TALKS BY
KRISHNAMURTI
IN INDIA
1959

(Verbatim Report)

NEW DELHI—MADRAS

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This Report is issued primarily for those who heard the Talks

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I

TALK IN NEW DELHI

It seems to me very important that we should first establish between ourselves right communication and understanding. For most of us, communication is merely at the conscious, at the verbal or intellectual level, and it is very difficult really to understand anything when communication is limited to that level. I think there is a form of communion which comprehends not only the conscious, but also the unconscious level, and also goes further, beyond that; and there is real communication or communion, it seems to me, only when there is complete harmony between these three. Behind the conscious or verbal understanding of the significance of the words there is an unconscious comprehension which is not merely verbal; and there is also a form of communion which goes beyond all that and which has no symbols, no words or phrases as a means of communication. It is the total integration of these three that makes possible a complete understanding of anything, is it not? To put it differently, I can understand something totally, fully, completely, only when I think with my whole being, which includes the conscious, the unconscious, and a state which lies beyond both and is not expressible in words. When there is this total comprehension, this total approach, there is surely complete communion between two human beings.

I think it is very important to establish this state of communion between ourselves. But the difficulty is that most of us merely accept verbally or intellectually what is convenient, and reject what is not, and on that level we dispute. This is what most of us do. But to go deeper, beyond the verbal level, beyond the level of words and symbols, requires much more attention, much more insight, a greater quality of awareness. And it seems to me that if we comprehend and communicate merely at the verbal level, these talks will have very little meaning. It is very easy to talk and argue about certain ideas; but we are not dealing with ideas. Ideas do not bring about a really fundamental change in the quality of the mind. Ideas influence us, they give a certain activity to the mind, but fundamentally, deeply, they do not change the quality of the mind; and it is surely very important that there should be such a change—a radical transformation in the quality of the mind. For it is only in bringing about a revolution in the quality of the mind itself that we can resolve the many problems that we have.

I hope that we now understand each other. There is no teacher with something to be taught. I think we must be very clear on this point: that the speaker is not the teacher, nor are you the disciple. If you put yourself in the position of a disciple, of a man who accepts or rejects, who wants a particular comprehension in order to resolve certain problems, I am afraid you will be disappointed. The true relationship between you and the speaker is one of understanding, it is a relationship in which we are both learning, and if you merely accept or reject what is said with a sanctimonious religious attitude, you obviously cease to learn and therefore communication between us is impossible. What we are trying to do, surely, is to understand the main problems of life—to go into them, to learn about them, and to see all the reactions of the mind in relationship to everything. If we do not learn about ourselves directly and are merely eager to be instructed, then instruction is not a process of learning, but only the accumulation of knowledge, which does not solve our problems. What does

solve radically and fundamentally our problems is a mind that is capable of inquiring, searching, learning. When you and I as two human beings talk things over together, inquiring, searching out, then our relationship is entirely different. Then you do not accept or reject; then the speaker is not on a pedestal, and you are not down below, and we are both learning.

To be capable of learning, the mind must obviously put aside all that it has learnt, which is extraordinarily difficult. To learn, the mind must be in a state of freedom. We are in a state of freedom when we want to find out, when we want to know, when we want to understand or discover something; but that freedom is destroyed the moment we begin to interpret what we discover in terms of our conditioning, in terms of our established morality, our environmental influences, and so on.

So, may I point out that these talks will be utterly useless if we do not from the very beginning establish the right relationship between you and me. After all, what is important is not society, but the individual who creates society, the individual who thinks, who feels, who suffers, who is probing, questioning, asking. So you and I as individuals are inquiring, and through this process of inquiry we are going to learn.

But learning ceases when there is the accumulation of learning. And it is a most difficult thing to really be in a state when the mind is learning, because it demands a sense of complete humility, does it not? If one wants to know something deeply, inwardly, that very urge to know presupposes a mind that is really humble; but we are not humble, and that is our difficulty.

Humility is necessary in order to learn. But humility is not to be cultivated. The moment you cultivate humility, you are cultivating the field of arrogance, and the humility which that field produces is false. But if we really begin to inquire, to probe, to ask questions, then there is humility, because in that state of inquiry the mind does not assume anything, it does not accept any authority, it has no tradition and is not bound by knowledge. Surely a mind that is humble has no authority in itself through its own acquisition of knowledge, nor does it accept the outside authority of a teacher. This deep sense of humility is essential to the process of learning. The truly humble mind is not weighed down by learning, by experience, by a knowledge of the sacred books. The man who is always quoting is not humble. The man who has read a great deal, and whose burden is knowledge, has no sense of humility.

So it seems to me of the utmost importance that from the very beginning we establish between us, you and I, a relationship in which you are not looking to be guided, or hoping to have your problems solved by another. There is no solution to any problem apart from the problem itself, and it would be well if we could really understand this deeply, fundamentally. There are no solutions, there are only problems, and the resolution of each problem lies in the problem itself. That much you and I should understand right from the start. We have innumerable problems at all levels of our existence, social, economic, intellectual, moral, sexual. There is the problem of death, the problem of what is true, of whether there is God, and the problem of what this whole business of life is all about. Having a problem, we always seek a solution, which means that our attention is not on the problem, but away from the problem in search of a solution. If you and I can simply understand this one thing, that the solution of a problem lies in the problem itself, then we shall pay tre-

mendous attention to the problem.

Do please give your mind to what is being said. I know you have problems of every kind, because everything that the human mind-heart touches it makes into a problem—which is a terrible thing. Having made problems, we want solutions, so we go everlastingly in search of them. We go from one career to another, from one teacher to another, from one religion to another, until we find what we think is a solution —and that becomes our curse, because it is not a solution at all. It is a deception, and so the problems multiply.

Now, you and I together are going to uncover the problems, understand them; but that is possible only when there is communication between us, not only at the verbal level, but also at the unconscious level, which is extraordinarily important. Because any fundamental change comes about, surely, not through decision, but only when there is deep comprehension of the full significance of the problem—which is not a matter of decision.

What we intend to do during these talks is to establish right communication with each other as two individuals, and then proceed to uncover our many problems. In the understanding of one's problems as an individual the mind will be free, because the individual is the totality of the mind—the conscious, the unconscious, and the untrodden regions beyond.

After all, your mind is made up of what it has learnt, of certain modern techniques which help you to survive, and there is also, in the unconscious, the residue of the past, of tradition, of innumerable influences, impressions, compulsions, fears. In addition to all this there are the conscious urges, the ambitions, frustrations and conflicting desires which create a wide chasm of self-contradiction.

So the transformation of the individual is of the highest importance, because what you are the world is. You as an individual must bring about a radical change in yourself; for what you think, your mode of activity and relationship, your ambitions, your frustrations, your miseries—all this produces the world about you, and unless there is a transformation in the quality of the mind itself, mere tinkering on the periphery, which is called revolution, whether communist or any other, will never bring about a fundamental change. The individual may adjust himself to a particular environment, he may become a communist, a socialist, a capitalist, or whatever it is, but inwardly, deep down, he will still be the same. That is why we must be concerned with the transformation of the individual at the core. But that requires a great deal of attention, a great deal of penetration, insight; it means that the mind must go beyond tradition in an ever-deepening inquiry, which is a delving into self-knowledge; and as this demands great energy, we prefer to quote the sacred books, or go to a *guru,* or belong to some so-called religious society, thinking all this is going to free the mind; but it is only perpetuating our misery.

It seems to me that we must be concerned with the process of learning; and we can learn only when we die to all the things of yesterday. It is only the new, fresh mind that learns, not the mind that is burdened with the accumulations of the past. So our problem is to understand ourselves. Without understanding oneself there is no possibility of understanding what is true and what is false, or of finding out if there is something eternal, immeasurable. Unless there is full comprehension of ourselves, life is merely a constant flux without much meaning. So self-knowledge is essential.

I know you will all nod your heads at this statement that you must know

yourself, for it has been repeated *ad nauseam* for ages; but really to go into oneself and observe the whole structure of the mind requires an immense aloofness from every thought and every feeling. Because, after all, thought and feeling are the reactions of the mind, and to know myself I must be aware, without condemnation or judgment, of my reactions in relationship to all things. I must see my responses—the unconscious as well as the conscious—to people, to property, to ideas; otherwise I do not know myself. I must not take these reactions for granted, or merely accept them verbally, intellectually, but actually be aware of every reaction; and this requires enormous attention.

I do not know if you have ever tried to be aware, not only of your reactions, but of the causes behind them—which is not introspection, for it does not concern the self at all. It is rather the uncovering of the self, the direct experiencing, through inquiry, of the whole structure of the self. To inquire into yourself there can be no authority; no psychologist, no *guru* can teach you. To know the extraordinary subtleties of the mind, its contradictions, its urges, its ambitions, frustrations and miseries—to know all that, there must be no sense of condemnation or judgment of what you see. There must be mere observation, which is extraordinarily difficult.

I wonder if you have ever observed anything really—a fly, or a picture, or a sunset, or the beauty of a leaf, or the moonlit waters on a still night. Perhaps you have never really perceived these things. Most of us have not; because the moment we see something, we immediately give it a name, cover it with a symbol, translate it in terms of what we know—which are all distractions preventing direct perception. To see something without naming it, to observe it totally, is possible only when there is no comparison, that is, when the mind is really quiet, silent in its perception.

To find out about oneself, such a mind is necessary: a mind that is capable of looking without interpreting, without condemning, without justifying. Try that sometime, and you will find out how extraordinarily difficult, how arduous a thing it is. Our tradition, our education, all our moral and religious training, has conditioned us to condemn, to justify, to cover up, not to penetrate. There can be penetration, deep insight, only when your mind is capable of observation without being distracted by any process of evaluation; and unless you know the source of your thinking, you have no basis for thinking at all. Then you are merely a machine, repeating certain ideas, predetermined thoughts.

So, to penetrate deeply into yourself is not introspection; it does not give strength to self-centred activity, but begins to open the door through which you will be able to perceive the whole process of your own mind. And if you go into it very deeply, dying to everything that you have discovered in the process of understanding, you will find that involuntarily, without any compulsion or discipline, the mind comes to a state of quietness, a state of alertness; and it is only then that a radical revolution takes place.

In all these talks you and I are going to discover the ways of the mind; we are going to find out how it is conditioned, shaped as a Hindu or a Moslem, a Parsi or a Christian, a communist or a socialist, and see how it holds on to certain beliefs, to certain ideas or aspirations. We are going to learn about all that, so that our minds are liberated through direct perception, and then we shall have a totally different relationship with society. We cannot exist in isolation, and it is only in relationship that

we discover what we are.

We have so many problems that our life is crowded with them. We know life only as a problem, and we never see life as a whole—this extraordinary vastness of a mind that has no barrier, that is not in bondage to experience. We do not know the quality of the mind that is illimitable, eternal. That is why it is very important for each one of us to learn how to listen.

Now, listening is a very difficult thing to do. Most of us never listen. We hear, but we do not listen. Surely, listening implies no interpretation. If I say something, you may listen; but you cease to listen the moment you interpret what you hear according to your background. Whereas, if there is no interpretation, no evaluation, but an actual listening with your whole being, then you will find in that very act of listening there is a mirror in which you see for yourself what is true and what is false—and that is the beauty of listening.

Just as you have never looked at anything—at a flower, at a star, at a reflection on the water—with your whole being, so you have probably never listened to anything with your whole being. To listen with your whole being is to listen with your conscious mind, with your unconscious mind, and with your body—that is, with all your senses fully awakened. It is only when you listen in this manner that you are able to discern that which is true, and the truth about the false. That is all the mind needs, isn't it?—the capacity to see what is true in ourselves and about ourselves.

To perceive what is true, there must be a total giving of oneself to the thing. If in listening to music you are capable of paying total attention, the music has quite a different meaning. If you are able to give your whole being to a problem, the problem is not. The problem exists only when there is contradiction within ourselves. This inner contradiction can be dissolved only through self-knowledge, and the self is revealed only in relationship with the one or with the many.

All this demands, surely, a tremendous alertness, and everything about us tends to put us to sleep. One of the drugs that put us to sleep is obviously knowledge. A mind that knows can never learn. Another drug is tradition—not only the tradition of centuries, but the tradition of yesterday, the tradition that says "I know, I have experienced". Knowledge, tradition, and the experiences that one gathers, both the good and the bad, the joyous and the sorrowful—all these contribute to put the mind to sleep. And it is only the alert mind, the mind that is constantly questioning, asking, looking into itself and all its activities—it is only such a mind that can discover what is true. Truth does not demand belief, truth is not the result of experience, truth is something that you perceive directly; but this is possible only when the mind is innocent, not burdened with a thousand and one problems. To die to all that, is the beginning of wisdom.

