blavatsky, may have introduced this concept into Theosophy, and Leadbeater in particular emphasized the coming of a Savior to theosophists as central to the mission of the Society in the years preceding the discovery of Krishnamurti. After the ‘discovery’ of Krishnamurti in 1910 by Leadbeater and the adoption of Krishnamurti by Annie Besant as her son,

Krishnamurti was increasingly accepted by a majority of Theosophists as the chosen vehicle of this coming Savior. In his 1922 speech in Madras under the Banyan tree Krishnamurti spoke of the Lord Maitreya speaking through him. Throughout the twenties, the term *World Teacher* was used publicly more often than *Lord Maitreya*. After 1929 Krishnamurti never referred to himself as the Lord Maitreya or Savior. But according to Narayan and Achyut Patwardhan, Krishnamurti would remain silent whenever they used it in their private conversations. Pandit Jagannath Upadhyaya, a renowned Pali, Sanskrit, and Tibetan scholar of Varanasi noted to Krishnamurti in 1985 that the coming of a world teacher with Krishnamurti's attributes was clearly described and prophesied in an ancient Tibetan manuscript. (See M. Lutyens' *The Open Door*).

²³Elliot's Beach in Adyar is a mile-long beach of white sand that forms the eastern boundary of the vast acres of the Theosophical Society in Madras. Other beaches in Madras are crowded and strewn with trash, but this beach remains a wonderful place to walk in the evening. Mrs. Jayalakshmi, a member of the KFI for many years, would drive Krishnamurti in the evenings from Vasanta Vihar to where the road ended and the beach began. Even during his last days in India, Krishnamurti went for his evening walk on this beach. See Asit Chandmal's *One Thousand Suns*.

²⁴Jamnadas Dwarkadas was a friend of Krishnamurti's from the 1920s.

²⁵Mrs. Jayalakshmi is a long-time resident of Madras, deeply interested in the teachings, friend of Narayan, self-taught architect, builder of luxury mansions, accomplished veena and violin player, patron of classical musicians of South India, collector of antique sculptures and paintings, host of Krishnamurti in the late sixties and early seventies, founder of the Krishnamurti Center, and member of the KFI for many years.

²⁶Dr. Sivakamu was sister of N. Sriram, president of the Theosophical Society, and of Rukminidevi Arundale, founder of the famed Kalakshetra Dance Academy in Madras and aunt of Dr. Krishna, rector of the Rajghat Education Center of the KFI. She was well known for her medical work for the poor and downtrodden in Madras and Tamil Nadu.

²⁷Leelavathi, one of Narayan's younger sisters—affectionately called Chinnamma—was a beautiful little girl who was struck in the 1930s by a serious attack of smallpox along with Narayan and two of his brothers and sisters. It left Chinnamma with deep facial scars. She did not pay much attention to it till she reached twelve or thirteen. At that age, it was thought to have triggered in her a state of deep depression and withdrawal. From then on till the mid-eighties she had to be taken care of at home by her mother and her siblings.

²⁸Anjaneya is the widely revered god with a simian face (also known as Maruthi and Hanuman) introduced by the sage Valmiki in the Sanskrit epic *Ramayana*. He is one of the twelve humans who attained immortality and lives invisibly among humans who are courageous, chaste, and humble; and is the patron god of wrestlers. His temple at Sholingavaram in Chittoor district in South India attracts thousands of people because of its reputation for exorcising spirits possessing human minds.

Apparently Sarada had seen someone with the symptoms of a possession being brought to this temple to a holy man to be restored to normalcy.

²⁹Sanjeevi, so named after Sanjeevamma, mother of Krishnamurti, is the oldest child and daughter of Sivaram. She had a brilliant academic career, graduating *summa cum laude* in mathematics from Madras University. She married after college and settled down to family life. During the seventies she taught math at the Blue Mountains School. She took great care of Narayan in Bangalore when he fell very ill in 1990-1991. Currently she lives with her daughter in Amherst, New York. Her older daughter is in the Indian Foreign Service and currently posted at the Indian Embassy in Washington, D.C.

³⁰Rudolf Steiner was originally a Theosophist who broke away when the Order of the Star was established in 1910. His philosophy is known as Anthroposophy.