What you and I are trying to do in these talks is to look into ourselves and uncover the many layers of our consciousness. If you do not do that and merely listen to a series of words, you will find that these talks will have very little meaning, and your coming here will be a fruitless thing. But if you follow and directly experience what is being said through the observation of your own mind, then together we can go very far. In penetrating deeply within yourself, you will find that the mind becomes completely motionless, spontaneously still and free. That state of quietness is not the result of any discipline, it cannot be brought about through any yogic practice. It is the

outcome of understanding oneself. Such a mind is essential to the understanding of the totality of life. Only such a mind can find out what is true, whether there is God.

Most of us are caught in some form of sorrow, turmoil, travail, and we can resolve it only through understanding ourselves—'ourselves' being the conscious as well as the unconscious. The more you understand yourself, the more subtle and beautiful you will find the mind to be; and without understanding yourself there is no reality. You may quote the sacred books and affirm your belief in God, but it is all just words without much meaning. What is essential is self-knowledge. To know oneself is not to talk about the *Atman*, the super-self, and all that business, which is just an invention of the mind. To know oneself is to know the mind that invents the super-self, that seeks security, that is everlastingly wanting to be settled, undisturbed, reassured. To know all that through direct observation brings about a spontaneous tranquillity of the mind. And it is only the tranquil mind, the mind that is still, motionless—it is only such a mind that knows the tremendous activity of being totally alive.

February 8, 1959.

II

TALK IN NEW DELHI

I would like, if I may, to talk over with you the problem of action. By action we generally mean what we do or think we should do under given circumstances, the question of what is the right course to take, and whether a particular action is justified or not. Most of our thinking is concerned with what to do. In the political and economic fields, in our personal relationships, and in the world at large, we are all primarily concerned with what is right action. And I would like, if I may, to talk over with you, not what is right and what is wrong action, but the totality of action; for if we can get a feeling of the action that is total, that is not self-contradictory, then perhaps we shall know or be able to feel our way through any particular action.

But it is very difficult, I think, to get a feeling of the totality of something. After all, to get the feeling of a tree, it is no good merely examining a leaf, or a branch, or the trunk. The tree is a totality, the hidden as well as what is shown, and to understand the beauty, the loveliness of a spreading tree, one must have a feeling of the totality of it.

In the same way, I think one must have this feeling, this inward comprehension of total action. If we look at ourselves we will see that in our relationships, in our governments, in every department of our living, there is not a total action, but many separate, unrelated actions. The government does one thing unrelated to our personal existence, the businessman does something else unrelated to the action of the government, and the individual says "I am a communist", "I am a Catholic", and so on. Each one is concerned with action according to a particular system or within a limited sphere, hoping that such action will cover the whole field. So there is always a contradiction, not only in the individual, in you and me, but also in our relationship with society, with the government, and with others.

Now, what is total action? You and I—you as an individual and I as another individual—are talking this over. I am not laying down the law. I am not saying "This is right and that is wrong", but together we are going to find out what is this extraordinary action which is total and therefore not contradictory in

itself.

All our responses have their opposite responses, have they not? If you observe you will see that every desire has its own contradictory desire. The moment we desire something, there is the shadow of an opposing desire; so our action always creates a contradiction, an opposite response.

Now, is there an action which is total which does not create a contradiction, and which is not merely the continuance of a particular form of activity? We are going to find out; we are going into it very hesitantly and discover the truth of the matter for ourselves.

After all, the function of a speaker is not merely to give you ideas—at least I do not think so—, because ideas never really change human beings. One idea can be opposed by another idea. The very idea of total action creates an idea opposite to it. But if we can put away mere ideas and think together, feel together, proceed, investigate, question together, then perhaps we shall get the feeling of a total action which is not self-contradictory; because that which is total cannot have within it something opposed to itself.

This is a very complex problem, and like all complex problems, it must be approached very simply, which is the way of learning. To learn, the mind must be in a state of inquiry; and the mind is not inquiring when it makes a decision and starts from there. If I have a conception of what is right and what is wrong action, I have already made a decision, and such a mind is incapable of learning the truth about action. Though it may be very active, it is really a dead mind. There is no movement of learning for the mind that has already learnt; there is no experiencing for the mind that is burdened with past experiences. I do not know if you understand this, or if I am making myself clear.

You see, the difficulty is that most of us are used to similies, examples, illustrations. If I could give you ten examples, you would think you had understood—but really you would not have understood. Examples and illustrations are most deceiving. They prevent you from really thinking, inquiring. An example can be offset by a contradictory example, and in arguing about the examples we shall get lost. Whereas, if we can capture the totality of action, the feeling of it, then we shall be able to work it out in detail in our daily existence. But that requires enormous attention, and a great deal of insight. Most of us are unwilling to give our complete attention to a problem of this kind, and we would rather be excited or amused by discussing examples.

What you and I are trying to find out is whether there is a total action that will cover the whole field of our existence. I say there is—but not dogmatically. I say there is a total action which will cover every department of our existence—governmental, economic, social, and the whole field of human relationships. But you cannot come to it, you cannot comprehend the feeling, the beauty, the subtlety of it, if you approach it from a particular point of view. Therefore there must be a letting go of your Communism, of your Hinduism, of your conception of action according to the *Gita,* the *Bible,* the *Koran,* or your latest *guru.* All that must be wiped out in order to find the total action which will respond to every challenge.

As I was saying last time, it is very important to know how to listen, because most of us never listen at all. Listening is in itself an action of liberation; it frees the mind. But when you do listen, what actually happens? If you observe your own mind you will see that you are comparing what is be-

ing said either with what you know, or with some authority whom you respect. You are always comparing or interpreting, aren't you? Therefore the mind is not in a state of listening at all. To listen you must give your total attention, and total attention is denied when you are comparing or interpreting. When you say that you see a correspondence between what is being said here and the teachings of Shankara or Buddha, that is a lazy man's way of listening. But if you really want to learn the truth about yourself, then you are bound to listen without comparing, without a calculated interest. And I say in that very act of listening without comparison or interpretation you will discover for yourself that in the state of learning the mind is not accumulating. But when the mind has learnt, it obviously ceases to learn, because it is always interpreting the new in terms of the old.

So listening is an extraordinary thing, because if you are really capable of listening, it frees the mind from all influence. Then the mind is clear, sharp —and such a mind is necessary to find out what is true.

This question of action, of what to do, is an enormous problem, and if we merely listen consciously, at the intellectual or verbal level, we shall enter the field of argumentation: I am right, you are wrong, I quote you this, you quote me that, and so on indefinitely. That is why it is important to communicate with each other at a much deeper level, unconsciously. I think fundamental change takes place only at the unconscious level. Change at the conscious level is based on a decision, and decision will always produce its own contradiction.

Please follow this a little bit patiently. Action born of choice is based on a decision, and such action is self-contradictory. I decide to do something. That decision is the outcome of choice, and choice always contains its own opposite. Therefore the action of decision is a contradiction, inwardly as well as outwardly. There is an action which is not of choice, not of decision, and in such action there is no contradiction; but that requires a great deal of inquiry into oneself.

Now, this is not a matter of acceptance or denial. Don't immediately say to me "I disagree with you", or "You are utterly right", because that would have no meaning. What matters is for you to see the truth that action born of choice, of decision, will inevitably produce a self-contradictory reaction. If you decide to do something, your action is born of choice, and that action will invariably create its own opposite; therefore you are caught in contradiction. So what are you to do? I say there is a total action in which there is no contradiction at all. But to understand that, one must go into the unconscious, and it is there that we shall have to commune with each other. Do you understand? I hope I am making myself clear. I see that I am not.

Most of us are concerned with what to do, what kind of legislation to enact, what kind of reform to carry out, and all the rest of it. But I say that is not important; put that aside for the moment and concern yourself with total action which is not self-contradictory. If you can find out what total action is, then you will be able to act truly in a particular direction. Do you understand?

Let us say that I do not know what to do as a governmental official, or in the family, or as a citizen who is not committed to any particular party or system. But before I ask what I am to do, I say to myself: "There must be a total action, an action which is whole, which does not contain the seed of self-contradiction." To understand the tree,

I must look at the whole tree, and not be concerned with a particular leaf. If I want to understand life, I must understand the whole depth, breadth and height of it, and not approach it through a particular system, belief, or ideology. Similarly, I must put aside for the moment the particular act, and be concerned with the comprehension of total action.

Sirs, life isn't any one particular thing. Life isn't just the bureaucratic system of New Delhi, life isn't just the communist system or the capitalist system, life isn't just tyranny or self-contradiction. Life is all these things, and far more; it is the daily relationship of conflict, of misery, of struggle and travail. Life is birth and death, it is meditation, inquiry, and all the various subtleties which the mind invents. Life is enormous, immeasurable by the mind, and you think you have understood life when you are able to dissect a tiny part of it. You say "Yes, I know life"; but you don't know life as long as your whole concentration is given to one section or department of life.

In the same way, what matters is not the immediate act, but the inquiry into the totality of action; so I say, put aside the immediate act. But you are not going to put it aside. The pressure is much too great. You have to do something tomorrow, you have to act. So the conscious mind is perpetually occupied with immediate action, like a machine that is constantly in motion. You never say "I will put this all side and find out".

So you and I are now inquiring at the unconscious level; therefore communication is entirely different. It is not verbal, it is not mere analysis, it is not a process of giving examples; it is like feeling your way under water. You can't assume anything, you can't be dogmatic or assertive; you must be negative. That is why negative thinking is tremendously important. Negative thinking is the highest form of thinking —but let us not go into that for the moment.

I hope you are following all this. If not, we will discuss it another time.

You and I are communicating at the unconscious level, where there is only the act of listening and not the listener who says "What shall I do?". Leave the 'what to do' to the conscious mind. We are going to inquire unconsciously into the totality of action—which does not mean that one goes to sleep; on the contrary, it is quite an extraordinary state of attention.

Now, let us differentiate between attention and concentration. Concentration, being a focusing of the mind, is limited, but attention is not. The conscious mind can be concentrated at its own level; but the unconscious can only be attentive, not concentrated. Am I making this clear? Sirs, don't immediately say "Yes". I mustn't ask that question, for you are apt to say it is clear because you want to proceed. I can proceed, but you will merely remain on the verbal or conscious level, and therefore you won't be able to proceed. You and I must proceed together, or not at all.

So we are inquiring negatively into the totality of action, which means that the mind is not concerned with decision; it is not for the moment concerned with what to do, the immediate action. Let me put it around the other way.

The conscious mind is always concerned with the immediate question of what to do. All politicians are concerned with what to do; therefore they are not concerned with the totality of action. At the conscious level there are and must be decisions; but those decisions are based on choice, which is the action of will, and therefore they become self-contradictory. Seeing the

psychological truth of this, I begin to inquire negatively, which is the only approach to the unconscious. There cannot be a positive approach, because the positive approach belongs to the conscious mind. The unconscious is enormous, it is like a vast sea where there is a perpetual movement; and how can you approach that enormous depth with a positive idea? To learn, there must be a negation of the positive. There is no learning at the conscious level; there is only the acquiring of knowledge.

As I said, sirs, this is a very difficult question. Concentration is exclusion, and what you exclude is always waiting to come in. Attention is a negation of concentration, because there is no exclusion, and that is the way one must approach the unconscious. That is the way you and I are going to communicate, which means that we are not concerned with the immediate decision and the activity based on that decision. We are inquiring negatively into the whole field of the unconscious, in which there is an action which is not self-contradictory.

So, what have we done so far? We have seen that to understand something there must be a total feeling, which is love. Love is a total act, it is a feeling of wholeness in which all the senses are fully awake, the mind completely at rest, and in which there is no contradiction. To comprehend the beauty of a tree against the sky, there must be a feeling of the totality of the tree, and that feeling is denied when you merely concern yourself with a leaf. But when you get the feeling of the totality of a tree, then you can be concerned with the leaf, with the branch, with the flower.

As we are concerned this evening with action, we are inquiring into the totality of it; and you can approach it only negatively, not with a desire to know what is the right thing to do. If that much is clear, we can proceed; but I'm afraid it is not clear, because most of us have not thought about this at all. We have only thought about what to do, what is right, what is profitable, what will give us more power, influence—which means that we are always calculating, self-interested, and therefore always self-contradictory. And there we remain, hoping to find a way to integrate our self-contradiction; but we never find it, because at that level there is no end to self-contradiction.

It is very difficult not to be a communist, a socialist, this or that, and to inquire into what is total action. Most of us are committed to something or other, and a man who is committed to something is incapable of learning. Life never stands still, it does not commit itself to anything, it is in eternal movement. And you want to translate this living thing in terms of a particular belief or ideology, which is utterly childish.

So what we are trying to do is to feel out the totality of action. There is no action without the background of thought, is there? And thought is always choice. Don't just accept this. Please examine it, feel your way into it. Thought is the process of choosing. Without thought you cannot choose. The moment you choose, there is a decision, and that decision creates its own opposite—good and bad, violence and non-violence. The man who pursues non-violence through decision creates a contradiction in himself. Thought is essentially born of choice. I choose to think in a certain way. I examine communism, socialism, Buddhism, I reason logically and decide to think this or that. Such thought is based on memory, on my conditioning, on my pleasure, on my likes and dislikes, and any action born of such thought will

inevitably create contradiction in myself and therefore in the world; it will produce sorrow, misery, not only for me, but for others as well.

Now please listen quietly, and don't say "Yes" or "No". Is there an action which is not the result of influence, which is not the result of calculated self-interest, which is not the result of past experience?—and I have explained how the burden of accumulated experience makes the mind incapable of experiencing.

Is there an action which is not the outcome of choice, of ideation, of a decision, but is the total feeling of action? I say there is. As we are living now, the government does one thing, the businessman does another, the religious man, the scholar and the scientist each does something else, and they are all in contradiction. These contradictions can never be overcome, because the overcoming of a contradiction only creates another tension. The essential thing is for the mind to understand the totality of action, that is, to get the feeling of action which is not born of decision, as one might get the feeling of a lovely sunset, of a flower, or a bird on the wing. This requires an inquiry into the unconscious with no positive demand for an answer. And if you are capable of not being caught up in the immediacy of life, of what to do tomorrow, then you will find that the mind begins to discover a state of action in which there is no contradiction, an action which has no opposite. You try it. Try it as you go home, when you are sitting in the bus. Find out for yourself what is this extraordinary thing, an action which is total.

You see, sirs, the earth is not communist or capitalist, it is not Hindu or Christian, it is neither yours nor mine. There is a feeling of the totality of the earth, of the beauty, the richness, the extraordinary potency of the earth; but you can feel that total splendour only when you are not committed to anything. In the same way, you can get the feeling of total action only when you are not committed to any particular activity, when you are not one of the 'do-gooders' who are committed to this or that party, belief, or ideology, and whose actions are really a form of self-centred activity. If you are not committed, then you will find that the conscious mind, though involved with immediate action, can put aside that immediate action and inquire negatively into the unconscious where lie the real motives, the hidden contradictions, the traditional bondages and blind urges which create the problems of immediacy. And once you understand all this, then you can go much further. Then you will be able to feel—as you would feel the loveliness, the wholeness of a tree —the totality of action in which there is no opposite response, no contradiction.

This is not the integration of action with its opposite, which is nonsense; on the contrary, it is the understanding of the totality of action which comes when the mind is capable of not being centred in the immediate activity. To be centred in the immediate activity is concentration. Awareness or attention is not centred in the immediate activity, but in that attention the immediate activity is included. So there is a totality of action only when the mind is capable of inquiring from moment to moment, and is not merely concerned with the immediate. Then the mind penetrates, it asks fundamental questions. Because its inquiry is fundamental, its action is anonymous, and being anonymous it has no contradiction, no opposite.

February 11, 1959.

III

TALK IN NEW DELHI

This evening I would like, if I may, to talk over with you the whole process of the mind. To most of us, apparently, thought is very important; but thought, even though it shapes our actions and our lives, will have very little meaning unless we understand the ways of the mind.

Before I go further, I would like to ask you what is the purpose or significance of your coming here? It is a valid question, I think, and one which you will have to answer for yourself. What is the motive, the intention of your coming? On that will depend your understanding of what is going to be said. If you come merely out of curiosity, obviously you will be little satisfied, and will go away rather more confused than before. But if you come, not just to hear what the speaker has to say, but in order to understand yourself, then I think these talks will have some meaning. But to understand oneself requires a great deal of attention, not only while we are here, but also when we go out into the ways of our daily existence; for it is in our everyday relationships that we find the mirror in which to see ourselves as we are.

So let us be very clear about our intention in gathering together here this evening. You are not going to learn anything from the speaker. To me there is neither the teacher nor the taught; there is no leader and no follower, no guru and no disciple; there is no path to reality, no system or discipline that can bring about the realization of that extraordinary thing which we call the real, the eternal, the immeasurable. No organized religion can lead you to it. And if you have come here with the hope of being led to happiness, to peace of mind, you are not only going to be disappointed, but more confused than ever.

So as an individual you must be very clear about why you are here. The man who follows any path, any system, any teacher, or who belongs to any organized religion, is merely an imitator and not an individual who is trying to understand the whole field of human existence. Living is a very complex process, and to understand it demands extraordinary attention, a detailed perception, a precision in thinking; so, obviously there can be no following, there can be neither an easy acceptance nor a casual denial. If that much is very clear between you and me as two individuals, then together we can proceed. But if you have come here merely to juggle with words, or intellectually to be amused, or cleverly to refute what is said, then I think you will miss the significance of the whole thing.

If one asks oneself very clearly "Why have I come?", that very question will begin to unravel the process of one's own mind. After all, the mind is the only instrument we have. It is the mind that perceives, that thinks, that calculates, that desires, that communicates, that penetrates, that creates its own blockages, that tries to fulfil itself and finds frustration, misery; it is the mind that is ambitious and ruthless, affectionate and sympathetic; it is the mind that knows pleasure and pain, love and hate, that takes delight in beauty. So unless we understand this extraordinary thing called the mind, we shall have very little basis for rational, clear and perceptive thinking.

Thinking plays a very large part in our life, does it not? It covers almost the whole field of our existence. That is why it is so important to understand the mind, from which thinking emanates. The mind is the source of our thought, of our feeling, of our per-

ception, our awareness; it shapes our relationship with society, with nature, with each other. So without understanding the mind, any change we bring about in our thinking will have very little meaning.

Now, in this talk and in all the talks to follow, what we are trying to do is to unravel this thing called the mind. It is not our intention that you should be influenced to think in a particular direction—and it is very important for you and me to understand this. All influence, good or bad, is pernicious, because it enslaves the mind. Influence is mere propaganda. The constant repetition of certain phrases creates belief, which is not thinking. To me any influence, whether pleasant or unpleasant, and however subtle or shrewd, is a form of compulsion. So again let us be very clear that you are not being mesmerized by me; your mind is not being influenced to think in a certain direction.

It is very important, I think, that we understand this. Influence, which is propaganda, is being exerted on the mind all the time. Newspapers, magazines, books, the speeches that are given by television and radio—all this, and everything else that goes to make up our environment, is urging us to think in a certain direction, and consciously or unconsciously we either resist or accept it.

Please don't just listen to me, but watch your own mind in operation. I am only describing the operation of your own mind, how influence twists and perverts your thought. There is not only conscious influence, which is called education, but also unconscious influence, the influence of which one is not aware; and perhaps this is much more potent than the conscious influence. If I directly tell you to do something, you may or may not do it, depending on my authority, my power of persuasion, and on your willingness or otherwise to accept what I say—which is a conscious influence. But the unconscious, where there is no means of defence, is much more easily penetrated by subtle suggestions, ideas, arguments; and influences on that level are apt to affect the mind much more. I do not know if you have observed this. And there is the whole weight of tradition, the modern as well as the ancient, that shapes the mind gradually, unknowingly.

So one has to be alert at all these talks not to be influenced, not to be hypnotized into accepting what is said —which does not mean that you must reject it. What we are trying to do is to understand the process of the mind; and you cannot understand the mind, the whole extent and depth of it, if you merely accept or reject. You and I together are trying to understand the mind, go into it, uncover all the various aspects of it, and not merely confine ourselves to one particular part. We are exploring and therefore discovering; and what you discover for yourself matters much more than anything you may hear from me. But you are not really listening if you are prejudiced, if you are argumentative, if you merely reject or accept, for then you remain at the verbal level; therefore you cannot explore, you cannot discover the movement, the extraordinary subtleties of the mind. I may point out to you many things, but unless you directly experience them, you cannot possibly understand the process of your own mind.

If you are really alert you will see that there is no *guru*, no path, no system or belief that can lead you to truth. There is only the exploration of the process of your own thinking. When once you begin to know the ways of your mind and see what it is that lies behind your thought—why there is fear, why you seek security, and all the rest

of it—, then you will never again follow anybody.

That being clearly understood by you and by me, let us ask ourselves, what is the mind? When I put that question, please don't wait for a reply from me. Look at your own mind, observe the ways of your own thought. What I describe is only an indication, it is not the reality. The reality you must experience for yourself. The word, the description, the symbol, is not the actual thing. The word 'door' is obviously not the door. The word 'love' is not the feeling, the extraordinary quality that the word indicates. So do not let us confuse the word, the name, the symbol, with the fact. If you merely remain on the verbal level and discuss what the mind is, you are lost; for then you will never feel the quality of this astonishing thing called the mind.

So, what is the mind? Obviously, the mind is our total awareness or consciousness, it is the total way of our existence, the whole process of our thinking. The mind is the result of the brain. The brain produces the mind. Without the brain there is no mind, but the mind is separate from the brain. It is the child of the brain. If the brain is limited, damaged, the mind is also damaged. The brain, which records every sensation, every feeling of pleasure or pain; the brain with all its tissues, with all its responses, creates what we call the mind, although the mind is independent of the brain.

You don't have to accept this. You can experiment with it and see for yourself.

I ask you where you live, which is a question with which you are familiar. The air waves striking upon the eardrum cause an impulse to be sent to your brain, which translates and responds to what it hears according to its memories and you say "Sir, I live in such and such a place". The response of the brain is also the response of the mind according to its conditioning. The mind is not only the result of the brain, but also of the time-process—the time-process being both external or chronological, and inward or psychological, inside the skin as it were, which is the sense of becoming something. So the mind is the result of the brain and of time, and it is made up of both the conscious and the unconscious, the surface and the hidden.

Now, the mind is controllable through education, is it not? That is what is happening throughout the world. The communists get hold of the mind through so-called education, through brain-washing, and so control it. That is essentially what all organized religions do. You are a Hindu or a Parsi, a Moslem or a Buddhist, because you have been brought up as one; your parents, your tradition, your priest, your whole environment, all help to condition your mind in that way.

So the mind is being influenced all the time to think along a certain line. It used to be that only the organized religions were after your mind, but now governments have largely taken over that job. They want to shape and control your mind. On the surface the mind can resist their control. You will become a communist only if it pays you. If you think you will find God through Catholicism, you will become a Catholic, not otherwise. Superficially you have some say in the matter; but below the surface, in the deep unconscious, there is the whole weight of time, of tradition, urging you in a particular direction. The conscious mind may to some extent control and guide itself, but in the unconscious your ambitions, your unsolved problems, your compulsions, superstitions, fears, are waiting, throbbing, urging.

So there is a division in the mind as

the conscious and the unconscious, the open and the hidden; inwardly, deeply, there is a contradiction. You remain a Hindu and cling to certain superstitions, even though modern civilization says they are nonsense. You are a scientist, and yet you marry off your son or daughter in the old traditional way. So there is in you a contradiction. There is also a contradiction in thought itself, in desire itself. You want to do something, and at the same time you think you should not do it. You say "I must" and "I must not".

This whole field of the mind is the result of time, it is the result of conflicts and adjustments, of a whole series of acceptances without full comprehension. Therefore we live in a state of contradiction; our life is a process of endless struggle. We are unhappy, and we want to be happy. Being violent, we practise the ideal of non-violence. So there is a conflict going on, the mind is a battlefield. We want to be secure, knowing inwardly, deeply, that there is no such thing as security at all. The truth is that we do not want to face the fact that there is no security; therefore we are always pursuing security, with the resultant fear of not being secure.

So the mind is a mass of contradictions, oppositions, adjustments, emotional reactions, conscious as well as unconscious, and from there we begin to think. We have never explored the depths of our own consciousness, but merely act on the surface. We believe or do not believe; we pursue what we think is profitable; we compel ourselves to do something, or we argue, drift. This is our life. And in this state the mind says "I want to find reality".