³¹Dr. Sunanda Patwardhan gave up a promising career as an academic researcher in sociology in Poona (now known as Pune), and her husband, Pama Patwardhan, left a high-powered job in publishing so that both could take care of Vasanta Vihar for Krishnamurti and manage the affairs of the newly formed Krishnamurti Foundation India in 1970. Pama, a younger brother of Achyutji, and Sunanda were both ardent listeners of Krishnamurti since the late forties. Before the introduction of the tape recorder, Sunanda transcribed in shorthand all of Krishnamurti's talks and discussions in India from the fifties and typed them up for the KWINC until the late sixties and after that for KFI. Well versed in Hinduism, Buddhism, and religious studies, she took an intelligent and lively part in hundreds of discussions with Krishnamurti in Madras, Bombay, Varanasi, Ojai, and elsewhere, and edited the *KFI Bulletin* for many years. Among other things, she compiled a book of Krishnamurti's talks in India, *Mind without Measure*, and edited *Within the Mind*. She was instrumental in making Vasanta Vihar an active center for exploration into Krishnamurti's teachings by organizing many seminar-type discussions between Krishnamurti and eminent Indian scientists and scholars. After Krishnamurti passed away, the Patwardhans moved to Pune. They are the main force in building the Sahyadri School of the KFI located at Bibi in Chas Taluk in Rajgurunagar district, near Pune. Their clarity, vision, and watchful guidance are helping Sahyadri to become a vibrant KFI school in western India.

³²Shiva is one of the three aspects of the universal spirit (*Brahman*) in Hindu mythology and symbolizes the primordial energy (*pralaya*) that ends the natural life cycle, of all living things, individuals, nations, worlds and eons (*yuga*).

³³Narayan pointed out to me that in *What the Buddha Taught*, Dr. Rahula gave a different meaning to the oft-quoted deathbed statement of the Buddha to his favorite disciple, Ananda. In most books on the life of the Buddha, Buddha asks Ananda to be diligent and to be a light unto himself. Rahula says that the word *dipa* used by the Buddha, quoted from early Pali scriptures, was repeated with the Sanskrit meaning of "lamp" for centuries. But in reality, says Rahula, the *dipa* as used by the Buddha was a word in Pali derived from the Sanskrit root *dwipa*, which means an island. So according to Rahula what the Buddha may have been actually telling Ananda is to be diligent and be an "island" unto himself. Rahula may have meant "non-dependence" when he used the metaphor of the island.

³⁴Brockwood Park is a school in Hampshire, England founded by Krishnamurti in 1968 as an educational residential community for young adults.

³⁵Nalanda was a famous Buddhist center of learning in the State of Bihar, founded around the second century BC and destroyed by Afghan invaders, around the twelfth or thirteenth century A.D.

³⁶See J. Krishnamurti and David Bohm, *The Ending of Time* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1985), chaps. 9 and 10.

³⁷A *ghat* is a series of stone steps built from the banks of the Ganga right up to the river's edge to allow pilgrims to walk down and take a ritual bath in the river's holy waters. Some ghats are reserved for the ritual cremation of Hindus, whose ashes are then immersed in the holy waters of the Ganga. This practice is carried out on the banks of other holy rivers of India, but it is extensive in Varanasi. *The City of Lights* by Diana Eck of Harvard University gives an unforgettable and affectionate picture of Varanasi, its people, its temples, and its ghats.

³⁸One can see this in a documentary film from India, *The Seer Who Walks Alone*.

³⁹The traditional Hindu approach to *mukti* (liberation) is to take any one of three paths; of knowledge, of devotion, or of action. Its origins are in the principal Upanishads, but it is clearly explained to the lay Hindu in the *Bhagavad Gita*, which is an integral part of the *Mahabharata*. They are the common theme in the teachings, hymns, and psalms of hundreds of India's sages and saints in ail of India's fourteen languages and is central to all schools of Hindu philosophy. Both Ramakrishna Paramahansa in the nineteenth century and Ramana Maharshi in the twentieth have discussed the threefold path extensively in their talks and discussions.

⁴⁰The late Dr. Adhikaram was a Buddhist scholar of eminence who had a Ph.D. from London University. He published many books on Buddhist thought, and many young people in Sri Lanka were influenced by his writings. He was the vice-chancellor of Sri Lanka University for many years and built the Krishnamurti center in Sri Lanka. He knew Krishnamurti and attended his talks at Vasanta Vihar. He visited and stayed at Rishi Valley and Varanasi on many occasions. Despite his knowledge and erudition, he was a humble person with great patience and affection for all. Adhikaram also translated some of Krishnamurti's books into modern Pali, a language evolved from the ancient Pali introduced into Sri Lanka from India. Pali was the language spoken in India during the time of the Buddha, and many major Buddhist texts are written in Pali.