But you can perceive what is real only when the mind is not in a state of self-contradiction. Whether you believe or do not believe in God has very little importance. Actually, it is of no importance at all, because in your life it is just a matter of convenience, of tradition and social security. You are conditioned to believe in God, as the communists are conditioned not to believe. It is conditioning that makes you call yourself a Hindu or a Buddhist, a Moslem or a Christian. Your moralizing about God or truth and your quoting of the various scriptures has very little significance, because the moment you discover for yourself that your mind is conditioned, that whole structure will collapse.

Being afraid, the mind finds security within the field of its own thought, convictions and experiences; it builds a haven of refuge through belief, and wards off the movement of life. This is the actual fact, whether you acknowledge it or not. The haven of refuge which the mind creates and remains within is the 'me' and the 'mine', and every form of disturbance that might shake the foundations of this refuge, the mind rejects.

Seeing that thought is transient, the mind creates the 'I'-process, the 'me' which it then calls the permanent, the everlasting, but which is still within the field of the mind, because the mind has created and can think about it. What the mind can think about is obviously within the field of the mind, which is the field of time; therefore it is not the timeless, the eternal, though you may call it the *Atman*, the higher self, or God. Your God is then a product of your thought; and your thought is the response of your conditioning, of your memories, of your experiences, which are all within the field of time.

Now, can the mind be free of time? That is the real problem. Because all creation takes place outside the field of time. All profound thinking, all deep feeling is always timeless. When you love somebody, when there is love, that love is not bound by time.

But the conditioned mind, surely, is

incapable of finding out what lies beyond time. That is, Sirs, the mind as we know it, is conditioned by the past. The past, moving through the present to the future, conditions the mind; and this conditioned mind, being in conflict, in trouble, being fearful, uncertain, seeks something beyond the frontiers of time. That is what we are all doing in various ways, is it not? But how can a mind which is the result of time ever find that which is timeless? All it can do is to mesmerize itself into a state which it calls the timeless, the real, or make itself comfortable with certain beliefs.

To find reality, the mind must transform itself; it must go beyond itself. And unless the mind is capable of receiving reality, it cannot resolve the innumerable problems that confront us in our daily life. It can adjust itself, defend itself, it can take refuge temporarily; but life is all the time challenging the defences that you so sedulously build around yourself. The house of your beliefs, of your properties, of your attachments and comforting ways of thinking, is constantly being broken into. But the mind goes on seeking security, so there is a conflict between what you want and what life's process demands of you. This is what is happening to every one of us.

So the mind is the result of time, it is caught up in conflict, in discipline, control; and how can such a mind be free to discover what lies beyond the limits of time? I do not know if this problem interests you at all. Everyday existence, with all its troubles, seems to be sufficient for most of us. Our only concern is to find an immediate answer to our various problems. But sooner or later the immediate answers are found to be unsatisfactory, because no problem has an answer apart from the problem itself. But if I can understand the problem, all the intricacies of it, then the problem no longer exists.

Most of us are concerned, I think, with how to live in this world without too much conflict. We want what we call peace of mind, which means that we do not want to be deeply disturbed. That is why we accept the immediate answers about death, about sorrow, and so on. But these problems cannot be understood, nor can there be the cessation of conflict, until one begins to comprehend the whole process of the mind. When you begin to inquire into the mind you will make the inevitable discovery that the limits or frontiers of the mind are defined by that which is recognizable, and that these frontiers of the mind can never be stormed; so thought can never be free. Thought is merely the reaction of your experience, the response of memory; and how can such thought ever be free? Freedom means, surely, a state which has no beginning and no end; it is not a continuity of conditioned thinking based on experience with all its memories.

So thought, which is the response of memory, of accumulated experience, of one's particular conditioning, is not the solution to any problem; and I think for most of us this is a bitter pill to swallow. Thought can never fly straight, because it is always influenced, it is always motivated, attracted, and that attraction is based on our conditioning, on our background, on our memory. So thought is merely mechanical. Please, sirs, do see the significance of this. Machines are taking over more and more of the functions of the human mind. The electronic brain, which can do much better work in certain areas than you and I can, is based essentially on association, memory, experience, habit, which are also the ways of the mind; and through association, memory, experience, habit, you can never come to that which is free.

It is of fundamental importance, then,

to be aware—not only at the conscious or surface level, but also at the deeper, unconscious level—of this extraordinary thing called the mind, with its frontiers of the recognizable. And can this mind —which is the result of time in both the chronological and the psychological sense—with all its demands, with all its variances and influences, be creative? Because that is what is needed, surely—a mind that is not merely productive or inventive, but in a state of creativeness which is not the product of the mind.

I do not know if I am making myself clear. This is a difficult thing to go into, and it will mean very little unless you have followed what has been said this evening—followed it, not just verbally, but at the same time watching your own mind.

In what we call thinking there is always a thinker apart from the thought, an observer different from the observed. But it is thought that has produced the thinker; there is no entity as the thinker who produces thought. Thought, which is the reaction of memory, produces the thinker. If there is no thinking, there is no 'I'—though this is contrary to what you have always been told. You have accepted the idea that there is a permanent 'I'—which you call the *Atman,* the higher self, and all the rest of it—that produces thought. To me this is sheer nonsense—it does not matter what the books say. What is important is for you to find out the truth of the matter for yourself. As long as there is this division of the thinker and the thought, as long as there is an experiencer who is experiencing, the mind is held within the frontiers of the recognizable, and is therefore limited. It is caught in the process of accumulation, attachment, and is therefore in a state of perpetual self-contradiction.

So in the mind there is this division of the experiencer and the experienced, the observer and the observed. Knowing this fact and recognizing its own limitations, how is the mind to go beyond itself? Because it is only when the mind goes beyond itself that there is creation. Creation cannot take place within the field of the experiencer and the experienced, the thinker and the thought, because in that field everything is in a state of conflict; there is confusion, misery. As long as there is the experiencer and the experienced, the thinker and the thought, there is a division, a contradiction, and hence a ceaseless struggle to bring the two together, to build a bridge between them. As long as that division exists, the mind is held within the frontiers of the recognizable; and what is recognized is not the new. Truth cannot be recognized. What you recognize you already know, and what you know is not what *is.*

Now, how is the mind to free itself from the known? For only in the state of unknowingness is there creation, not within the field of the known. Being the result of time, which is the known, how is the mind to die to the known?

Sirs, there is no answer, there is no system by which you can make the mind new, fresh, young, innocent. As long as the mind is functioning within the field of the known, it can never renew itself, it can never make itself totally free. So please listen to the question, and let the seed of the question penetrate into the unconscious; then you will find the answer as you live, as you function daily.

How is the mind to free itself from the known? It is only in that state of freedom from the known that there can be creation, which can then be translated as inventiveness, as the creativeness of an artist, as this or that—all of which is irrelevant, it has only social significance. God, or truth, is that state of freedom from the known;

it has nothing to do with your ideas *about* that state. The man who is seeking God will never find God. The man who practises a discipline, who does *puja* and all the rest of it, will never find out what is true, because he is still working within the field of the known. It is only when the mind is dead to everything that it has experienced, totally empty of the known—not blank, but empty, with a sense of complete unknowingness—, it is only then that reality comes into being.

February 15, 1959.

IV

TALK IN NEW DELHI

This evening I would like to suggest that we talk over the question of change and revolution; but before we go into it, I think it is very important to understand the relationship of the individual to society. The first thing to realize is that the problems of the individual, his sorrows and struggles, are also those of the world. The world is the individual; the individual is not different from the society in which he lives. That is why, without a radical transformation of the individual, society becomes a burden, an irresponsible continuity in which the individual is merely a cog.

There is a strong tendency to think that the individual is of little importance in modern society, and that everything possible must be done to control the individual, to shape his thought through propaganda, through sanctions, through the various means of mass communication. The individual himself wonders what he can do in a society which is so burdensome, which bears down on him with the weight of a mountain, and he feels almost helpless. Confronted with this mass of confusion, deterioration, war, starvation and misery, the individual not unnaturally puts to himself the question, "What can I do?". And I think the answer to this question is that he cannot do anything, which is an obvious fact. He can't prevent a war, he can't do away with starvation, he can't put a stop to religious bigotry, or to the historical process of nationalism, with all its conflicts.

So I think to put such a question is inherently wrong. The individual's responsibility is not to society, but to himself. And if he is responsible to himself, he will act upon society—but not the other way round. Obviously the individual can't do anything about this social confusion; but when he begins to clear up his own confusion, his self-contradiction, his own violence and fears, then such an individual has an extraordinary importance in society. I think very few of us realize this. Seeing that we cannot do anything on a world scale, we invariably do nothing at all, which is really an escape from the action within oneself which will bring about a radical change.

So I am talking to you as one individual to another. We are not communicating with each other as Indians, or Americans, or Russians, or Chinese, nor as members of any particular group. We are talking things over as two human beings, not as a layman and a specialist. If that much is clear between us, we can proceed.

The individual is obviously of the greatest significance in society, because it is only the individual who is capable of creative activity, not the mass—and I shall explain presently what I mean by that word 'creative'. If you see this fact, then you will also realize that what you are in yourself is of the highest importance. Your capacity to think, to function with wholeness, with an integration in which there is no self-contra-

diction—this has an enormous significance.

We see that if there is to be any real change in the world—and there must be a real change—, then you and I as individuals will have to transform ourselves. Unless there is a radical change in each one of us, life becomes an endless imitation, ultimately leading to boredom, frustration and hopelessness.

Now, what do we mean by change? Surely, change under compulsion is no change at all. If I change because society forces me to change, it is merely an adjustment according to convenience, a conformity brought about by pressure, by fear.

Most of us change only under compulsion, through fear, through some form of reward or punishment. Psychologically, this is the actual fact. And when we are forced to change, it is merely an outward conformity, while inwardly we remain the same. I may change because my family or the society in which I live influences me to do so, or because the government requires that I act in a certain way; but this is only an adjustment, it is not change, and inwardly I am still greedy, envious, ambitious, frustrated, sorrowful, fearful. I have outwardly conformed to a new pattern; I have not changed radically within myself. And is it possible for me as a human being to be in a state of continuous change, revolution, which is not the result of any compulsion or promise of reward?

Surely, anything I do because of compulsion, fear, imitation, or reward, is within the field of time, and it breeds habit. I do the thing over and over again until habit is established, and this habit is within the field of time. So there can be no real change, no revolution, within the field of time; there can only be adjustment, conformity, imitation, habit. Change requires a total perception or awareness of all that is implied in imitation, conformity, and this total perception frees the mind to change radically. I am just introducing it to you, so that you and I can think it out together.

As I said, any form of change through compulsion is no change at all, which I think is fairly obvious. If you force your child to do something, he will do it through fear, but there is no understanding, no comprehension of what is involved. When action is born of fear, outwardly it may appear to be a change, but actually it is not.

Now let us find out if it is possible to understand and free the mind from fear, so that there is a change without effort. All effort to change implies an inducement, does it not? When I make an effort to change, it is in order to gain, to avoid, or to become something; therefore there is no radical change at all. I think this fact must be very clearly understood by each one of us if there is to be a fundamental change.

If we are well off and have a good job, if we are fairly well-to-do, most of us are contented and do not want anything changed; we just want to carry on as we are. We have fallen into a certain habit, a certain comfortable groove, and we want to continue in that state of endless limitation. But the wave of life does not function in that way, it is always beating upon and breaking down the walls of security which we have built around ourselves. Our desire to be secure right through, psychologically as well as physically, is constantly being challenged by the movement of life, which like a restless sea is always pounding on the shore. And nothing can withstand that pounding; however much one may cling to inward security, life will not allow it to exist for long. So there is a contradiction between the movement of life and our desire to be secure; and out of this comes fear in all its various forms.

If we can understand fear, perhaps in the very process of that understanding there will be the cessation of fear, and therefore a fundamental change without effort.

What is fear? I do not know if you have ever thought about it. We are going to examine it now; but if you merely follow verbally what is said and are not aware of your own fear, then you will not understand and will not be free of fear.

After all, these meetings are intended, not merely to stimulate you, but to help to bring about a change in the quality of the mind. That is where there must be a revolution: in the quality of the mind itself. And that revolution can take place only if you are aware of your own fear, and are capable of looking at it directly.

Fear is a sorrowful, a dreadful thing, and it is always following most of us like a shadow. One may not be aware of it, but deep down it is there: the fear of death, the fear of failure, the fear of losing a job, the fear of what the neighbours will say, the fear of one's wife or husband, and so on. There are fears of which one is conscious, and fears of which one is unaware. I am not talking about a particular form of fear, but of the whole sense of fear; because unless the mind is free from all sense of fear, which is not to cover it up, thought cannot function with clarity, with perception; there is always apprehension, confusion. So it is absolutely essential for the individual to be free from fear in all its forms.

Now, how does fear arise? Is there fear when you are actually confronted with the fact? Please follow this closely. Is there fear when you are face to face with the fact of death, let us say? Surely, when you are directly confronted with the fact, there is no fear, because in that moment the challenge demands your action and you respond, you act. Fear arises only before or after the event. I am afraid of death in the future. I am afraid of what may happen if I become ill—I may lose my job. Or I am afraid at the thought of what has already happened, or what nearly happened. So my fear is always linked to the past or to the future, it is always within the brackets of time, is it not? Fear is the result of my thinking about the past, and of my thinking about the future. If you observe very carefully you will see that there is no fear of the present. That is because, when there is full awareness of the present, neither the past nor the future exists. I do not know if I am making myself clear on this point.

Knowing that I shall die in the future, I am afraid of death, of what is going to be. I have seen death in the past, and that has awakened in me fear of what is going to happen in the future. So my mind is never fully aware of the present—which does not mean that I must live thoughtlessly in the present. I am talking about an awareness of the present which is not contaminated by past fear or future fear, and which is therefore limitless.

This is very difficult to understand unless you experience for yourself what I am talking about—or rather, unless you observe the actual arising of fear. Fear comes into being only when thought is caught in the past as memory, or in the future as anticipation. So time is the factor of fear, and until the mind is free of time there can be no radical wiping away of fear. It sounds complicated, but it is not. We are used to resisting fear, to disciplining ourselves against it. We say that we must not think about the past or the future, that we must live only in the present; therefore we build a wall of resistance against the past and the future, and try to make the best of the present, which is a very shallow way of

living. If that is clear, let us look again at the whole process of fear.

Being afraid, how am I to resolve fear? I may resist fear, I may escape from it; but resistance and escape do not wipe away fear. How then am I to approach fear, how am I to understand and resolve it without effort? The moment I make an effort to be free of fear, I am exercising will, which is a form of resistance; and resistance does not bring understanding. So this habit of effort must go—that is the first thing I have to realize. My mind is caught in the habit of condemning, resisting fear, which prevents the understanding of fear. If I want to understand fear, there must be no resistance, no defence-mechanism in operation with regard to that particular feeling which I call fear. And then what happens? What happens when the mind is free from the habit of resisting or running away from fear through reading books, listening to the radio, and through the various other forms of escape with which we are all familiar? Then, surely, the mind is capable of looking directly at that feeling which it calls fear.

Now, can the mind look at anything without naming it? Can I look at a flower, at the moonlight on the water, at an insect, at a feeling, without verbalizing it, without giving it a name? Because verbalizing, giving a name to what is perceived, is a distraction from perceiving, is it not?

Please, sirs, I hope you are actually doing this, experimenting to find out whether you can look at your fear without naming it. Can you look at a flower without giving it a name, without saying "It is lovely", "It is yellow", "I like that flower", "I don't like that flower"—without all the chattering of the mind that comes into operation when you look at something? Try it and you will find that it is one of the most difficult things to do. This chattering of the mind, this verbalization in terms of condemnation or admiration, is a habit that prevents direct perception.

So you are now aware of your fear; you know you are afraid. Can you look at it without condemnation or acceptance? Are you looking at it through the focus of the word 'fear', or are you aware of that feeling without the word?

Sirs, let us take another example. Most of us are idolatrous—which means that the symbol becomes extraordinarily significant. We worship not only the idol made by the hand, but also the ideal created by thought. Now, an idolatrous mind is not a free mind. An idolatrous mind can never think clearly, perceptively. The man who has an ideal is obviously not very thoughtful. I know it is the fashion to have ideals, it is the respectable escape from the actual fact, and that is why ideals become all-important. But however much you may pursue the ideal of non-violence, for example, the actual fact is that you are violent.

So the idealistic mind is idolatrous; being violent, it worships the ideal of non-violence, and thereby lives in a state of self-contradiction. The ideal of non-violence is merely the mind's reaction against its own violence; and if it is to be free of both, the mind must be aware of the fact of its violence, but not in relation to the opposite, which it calls non-violence. Then one can look at violence, observe it with one's whole being, which is not to condemn it, or say that it is inevitable in life.

Now, are you aware of your fear in that way? Are you aware of the feeling without the word? That is, can you look at the feeling without verbalizing it—which is really to give your whole attention to the feeling, is it not? There is then no distraction, no verbal screen between you and what is being observed. That is true perception,

surely: when the mind is not chattering, but sees the fact entirely, without the word coming in between.

This observation of fear without verbalization is in itself discipline; it is not a discipline imposed upon the mind. I hope this is clear, because it is very important to understand it. The observation of fear is in itself discipline. You don't have to exercise discipline in order to observe. The exercising of discipline in order to observe, prevents observation; it blocks perception. But when you see the falseness of disciplining the mind to observe, that very perception brings its own discipline.

If you want to understand something, if you want to understand fear, you must obviously give your whole attention to it. Do not say: "How am I to give my whole attention without discipline?" That is a wrong question which will receive a wrong answer. First see the truth that to understand your fear, you must give it your whole attention, and that there can be no attention as long as you run away from fear, or condemn it. This condemnation and escape is a habit which you have fallen into, and habit cannot be wiped away by any discipline. The disciplining of the mind to wipe away habit merely creates another habit. But in observing fear without verbalization, without condemnation or justification, there is a spontaneous discipline from moment to moment—which means that the mind is free from the habit of discipline.

I wonder how many of you are following all this? Perhaps you are too tired at the end of the day to follow it consciously; but if you just listen without a conscious effort to listen, I think you will find that listening is in itself an astonishing thing. If you listen rightly, a miracle takes place. The man who knows how to listen without effort, learns much more than the man who makes an effort to listen. When one listens easily, effortlessly, the mind can see what is true and what is false; it can see the truth in the false. So listen to what is being said, even though you may not be able to follow it consciously, through direct experience. After all, the deep, fundamental responses of human beings are anonymous. It is not that I am telling you something, which you then understand, but when the mind is in a state of listening there is an understanding which is neither yours nor mine; and it is this effortless understanding that brings about a fundamental revolution.

To go back, fear exists only within the brackets of time, where there is no real change but merely reaction. Communism, for example, is a reaction from capitalism, just as bravery is a reaction from fear. Where there is freedom, which is the absence of fear, there is a state which cannot be called bravery. It is a state of intelligence. That intelligence can meet problems without fear, and therefore understand them. When a mind that is afraid is confronted with a problem, whatever action it takes, only further confuses the problem.

So, freeing the mind is the action of intelligence. There is no definition of intelligence, and if you merely pursue a definition you will not be intelligent. But if you begin step by step to find out precisely what you are afraid of and why, then you are bound to discover that there is a division between the observer and the observed. Please follow this a little bit, sirs, I am only putting it differently.

There is the observer who says "I am afraid", and who is separate from the feeling which he calls fear. If, for example, I am afraid of what the neighbours might say, there is the feeling of fear, and the 'me' who is the experiencer, the observer of that feeling. As long as there is this division between the

observer and the observed, between the 'me' who is afraid and the feeling of being afraid, there can be no ending of fear. The ending of fear comes about only when you begin to analyze and examine very carefully the whole process of fear, and discover for yourself that the observer is not different from the observed. There is fear because the observer in himself is afraid, so it is not a matter of being free from the fear of a particular thing. Freedom from the fear of something is a reaction, and is therefore not freedom. When I am free from anger, that freedom is merely a reaction from anger, and therefore it is not freedom. When I am free *from* violence, that freedom is again only a reaction from violence. There is a freedom which is not freedom *from* something, and which is the highest form of intelligence; but that freedom can come into being only when one goes very deeply into this whole question of fear.

Now, let us look at another problem, which is this: why do we have ideals? Is it not a waste of time? Do not ideals prevent the perception of what actually *is*? I know most of you have ideals: the ideal of nobility, the ideal of chastity, the ideal of non-violence, and many more. Why? Do they really help you to get rid of what *is*? I am avaricious, acquisitive, envious, let us say, and I have the ideal of renunciation. Now, why should I have that ideal at all? We say the ideal is necessary because it will act as a lever, as a means of getting rid of avariciousness. But is that so? Surely, the mind can be free of greed, or whatever it is, only when it applies itself to the problem, and not when it is distracted by an ideal. That is why I say the ideal is utter nonsense. Being violent, the mind pursues the ideal of non-violence, which is a vast mechanism of escape from the actual fact of violence. It is a self-deception. It has no validity at all. What has validity is violence and one's capacity to examine it. To pursue the ideal of non-violence, all the time struggling within oneself not to be violent, is another form of violence.

So what matters is not the ideal, but the fact and your capacity to face the fact. You cannot face the fact of your anger, your violence, as long as you have an ideal, because the ideal is fictitious, fallacious, it has no reality. To understand your violence, you must give your whole attention to it, and you cannot give your whole attention to it if you have an ideal. Idealism is merely one of the habits that we have, and India is drowning in this habit. "He is a noble man, he has ideals and conforms to them"—you know all the nonsense we talk. The simple fact is that we are violent; and it is only when we look at our violence without justification or condemnation that we can go into it. The moment one's mind ceases to justify or condemn violence, it is already free to examine the structure of violence.

Fear expresses itself in different forms. There is not only fear as despair, but also fear as hope, and most of us are caught in the chasm between the two. Being in despair, we run to hope; but if we begin to understand the whole process of fear, then there is neither hope nor despair.

Sirs, I do not know if you have ever tried pursuing virtue to its limit and examining it without acceptance or rejection. Try it sometime, try pursuing and looking at virtue without justifying or condemning it, and you will find that you come to a point in the understanding of virtue which is not merely a social convenience or conformity to an idealistic pattern. You will come to a point when the mind is free from the whole idea of virtue, and therefore faces a state of nothingness.

Again, sirs, please listen before you agree or disagree; just listen, and let the words sink into your unconscious.

The mind is at present cluttered with ideas, is it not? The mind is the result of experience; the mind is fearful, it knows hope and despair, greed and the ideal of non-greed. Being the result of time, the mind can function only within the field of time; and within that field there is no change. Change there is merely imitation or reaction, and therefore it is not a revolution.

Now, if the mind can push more and more deeply into itself, you will find that it comes to a point when there is complete nothingness, a total void, which is not the void of despair. Hope and despair are both the outcome of fear; and when you have deeply pursued fear and gone beyond it, you will come to this state of nothingness, a sense of complete void which is not related to despair. It is only in this state that there is a revolution, a radical transformation in the quality of the mind itself.

But this state of nothingness is not an ideal to be pursued. It has nothing to do with the inventions of the mind. The mind cannot comprehend it, for it is much too vast. But what the mind can do is to free itself from all its chattering, from all its pettiness, from all its stupidities, its envy, greed, fear. When the mind is silent there is the coming into being of this sense of complete nothingness which is the very essence of humility. It is only then that there is a radical transformation in the quality of the mind, and it is only such a mind that is creative.

February 18, 1959.

V

TALK IN NEW DELHI

This evening I would like to talk about what is confusion and what is clarity. But before we go into that, I think we ought to understand for ourselves what is the intention of these talks. It would be a great pity if we listened merely to find answers to our problems. As I have often pointed out, and I hope you will not mind if I say it again, there is only the problem, there is no answer; for in the understanding of the problem lies its dissolution.

So I think it would be wise to listen, not in order to find an answer or to receive instructions, but to discover for oneself, in the very process of listening, the truth about confusion and clarity.

Most of us are satisfied with descriptions, with answers, with explanations, and we think we have found a solution to our problems. That is why we are so eager to repeat, to quote, to explain, to formulate. But all those things, to me, are barriers to comprehension. A man who quotes is obviously incapable of clear thinking. He relies on authority for his thought. But even though there is in the world every form of authority seeking to drive man in a particular direction, there are more and more individuals who are aware of the problem, and who have not only discarded authority but are trying to discover for themselves the whole significance of living.

Now, either we give a meaning to life, or we are living. The man who gives a meaning to life, who seeks what he calls the goal of life, is obviously not living. He wants to find something of greater significance than the very fact of existing and living, so he creates a Utopia, a speculative formulation of what life should be, and according to that formula he guides his life.

That is exactly what I *don't* propose to do. We have innumerable problems, some of them quite suffocating, and they are there to be understood, not from any particular point of view, but as part of the total process of living.