⁴¹The Ramakrishna Mission is a hundred-year-old worldwide order begun by Swami Vivekananda and inspired by his teacher, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the Hindu sage and spiritual teacher of Bengal in the nineteenth century. The Mission has over a hundred centers all over the world and carries out educational, charitable, publishing, and hospital work through its dedicated monks. Some of its *bhajans* (devotional hymns) have become part of the choir curriculum in many schools,

including KFI schools. Some of the chants in KFI schools are based on special musical notation created by the Mission's monks.

⁴²The *mantapam* is part of a temple complex in South India that was used for many centuries as a meeting place for scholarly discussions and for dance and music performances. Open on all sides, full of fresh air and light, the Assembly Hall in Rishi Valley, designed and built by Dr. Balasundaram in the sixties, was used for Krishnamurti's talks and discussions with students and for morning meetings, conferences, public examinations, and music performances. The renowned music and dance teachers Veena Visalakshi, Meenakshi, and Shankari taught in its adjoining rooms. Classical dance ballets with story lines from Sanskrit, Telugu, and Tamil classical literature were presented for twenty years during Krishnamurti's annual visits by Visalakshi and her niece Meenakshi, and later on by Shankari under the banyan tree. They are outstanding examples of synergy created in Rishi Valley by students, teachers, and the place itself.

⁴³Chanting in Sanskrit, a practice that has been part of Hinduism for more than three thousand years, demands tremendous attention and regular practice. Generally the text is selected from the four Vedas (see note 44). Over time, the Hindu priestly class (Brahmins) acquired a monopoly over chanting at religious ceremonies and at sacramental obligations. The Brahmins regarded chanting as a sacred duty, and voluntarily took upon themselves the task of its preservation, conservation, and transmission to the next generation. They were encouraged and patronized by kings and the business classes through the millennia. Support was given to religious schools through grants of fertile lands where it was taught correctly, thus preserving its pristine purity. Chanting is quite a separate activity from the ritual recitation of Sanskrit verses used during worship, prayer, or sacramental ceremonies in temples or Hindu homes. Selected verses from many Sanskrit texts suitable for chanting at the school level have been part of the curriculum of KFI schools as well as other schools managed by the Arya Samaj, the Chinmaya and Ramakrishna Missions, and Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. Some of the chants in KFI schools, though recited in nontraditional fashion, are still considered to be well within the broad parameters of Indian musical notation. Introduced by Apte when Pearce took over Rishi Valley, it was energized by Venkatachallam, Narayan, Hanumantha Rao, Uma Kalyanaraman, and Radhika Herzberger.

⁴⁴The Vedas ("that which is heard") are the most ancient of Sanskrit texts. Religious and ritual in nature, they are divided into four parts, probably reflecting the periods they were composed over five hundred years in this order: *Rig*, *Yajur*, *Atharva*, and *Sama*. The Vedas contain a wealth of information on the life of the people who came to India after the decline of the Indus Valley civilization, and was orally transmitted from one generation to the next over three thousand years. The main part of each Veda is the *Samhita*; the second is the *Brahmana*, which also contain the *Aranyakas*, of which the major Upanishads are the end part.

⁴⁵Madras is in the path of what is known as the returning monsoon, which moves from the tropic of Cancer to the equator in the months of November and December, bringing torrential downpours for several hours and days. But this is the water source that fills its irrigation wells, rivers, dams, and lakes and raises groundwater reserves sorely needed by the people of Andhra and Tamil Nadu.

⁴⁶One of the strong features of all KFI schools, and in particular at the ones that are boarding, is their emphasis on physical education. Students wake up around 5:30 A.M. and take part in brisk walks, group calisthenics, yoga, aerobics, dance, and jogging in the fresh air. In the evenings all of them have to take part in team and individual sports such as soccer, basketball, cricket, tennis, volleyball, track, and swimming. After dinner, many play table tennis and badminton. Teams from these schools have done well in interschool and college level meets. Most teachers are also coaches. Sports fields and grounds are well maintained. The dispensary in the school is always staffed with trained nurses, and resident physicians take care of health problems. Dr. Asha Lee modernized the dispensary in the early 1970s and developed a village clinic for local residents. In Rishi Valley fresh cows milk from the school's dairy and a vegetable and fruit diet along with other nutrients provided by legumes, rice, and wheat help the students to be physically fit and healthy.