There are people who perceive the problems of life and who want to resolve them according to certain beliefs and dogmas, either religious or politico-economic; they look at the discords and horrors of man's existence only from that narrow point of view, and they think that through some form of belief or legislation they can bring about a transformation in the world. And there are scientists who are only concerned with the exploration of matter, and going upward into the sky. All these people are approaching the problems of existence from a particular point of view, are they not? They are all breaking up into segments the process of living. But living, surely, is a total process, it is not a matter of departmental behaviour. At present the individual is one thing in the government, and some thing else in his private life; he is an economist, or a Communist, or a businessman, and that has nothing to do with his hunger for reality, his longing to find out the truth of death, of meditation, of all the extraordinary things that comprise life.

So I think it would be a very great pity if you as an individual were to listen to all this with a fragmented mind, with a partial or specialized mind. Life is not fragmentary, and it must be approached totally, fully, and as deeply as possible.

What is important, it seems to me, is to understand this vast ocean of life with its immeasurable loveliness and reality, its shallowness and great depths, its joy, its misery, its strife and pain. The struggle to earn a livelihood, the sense of despair, of utter hopelessness, the mistakes and accidents, the deep delving into oneself through meditation and discovering that reality which is beyond time—all this is life, and to see the full significance of it, the mind must be very clear. There must be no shadow of confusion. The mind must be capable of exploring every untrodden region of its own being without accumulating what is discovered; because the mind that accumulates obviously cannot go very far. I am not being rhetorical but merely factual. When the mind is burdened with a great deal of experience, how can it experience anything anew? It is the mind that is young, fresh, innocent, the mind that is always moving, that has no accumulation of experience, no refuge—it is only such a mind that can understand life as a totality.

To have this extraordinary perception of the immensity, the immeasurableness of life, our minds must be very clear, very precise. And precision of the mind is not a matter of following instructions; it does not come about through discipline or obedience. Precision comes to the mind only when one understands this whole process of confusion in which most of us are living. Most people—from the biggest politician to the poorest clerk who goes on his bicycle every day to repeat some ugly routine of business—are confused; and without understanding what it is that brings about this sorrowful state of confusion, the search for clarity is merely an evasion, an escape.

Very few of us are willing to admit that we are wholly confused. We say: "I am partly confused, but there is another part of me which is very clear, and with this clarity I am going to clear up my partial confusion". Or, if you admit you are totally confused, you say: "I shall go to somebody who will tell me what to do to clear up my confusion". But when you choose a *guru* or a leader to help you, you are choosing out of your own confusion; therefore your choice is bound to be equally confused. (*Laughter*). Don't laugh, sirs, this is actually what is happening in the political world, and also in your so-called religious life, with its *gurus*,

beliefs, philosophies and disciplines; it is happening in all the ways of your existence. Being confused, you turn to someone who promises to clear up your confusion. So dictatorships appear; ruthless systems of exploitation come into being, both political and so-called spiritual.

So first of all, we have to realize that confusion can never be cleared up for us by another, and this is a very difficult thing for most of us to face. The mind does not want to see the fact that there is no one who can help it to be clear. But as long as you are confused, your choice of a leader or a *guru* is the result of your confusion; and if you are *not* confused, you will not create the leader, the *guru,* the hierarchical system of authority.

The simple fact is that the mind is confused. If you really look at your own mind you will see that you are in a state of confusion, politically, religiously and in every way. You don't know what is the right thing to do, whom to follow, or whether to follow anyone at all. Specialists contradict other specialists. The Communists, the capitalists, and the various religious sects are all working against each other. So the mind is confused, and whatever it chooses or decides to do in its confusion is bound to bring about still further confusion, further conflict and misery.

Now, why is there confusion? I am going to inquire into it, and please listen to what is being said without rejecting or accepting it. Just listen as you would listen to anything worth while. First see the truth that a mind that chooses out of confusion can only breed furher confusion. That is one fact. Another fact is this: that when the mind says it is only partially confused and thinks there is a part of itself which is clear—the higher self, the *Atman,* and all that business—, it is still totally confused. The mind that says "There is a part of me which is not confused", is deceiving itself. If there were any part of you which is very clear, obviously that clarity would wipe away all confusion. Where there is clarity there is no darkness; there is only clarity. So it is sheer nonsense to think there is part of yourself, a spiritual essence, which is clear, and that only the material world is in a state of confusion. That idea is an invention of the mind which prevents you from looking at the fact. The fact is that there is only confusion, so you must be aware of this fact and not deceive yourself.

What brings about this state of confusion? Essentially, it is the urge to be different from what you are, which is encouraged by educational and other influences that make you think you must have ideals. Where there is an urge to be different there is an endless process of imitation, which means following the pattern of authority. Please see the truth of this. When you desire to be different from what you are, you begin to follow, you have standards, formulas, ideals, which means there is a contradiction between what you are and what you think you *should* be. Just observe this contradiction in yourself. Do not accept or deny what I am saying, for that would be very silly—if I may use that word without any derogatory significance. Surely the moment you want to be different from what you are, without understanding what you are, you have set in motion the process of self-contradiction; and this very self-contradiction is the way of imitation. If you are lazy, for example, you have the ideal of *not* being lazy, and you strive to live up to your ideal; and in that very striving you have established the pattern of imitation.

So there is an inward going, and an outward going. The outward going you call materialistic, and the inward

going you consider to be spiritual. But the man who goes inward in the sense of pursuing an ideal, who struggles to change himself through discipline and all the rest of it—the mind of such a man becomes a battle-field of contradictory desires, does it not? Psychologically, inwardly he has established the pattern of imitation, of authority, and he struggles to live according to that pattern. So your inward going is really as materialistic as your outward going—materialistic in the sense of being profitable. Outwardly you want more power, a better position, greater prestige, you want more land, more possessions; and inwardly you want to be something other than what you are. So both are a form of self-interest, self-perpetuation.

These are facts, they are not my invention. I am merely exposing the facts. You probably won't like it, because you think you are a religious person, and therefore you will discard all this. But if you are capable of examining yourself very clearly, precisely, impartially, you will see that there is this desire to be different, both inwardly and outwardly; hence there is imitation and the creation of authority, and therefore an endless contradiction between what *is* and what *should* be. This state of self-contradiction is the beginning of confusion.

Now, there is an inward going which is not motivated by the desire to be different, and therefore it does not create the self-contradiction which breeds confusion. That is the true inward going—seeing the fact as it is without trying to change it. To see the fact that one is lazy, that authority in various forms dominates one's life—to see this fact and not try to alter it, not say "I must not be lazy, I must be free from authority", is surely of the greatest importance, because it does not create the opposite and bring about the confusion of self-contradiction. But simply to perceive the fact is an extraordinarily difficult thing to do, because our minds are always comparing, always desiring to change what *is* into something else.

Take authority, for example. When you are aware that you are being compelled, pushed around, when you know that you have to obey, what happens? There is also a movement of the opposite, is there not? That is, you feel that you must be free. So in the very fact of obedience, there is the contradiction of that obedience. This contradiction is inevitable as long as you do not understand the whole process of authority—not why you must keep to the right or the left side of the road, which is obvious, but why there is the authority of the *guru,* why you treat a particular book with such extraordinary reverence, and all the rest of it. If you really go into it, you will see that the mind wants to be certain, secure; it wants to be led, guided, so that it will have no struggle, no pain, no feeling of aloneness. As long as the mind does not see this fact and merely seeks clarity, inwardly or outwardly, there is bound to be authority; and that authority is the result of your confusion, which is the outcome of self-contradiction.

So one begins to see that every desire has its own equal and opposite response. Do you understand? Am I making myself clear? Surely, desire creates its own opposite. In other words, all desire is self-contradictory. I desire to be good, to be kind, to be affectionate, and at the same time there is the desire to be violent, to be angry, to be jealous, and all the rest of it. The very urge to be something creates the opposite desire, does it not? No?

Sirs, let me put it in a different way. Can you have a desire without its opposite? Surely not. I want to be kind,

and yet I am brutal; I want to be non-violent, and I am full of violence. So desire is contradictory in itself—which does not mean that there must be no desire at all. On the contrary. If you observe yourself as we go along, you will see that something quite different comes into being—not a mind that is desireless.

Confusion arises where there is the urge to be different. That is an important fact to discover for oneself. And it is also important to see the truth that every desire has its own opposite.

Now, seeing the truth of something is an immediate perception, it is not a disputatious, analytical approach in which you finally say "Yes, I understand". Perception of what is true takes place when the mind is in a state of real inquiry, which means that it is not defending, nor is it on the offensive. You can see the truth as the truth, the false as the false, and the truth in the false, only when your mind is very clear and simple, that is, when it is uncluttered with thoughts, with experiences, with its own hopes and fears. To see the truth of something, the mind must be fresh, innocent, which is really a state of self-abnegation.

I was saying that there is confusion when there is self-contradiction, which arises with the desire to be different; and the desire to be different sets going various systems of imitation and authority. You must see the truth of this for yourself—not by my persuasion, for then you don't see it at all, and you will again be persuaded or influenced by somebody else. There is no good influence; all influence is evil, just as all authority is; and the more absolute the authority, the more absolute the evil. So it is of the utmost importance for you to see the truth of this for yourself: that there is confusion when there is self-contradiction, which is born of the desire to be different; and this desire breeds imitation and authority.

Now, if you see that simple fact, then the question arises, "Must there not be the understanding of what I am?" And the understanding of what you are is the real inward going; it is not a reaction to or the rejection of outward going. But you do not know what you are. You think you are the *Atman,* the higher self, this or that; whereas you are actually the result of innumerable influences, of tradition, of various environmental pressures, and so on. The fact is that you are conditioned by the culture in which you were born. Just as a Communist is conditioned not to believe in God at all, to say it is sheer nonsense, so you are brought up and conditioned as a Hindu, and you believe accordingly.

To find out what you are requires the comprehension from moment to moment, not only of the outward influences which have moulded your life, but also of the subtle influences and urges of the unconscious, of which you are generally unaware. What you are is not static; it is moving, changing all the time. It is never a permanent state, and in the perception of that impermanency there is no contradiction. I do not know if you see the truth of this. What you are is never fixed, permanent. You would like it to be permanent, you would like to be able to say "I am the ultimate spiritual self, which is permanent", because in that 'permanent' state you think you will have found happiness, security, God, and all the rest of the business. Whereas, to see what you are at each moment and to pursue what you see to its fullest depth and width, is the true inward going; and this true inward going will never create self-contradiction and confusion, because there is complete abandonment at each moment of what has been observed, experienced, learnt. It is the mind that has assumed a position, that has ex-

perienced and says "I know", that wants to be different—it is only such a mind that creates self-contradiction and therefore confusion.

You are obviously the result of influence. Your mind is being influenced all the time by newspapers, by the radio, by speeches, by your wife or husband, by society, by traditions, dogmas, beliefs. You are influenced by what you eat, by what you wear, by the climate you live in, by the daily routine you follow, and so on. But to know all this, to be aware of these innumerable influences from moment to moment without acceptance or rejection, is to begin to be free of them; because, obviously, a mind that is very alert is not easily influenced. It is the mind that is unaware of itself, that is crippled by tradition, held in the bondage of time —it is only such a mind that is always being influenced.

To see at every moment what actually *is* requires a perception, an alertness, an awareness in which there is no accumulation; because what *is* is constantly changing. Today you are not what you were yesterday; what you were yesterday has been modified by a series of events in time. Thought moves from point to point in time; it is never absolute, never fixed, never the same. What *is* is never static. Therefore you don't have to introduce the idea that you must be different. The very perception of the fact of what *is* is sufficient; it brings about its own movement of change, which is the transformation of what *is*.

So a mind that is confused, yet seeks to become clear, creates a contradiction in itself and thereby increases its own confusion; and whether it goes outward or inward, a confused mind builds up systems, disciplines, contradictions, compulsions, which only breed further misery. The man who goes outward you call materialistic, and the man who turns inward you call spiritual; but they are both self-contradictory. Whereas, there is a true inward going which is not a reaction, not the opposite of outward going. It is the simple perception of what *is*, and this is very important to understand.

Sirs, what happens when a mind that is lazy becomes aware of its own laziness? It immediately says, "I must discipline myself not to be lazy, I must get up early every morning, I must do this, I must not do that." Now, laziness is an indication of a disciplined mind. The mind that disciplines itself is lazy. (*Laughter*). Sirs, don't laugh it off, just see the truth of it. Becoming aware that I am lazy, I force myself to get up early every morning, to take exercise, to sit quietly in so-called meditation, and all the rest of it. Now, what has happened? I have merely set going another habit of thoughtlessness. Thoughtlessness is the very essence of a lazy mind. When you see that you are lazy and force yourself *not* to be lazy, that very forcing breeds contradiction and further confusion. The fact is that you are lazy. Look at that fact, go into it, uncover all the factors that are making you lazy. Don't try to change the fact, but watch laziness in operation, be aware of it from moment to moment. Then you don't have to discipline yourself. The mind is alert every minute to see when it is lazy, and such a mind is not a confused mind.

So there is confusion only when there is an outward going or an inward going which becomes a contradiction. Perception is neither inward going nor outward going; it is seeing things as they are at every moment without prejudice, without colour, without evaluation. Only then is there clarity. Such a mind has no untrodden regions, either on the surface or inwardly, because it is so alert, so watchful, so aware that its

every movement is perceived, examined and understood.

All that I am saying is that a clear mind is a perceptive mind. The more there is true perception, in the sense of self-knowledge, the deeper that perception penetrates within—but not in terms of time. When there is self-knowledge, which is a perceiving of the continuous movement of what *is*, not only at the conscious level but deep down in the unconscious, then you will find that there comes a state which is not measurable by the mind. The mind is then extraordinarily clear, it has clarity without a shadow; and only such a mind is capable of receiving what is true.

February 22, 1959

VI

TALK IN NEW DELHI

May I suggest that we talk over together this evening the question of what is self-knowledge. It is a rather complex problem, and like many other problems of life, it has no final answer. Most of us easily accept the explanations of self-knowledge which we hear from another, or read in psychological or religious books, and it would be a great pity if we merely remained at that level. Instead, let us this evening see if we can penetrate into the depths of our own consciousness, which is to experience directly the total process of our own thinking and feeling, the totality of our hopes and our fears.

Before we go further, I think it is important for you to be aware of how you are listening to what is being said. I shall try to go into this whole question of self-knowledge; but if you merely listened to the explanations and were satisfied with words—that, it seems to me would be a most fruitless thing to do. It would be like a hungry man listening to a lot of words and explanations about the harvest, or the preparation of food, hoping that his hunger would thereby be satisfied. Actually, most of us are in that position. We are not hungry in the deep sense of the word, we are not really eager to understand the whole process of the mind, the totality of our own thoughts and feelings. That is why we are so easily satisfied by explanations and approach our many problems at the explanatory level; and I think that both the man who merely explains, and the person who is satisfied with explanations are living very superficially.

Do explanations ever resolve any vital problem? I may explain to you the falseness of nationalism, its corrupting, destructive and deteriorating effect; but though you may see the validity of such an explanation, it obviously does not free you from nationalism. The fact is that you enjoy the feeling of being nationalistic; you like belonging to a particular group, it is profitable to you both emotionally and economically. So explanations never bring about understanding, they never really solve any vital problem. A dentist may tell you that taking too much sugar is very bad for your teeth, and he may even show you a great deal of evidence in support of his statement; but you like sugar, and you go on taking it in large quantities. So explanation is one thing, and direct action is quite another. Either you are merely following the words, the explanations, or in the very process of listening you are directly experiencing what is being described—which has much more significance, far greater validity, greater vitality than being satisfied with words.

So let us be very clear about where explanations end, and real perception or experiencing begins. You can go only so far with explanations, and the rest

of the journey you must take by yourself. Most of us are not willing to take that journey, because we are lazy and easily satisfied with the obvious, which is always the explanation. But the vitality of direct action, experience, lies beyond the explanation, however obvious or subtle it may be.

That is why it is very important to experience directly the things that we are talking about, and not merely stop at the verbal level. I think it would be really fascinating if we could go into this whole problem of self-knowledge and find out what is the real basis of our thinking, the basis of all our actions, of our very being. If one can inquire into this step by step, in minute detail, and directly experience it, then I think one will go very far. After all, to go far one must begin near, and the near is the 'me', the self, this whole process of the mind. You may be a scientist or an engineer and master the technology of space travel; but the real journey is inward, and that is much more difficult, much deeper and more significant than mechanically going to the moon. The immeasurable is still within oneself.

So it is very important to comprehend where the verbal or intellectual explanation ends, and direct perception or experiencing begins. Explanation can never lead to reality. However satisfactory the explanation may be, it cannot give you the understanding that is born of direct perception, direct experience.

If you realize this very clearly, then you will never be satisfied with explanations, you will never quote, you will never turn to the authority of the *Gita* or the Bible. You may read as a mere intellectual amusement; but direct experience is worth infinitely more than what is taught in the books. A living dog is better than a dead lion. All the heroes in the books are dead lions, and their authority is disastrous. What you directly experience and know for yourself is far more valid than the explanations of all the various authorities, whether ancient or modern.

With that in mind, let us inquire into the process of self-knowledge. Like a sign-post, I am merely pointing the direction. The sign-post is not important at all. What is important is the man who is journeying. The speaker is not a *guru*, he is not an authority, he is not a guide. One has to take the inward journey alone—not as a reaction away from outward things, but as the inevitable process of trying to understand. The outer must lead to the inner, that is, to an understanding of the whole process of existence, in which there is no division as the outer and the inner.

To understand the whole process of existence, outwardly as well as inwardly, you must comprehend the ways of your own thinking; you must find out why you think what you think, which is to see the source of your thought. Without the discovery of that source, you have no real basis for inquiry, for action. Your action now is based on habit, on routine, on discipline, on your particular conditioning. There is an action which is entirely different from the habitual action of routine, of discipline, of conditioning; but such action comes only through self-knowledge, and that is why it is so necessary to understand oneself.

Now, what do we mean by knowledge? When we say "I know", what does it mean? I know you because I have been introduced to you. Having once met you, a picture of you remains in my mind, and when I meet again I recognize you. So knowing is a process of recognition, and we recognize through the background of past experience, which means that knowing is cumulative, additive; knowledge can be

added to. And when we say "I must know myself", we think the self is something stationary, static, fixed, and therefore recognizable. Or we have been told what the self is and have come to certain conclusions about it, and from that background we begin to recognize the self. So knowing is always a process of recognition, without which there is no knowledge. Knowledge is additive through recognition. This may seem complex, but it is actually very simple.

Knowing is one thing, and understanding is another. Knowing implies accumulation; it is a process of recognition through past experience. Each new experience is conditioned by and adds to previous knowledge. So knowing is additive, whereas understanding never is. When you say "I know you", you know me only from the background of a previous, static experience. You know me by my features, by my name, by what I have said to you, or by what others have said to you about me, and so on. All that knowledge is of yesterday. Since then I have undergone many experiences, many varieties of influence, and I may have changed tremendously. But you retain the memory of yesterday, and from that background you judge me today. So you say "I know you", when in fact you do not know me at all; but you find it very convenient to say "I know you", and move on.

Perhaps I am not making myself clear. Unless you understand this one simple thing, it is going to be very difficult for you to see the significance of this whole movement of self-knowledge.

When the mind says "I know", all that it knows is what has happened yesterday, or at some other time in the past. With that knowledge it approaches the present; but the present is changing from moment to moment. So the mind can never say "I know"; and this is very important, psychologically, to understand. The man who says "I know", does not know. You can never say "I have found truth", because truth is moving, living, dynamic, it is never still, never static, never the same; and that is the beauty, the splendour of truth.

To understand this thing called the 'me', the self, you must come to it without saying "I know", without accepting any authority. All authority is dead, and it does not bring about this creative search. Authority can guide you, shape you, tell you what to do and what not to do, but all that is still within the field of knowing; and burdened with the known you cannot follow that which is living, vital, moving. So the mind that sees the truth of this and wishes to inquire into itself will never say "I know"; therefore, being in a state of constant movement, it is able to observe that which is also never the same. This is the beginning of self-knowledge. I do not know if I am making myself clear.

Look, sirs, the self as we know it is a limited thing, but it is also living, moving, and a mind that is conditioned, bound by tradition, a mind that says "There is a higher self and a lower self" and all the rest of it—such a mind cannot possibly understand the self. I am not using the word 'self' in any significant spiritual sense; I mean by that word the self which functions daily, which thinks, feels, invents, hopes, wants, and is caught in conflict; the self which is biassed, which speculates, judges, seeks.

Is all this too difficult? I hope not. If it is, you can skip it, and perhaps I can put it differently.

We know the self as the 'me' which has property, which has qualities, which has certain relationships, which is conditioned by a particular culture, by the

many environmental influences, by the books it reads, the philosophies it studies, the techniques it learns. The mind which is jealous, which knows love and hate, hope and fear—all that is the self. The self is not only at the superficial level, it is not only the conscious mind functioning in our daily activities, but it is also the unconscious mind, which functions at a much deeper level. The totality of that consciousness is the self.

Now, from that centre, which is the self, all our thinking begins. Where there is a centre there is also a circumference, a frontier. The centre is the conscious as well as the unconscious thinker who knows, and the frontier is that which he seeks and which is also within the field of the known. So there is the thinker and the thought, the experiencer and the experienced, the observer and the observed. Don't accept or deny this, rather follow it, not just verbally, but through the explanation actually see how your own mind is working.

I want to know myself. Why? Because without knowing myself I have no ground upon which to build anything. I do not know whether my thoughts are valid, whether I am living in illusion, whether I am deceiving myself; I do not know why I struggle, why I have certain habits, and so on. Without knowing myself I am incapable of seeing clearly. So I must know myself, which means that I must understand my own mind. I must be aware of every reaction, of every thought, without any sense of condemnation or justification. I must be in a state of inquiry, which means looking at every thought, every feeling without prejudice, without the background of previous experience which says "This is good, that is bad; this I must keep, that I must discard".

All this is obvious, is it not? If I want to understand my son, I have to be aware of him as he is, study him without condemnation or comparison; I have to observe him when he is playing, when he is crying, when he is overeating, and so on. In the same way, if I want to understand myself, I must watch myself, without judgment in the mirror of relationship; I must be aware of what I say to you and how you react to me; I must observe how I talk to my servant, how I talk to my wife or husband, how I treat the busman and the coolie; I must know what I feel, what I think, and why. I must see the whole process of my thinking and feeling. This does not demand discipline at all. When you discipline yourself to observe, the discipline prevents you from observing, because discipline then becomes your habit. Where there is a real concern to find out, there is a constant observation which does not require the habit of discipline.

So this is the first thing to realize: that it is absolutely essential to know yourself, otherwise you have no basis for thought at all. You may be very erudite and have a big position, but that is all nonsense as long as you do not know yourself, because you will be walking in darkness.

To understand yourself there must be an awareness, a watchfulness, a state of observation in which there is not a trace of condemnation or justification; and to be in that state of observation without judging is an extraordinarily arduous task, because the weight of tradition is against you; your mind has been trained for centuries to judge, to condemn, to justify, to evaluate, to accept or deny. Don't say "How am I to get rid of this conditioning?", but see the truth that if you want to understand yourself, which is obviously of the highest importance, you must observe the operation of your own mind without any condemnation or comparison.

Now, why do you compare, why do you condemn? Isn't that one of the easiest things to do—to condemn? If you are a capitalist you condemn the communist, just as the communist condemns the capitalist. If you are a devout Christian, you obviously condemn Hinduism, or Islam, because it is the easy thing to do—to condemn and get on with it. Condemnation is really a reaction, and it is one of the indications of a lazy mind.

The same is true of comparison, is it not? Can a mind that compares ever understand? Sirs, don't agree or disagree, but watch yourself. When you compare your younger son with his older brother, do you understand the younger boy? And in the classroom, in so-called education, is not the sensitive child destroyed 'by comparing him with those who are older or more clever? Surely, comparison is also one of the indications of a slack mind, a thoughtless mind, a mind that is inherently lazy; and such a mind can never understand.

The next question is, what is thinking? Surely, what we call thinking is a reaction of memory, of one's conditioning. If I ask you a question with which you are familiar, your response is immediate, because the mechanism of memory operates instantly. There is no gap between the question and the answer. If I ask you a much more complex question, then between the question and the response there is a gap, a lapse of time during which the mind is looking in the storehouse of memory, going over all the things it has learnt to find an answer. Surely, that is what we call thinking—the response of memory.

Now, memory is always conditioned, is it not? You are conditioned as a Hindu, a Moslem, a communist, a capitalist, or whatever it is, and when I ask you a certain question, you reply according to your conditioning. If you are a devout Hindu and I ask "Do you believe in God?", you will say yes, because for centuries you have been educated, conditioned to believe. And if the same question is put to someone who has been conditioned *not* to believe in God, he will say "What nonsense are you talking?" So all our thinking, from the most superficial to the most complex, is a response of memory according to its conditioning.