⁴⁷Many important and well-known personalities in India met Krishnamurti over many years at Bombay, Delhi, Rajghat, and Vasanta Vihar. Some of them met him several times. Some of these dialogues have been published in the *Commentaries on Living* series, and some appear in the biographies. One important visitor to Rishi Valley was Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. A visitor at Vasanta Vihar during those times was Shri R. Venkataraman, then vice-president of India. Venkataraman had attended Krishnamurti's talks and discussions over many years, and when he was the president of India he helped the KFI in many ways. His public life extends to taking part in the freedom struggle, building trade unions in Tamil Nadu, being a minister at the state level, a member of the Parliament, a minister at the center under Indira Gandhi before he became vice-president and president of India. He is a scholar, a writer, and an excellent public speaker. Now retired, he lives in Madras.

⁴⁸Shri Ganesan, a close friend of Narayan's, is a grand nephew of Shri Ramana Maharshi, considered one of the greatest spiritual teachers in the Hindu tradition in the twentieth century. Shri Ganesan is actively involved in the management of Ramanashram in Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu, where Shri Ramana lived, taught, and died. (See the biographies by Arthur Osborne and Cohen.) Shri Ramana's teachings, compiled in many books from discussions that he had with scholars and lay people over fifty years, are regularly featured in the magazine *The Mountain Path*. Professor Swaminathan was the editor of *The Mountain Path* for many years. He had also undertaken to edit the life and works of Mahatma Gandhi. He was a keen student of the teachings of Ramana Maharshi and has written books on him.

Narayan visited Ramanashram a few times in the late eighties and wrote a few articles for *The Mountain Path*, including one about the teachings of Krishnamurti.

⁴⁹A whole chapter is devoted to the hoopoe in *Birds of Rishi Valley*, published by the Rishi Valley Education Centre.

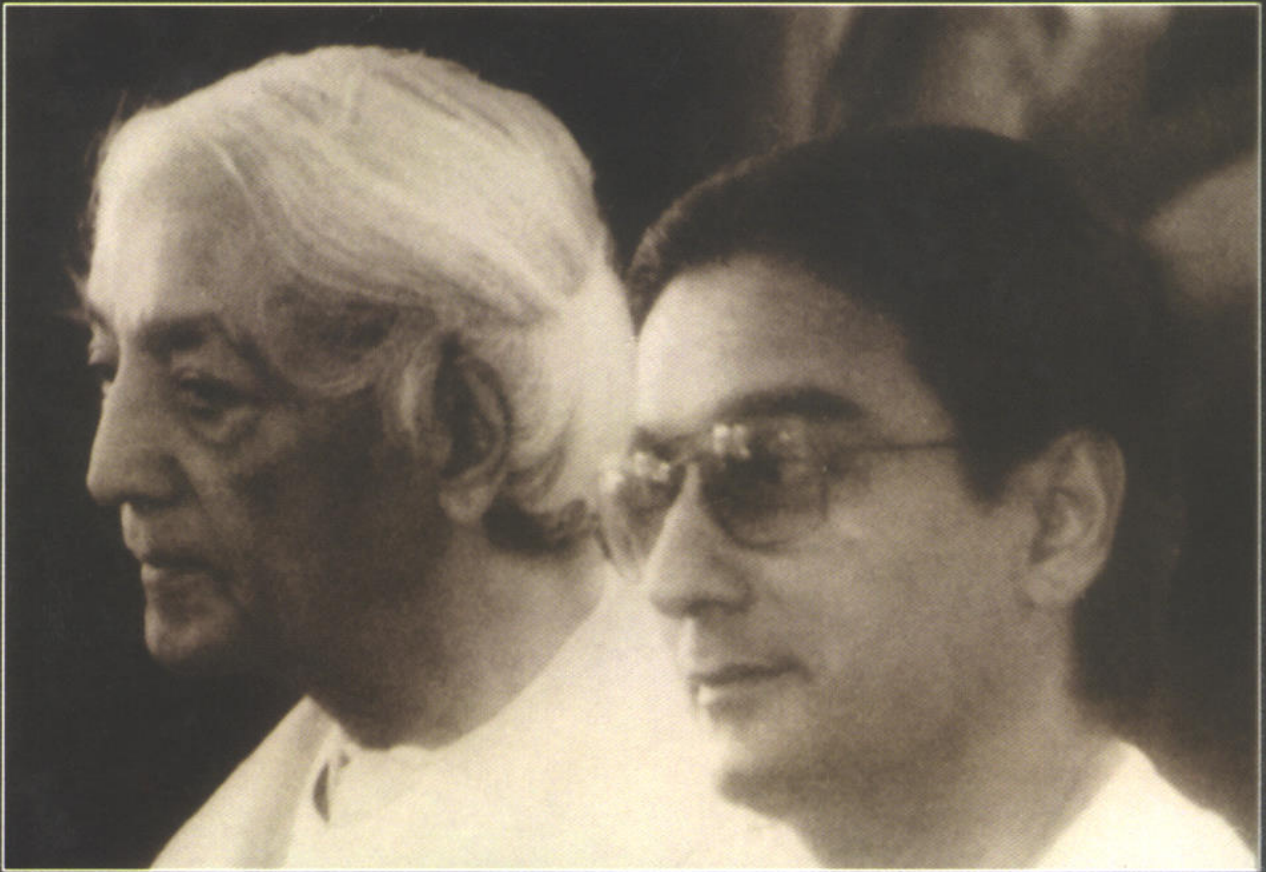
⁵⁰Music and dance have been part of the Rishi Valley School curriculum for years. Krishnamurti was always delighted that an opportunity existed for children to learn the creative arts. During Balasundaram's principalship, the department of music and dance made the school's fine arts program possibly the best of any boarding or private school in the whole of India. At Vasanta Vihar and Rishi Valley, there would be South Indian classical music concerts, and Krishnamurti always attended

them. He would sit cross-legged and still for an hour and more, listening to the music and watching the audience. The editor has heard Krishnamurti hum a few classical compositions at other times, and has also seen him learning some South Indian classical compositions from Narayan. Mrs. Jayalakshmi had many friends who were considered top-notch concert musicians in South India. Many were invited by her to give concerts at Vasanta Vihar, and they would eagerly oblige. One who sang at Vasanta Vihar often was M. S. Subbulakshmi. Krishnamurti enjoyed her concerts the most and would invariably greet her at the beginning and at the end of the concert. Subbulakshmi was one of the few artists of the world who gave a concert at the United Nations. When Narayan was principal at the Rishi Valley School, and at Krishnamurti's suggestion, Jayalakshmi was able to persuade two great musicians to stay in the school for a number of years. Hemmadi of Hyderabad often arranged for musicians from the Hindustani school of music, such as Pandit Jasraj and Lakshmi Shankar, to give concerts at Rishi Valley.

⁵¹*The Oxford English Dictionary or The Universal Dictionary of the English Language* by Henry Cecil Wyld.

⁵²The book *Unconditionally Free*, published by the KFA, gives a long and complete list of every place Krishnamurti spoke from 1923 till 1986.

⁵³Dr. Radhika Herzberger, a Sanskrit scholar and a member of the KFI, began working with Narayan in Rishi Valley as director of studies. She took over as director of the Rishi Valley Education Center in 1987 and became the editor of the *KFI Bulletin* in 1986. She compiled *The Future Is Now: Last Talks in India*. She is responsible for the ecological regeneration of the valley as well as the vast educational work for villagers and the "School in a Box," which has spread to other states in India.



J. Krishnamurti (1895 -1986), the revolutionary mystic, iconoclastic author, and speaker had a profound impact on vast numbers of people for more than half the 20th Century. He counted as closest to him the nameless millions of serious and questioning people world-wide who strove to break the bounds of religious and psychological suffering.

Krishnamurti's nephew, Giddu Narayan, has written a gentle memoir, **As the River Joins the Ocean**, that illuminates Krishnamurti in ways that more formal biographies have not. The family genealogy shows the humble origins of the great teacher. His touching lifelong concern and compassion for people, and for his own family, reveal him to be deeply related to humanity. This new memoir by a devoted student of the teachings is an important historical document for scholars and others concerned with Krishnamurti's unique approach to the perennial issues that perplex humanity.

memoirs / J.Krishnamurti / philosophy

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