The mind that says "I am going to inquire into myself", is already conditioned; it is conditioned as a Hindu, a Buddhist, a Christian, this or that. It is only in understanding this conditioning that the conditioning can be broken down. And obviously it *must* be broken down. It is absurd to be a Hindu, or a Christian, or a communist, or a socialist. We are human beings, and to solve the problems of life we must approach them as human beings, not as members of these conflicting groups. No system, no belief or ideology is going to solve our human problems. Starvation is a human problem, and we must tackle it together, not divided as capitalists and communists. Systems are no good at all in solving the basic problems of life; they only further condition our minds, which are already conditioned by tradition, by environmental influences, and so on.

Now, how is the conditioned mind to resolve its conditioning? Do you understand the question? You are conditioned as a Hindu, let us say, and you are totally unaware of that conditioning because you live in a society where practically everybody is Hindu and you have accepted it; so you never question it at all. But now someone is telling you that your mind is conditioned, and you have begun to see that it is true; so you say "How am I to be free from this conditioning?"

Sirs, freedom from a particular conditioning is still a conditioned state, is it not? Please follow this. To be free *from* something is a reaction, therefore it is not freedom at all. I will show you what I mean. Merely to free myself from nationalism is a reaction, because I want to be something else. My conditioning gives me pain, sorrow, and I say I must be free from it in order to be happy, that is, in order to be something else. In other words, I free myself from something in order to be in a more gratifying state, which is obviously a reaction; therefore it is not freedom. Freedom is not born of reaction, it is a state of mind in which there is no desire to be or not to be something.

If you see the truth of that, then the next question is, what does it mean to be free of conditioning? It means, surely, not freedom *from* something, or freedom to *be* something, but seeing the fact as it is. Let us say I am conditioned as a Hindu. I do not want to be free from my conditioning; I want to *see* it. And the moment I see it as it is, there is freedom, not as a reaction. I do not know if I am making myself clear on this point. I don't want to take examples, because examples can be refuted by other examples. But what is important is to think of it negatively, because negative thinking is direct thinking.

You see, there is positive thinking and negative thinking. Positive thinking is deciding what to do, how to break down one's conditioning by practising a system, a method, a discipline. In practising a method or a discipline in order to be free of conditioning, one has merely introduced a further conditioning, a new habit. That is positive thinking. Whereas negative thinking is to look at the fact of one's conditioning, and see the truth that no system or discipline can bring freedom from conditioning.

Sirs, many of you practise non-violence, you worship the ideal of non-violence, you everlastingly preach non-violence. That is the positive approach, which you know very well. But the truth is that you are violent; and the negative approach is simply to perceive that truth. To perceive the truth that you are violent is enough in itself. You don't have to do anything. The moment you act upon violence, you have introduced the fictitious ideal of non-violence.

I don't know if you see this. Let us say I am greedy. That is a fact, and I know it. I don't want to change greed into non-greed, to me that has no meaning, because I see that becoming non-greedy still has the qualities of greed. All becoming is obviously a form of greed. The mind is aware of the fact that it is greedy, and it also perceives that any move on its part to change greed is still within the field of greed. This very perception of what *is* is the resolution of it.

So the inquiry into the self must begin with a negative approach, because you don't know what the self is. You may think you know the self as a greedy man, as this or that; but the self is being influenced, it is undergoing constant change, and to understand it you must approach it, not positively, but negatively, obliquely.

Most minds are conditioned, and the breaking down of that conditioning does not come about through any resolution or determination, through any practice of discipline. It comes about only when there is a negative approach to one's conditioning. The mere perception of what *is* is enough in itself. Follow this and you will see why. When you understand the negative approach, which is to see the truth of it, its uselessness, its fictitious nature, then your mind, which is greedy, is no longer caught in

the fictitious process of trying to become non-greedy. Therefore it is free to look at what *is*, which is greed; and because the mind is free to look at greed, it is capable of dissolving greed. Try this the next time you are angry or violent. Don't condemn it, don't say it is right or wrong, but look at it. Just to look at the feeling, without naming it, without condemning or justifying it, is an extraordinary thing. The very word 'anger' is condemnatory, and when you look at the feeling without naming it, the verbal association with that feeling, through the word 'anger', ceases.

Go along with this, sirs; don't accept or reject what is being said, but just follow it whether you understand it or not.

To understand the whole process of the self, there must be a negative approach; because the conscious mind can never go consciously into the deep unconscious. You may be a great technician outwardly, on the conscious level, but inwardly, in the deep layers of the unconscious, there is the everlasting pull of the racial, instinctual, traditional responses; there all your ambitions, your frustrations, your hidden motives and fears are rampant, and you have to understand all that. To understand it, you must approach it negatively. The positive approach is always within the field of the known. But the negative approach frees the mind from the known, and therefore the mind can look at the problem anew, afresh, in a state of innocency.

Then you will discover that the self is not only the seeker, but also the process of seeking as well as that which is sought. The seeker is seeking peace of mind, and he practises a method by which to find what he seeks. The seeker, the seeking and the sought are all one and the same thing. When the seeker seeks what he wants, which is peace of mind, it is still within the field of the known. His seeking is a reaction from the conflicts of life, so the peace he is everlastingly pursuing is a projection of the known. Whereas, if the mind, seeing for itself the fictitiousness of that pursuit, is not concerned with peace at all, but with understanding its own conflicts, and therefore approaches them negatively, then there is the beginning of self-knowledge.

The understanding of oneself is a constant, timeless process. There is no end to self-knowledge. The moment you see the truth that the understanding of oneself is limitless, your mind is already freed from the known and therefore able to penetrate into the unknown. A mind that is tethered to the known can never move into the unknown. All your Gods, your Bibles, your *Gitas*, your Marxist books will not lead you very far. To go far you must begin near, which is to see that a mind hedged about, bound by the known, cannot proceed into the unknown.

The unknown is the total negation of the known, it is not a reaction from the known. So there must be an end to the game of the seeker and the sought. In other words, there must be an end to all seeking. Then only is there something new. All profound discoveries are made in this state, not when the mind is pursuing a projection of the known. It is when the mind ceases completely to move in the field of the known, when it does not project the known into the unknown—it is only then that there is the coming into being of an extraordinary state of creative newness which has nothing to do with the known. That is truth, that is reality, that is God, or whatever name you care to give it. But the name is not the thing.

So one must begin near, which is to empty the mind of all the things it has known—inwardly, psychologically, not

factually. You cannot forget where you live, that would be amnesia. But you have to wipe away, in the psychological sense, all that you have known as a man of experience, as a man of knowledge, as a man who has read, read, read, and who is controlled by what is known—all that must come to an end. What is known has always a centre, and therefore always a circumference, a recognizable frontier. The frontier ceases only when the centre ceases. Then the mind is unlimited, not measurable by man.

February 25, 1959.

VII

TALK IN NEW DELHI

This evening I think it would be worth while to talk over the very complex and intricate problem of time and life, and to see in what way they are related to each other. To do this one needs a very precise and penetrating mind, a mind that is not caught up in conclusions, in speculative theories, and is therefore capable of listening, which is really experiencing. But most of us have theories about time, about love, about death, we are full of speculative ideas and are satisfied to remain on the verbal or speculative level. We are like a man who is always ploughing and never sowing. And it seems to me that if one would experience, one must have the capacity to listen with one's whole being, as one does when one is really interested in something. Then, perhaps, listening is experiencing.

Now, to experience something directly, one must have a mind that is tentative, hesitant, that does not start from a conclusion or take a stand. Surely, to unravel a problem like death, or time, or love, it is essential to approach it with a sense of humility, with great hesitation, with a certain tenderness—if one can use that word without sentimentality. It is only then, I think, that we shall be able to experience the truth or the falseness of what is going to be said. One must perceive the false as well as the true, otherwise there is merely acceptance or denial. If one is capable of perceiving what is true and what is false, then experience has an extraordinary significance. It is an immediate response to challenge; there is no question of saying "I will think about it, I will go home and meditate upon it", which actually prevents the immediate response. Without perception there is no immediate response; and perception is really quite simple. One perceives, and that is all. There is no argumentation, no speculation, no system of thought. Either one sees, or one does not see; one comprehends, or one does not comprehend. He who does not comprehend will never come to comprehension by thinking about it, by seeking explanations. To seek explanations is to remain at the verbal, explanatory level. A man who actually experiences something does not seek an explanation. His own perception awakens the explanation.

And so, when we are discussing, talking over together any serious problem, it seems to me that one must have the intelligence, the tenderness to perceive what is false and what is true. Such perception is very difficult for most of us, because our minds are stuffed with so many ideas, cluttered up with so many conclusions, traditions, beliefs, and they are whirlpools of self-contradiction. But I think it is possible to discover for oneself what is false and what is true if one is aware of one's own conditioning and says: "I know I'm conditioned, and I'm not going to let the influences of that background interfere with my perception". Perception comes when there is humility,

a sense of hesitancy, of tenderness, not when there is dogmatic assertion or denial, or mere acceptance.

We are going to talk over together, as two individuals who are really concerned, the problem of death, of time, and that extraordinary thing called love. To really comprehend these things, we must feel our way into them as into an unknown realm, a region where the mind has never trodden, and this requires a delicate touch, a sensitive approach. That sensitivity is denied when you have an attitude of assertion or denial, which is obviously immature, the reaction of a thoughtless mind. So whether you are young or old, whether you are a technician with a good job, or a coolie, or a mother with many children, I would suggest that you approach these questions, which concern us all, without seeking an answer; for, as I said, there is no answer, and if you expect an answer at the end of the talk, you will be disappointed. But what you and I can do, as two individuals, is to explore the problem. It is much more important to explore than to discover. What matters is to keep on looking, examining, perceiving, without saying "I have found". The man who has found, has really not found; the man who says he knows, never knows. So it is with an attitude of learning, of feeling it out together, that you and I as two human beings are going to look into the problem.

I do not know if you have ever thought about death, or time, or that state which we call love. But before we begin to inquire into what is death, we must first know what life is—not life at any particular level, not the life of a scientist, or a parliamentarian, or a housewife, or a businessman. These are all included in examining what life is in our own daily existence. Without knowing what our living actually is, we can never find out what is the significance of life. So let us very carefully, advisedly, look into what we call living.

What is our living? What is the life we live from moment to moment, from day to day, from year to year? It is a constant strife, is it not? We ceaselessly struggle to adjust ourselves to society, to our neighbour, to our wife or husband, to the government, to the culture in which we live. There is an endless battle between ourselves and the environment, a constant turmoil of embitterment, routine, drudgery and boredom. We are forced to do things which we cordially dislike, so there is a contradiction, a series of conflicts and associations which strengthen memory. From this memory we act, we function. Most of us are not real human beings, but mere functionaries, and we have no time to think about these things; so we say "I will think about serious things when I retire".

The politician who goes in for government is not concerned with man, he is concerned with policies, systems, status. The writer is concerned with verbal expression, with competing, struggling to get ahead and make a name for himself—and therein lies the seed of his frustration. The man who hasn't arrived wants to arrive, the man who has little longs for more—these and many other conflicts make up the life we know from day to day. There is a passing joy, a love that soon withers, a sensation that becomes routine, a sense of utter boredom; our life is narrow, petty, shallow, and memory as experience overshadows it all. These are obvious facts of our daily existence, and at the end of it there is the inevitable: death. Death is the ending of everything that we have known, everything that we have experienced; and we are frightened of that ending. Fear is related to time

in the sense that the mind foresees the ending of all that it has known, and therefore projects the known into the future from the background of the past. Death is the unknown; and facing the unknown, the mind seeks the continuity of all that it has known.

So our life is a series of events with their causes and effects in the field of time. That is, I lived yesterday, with all its pleasures, passing joys, conflicts, sorrows, struggles, and with that burden of yesterday I live today, which obviously colours the mind of today; and this in turn shapes and distorts the mind of tomorrow. We know only this continuity, do we not? I know I lived yesterday; I know that today I am responding inadequately to certain challenges, and therefore suffer; and I know that tomorrow—if nothing happens, if there is no accident, if the sky does not fall on me—I shall carry on in the same pattern: going to the office, continuing with my struggles, my likes and dislikes, having the little pleasures of sex, going to the temple, and so on. Our life is a constant movement in the field of time, which is called continuity. That is all we know.

Have you been observing your own life, your own mind, and not merely listening to my description? If while listening you are watching your own mind, you will see that what is being said is true. You cannot refute, deny, or accept it. It is simply a fact. A little pain, a little pleasure, the vanity of achievement, abiding sorrows, deep frustrations, ambitions that can never be fulfilled, envy, jealousy, the fear of emptiness, loneliness, the fear of destruction—this is our life, the only life we know. We live and function within the field of the known.

Memory is the known. If you had no memory of yesterday and no memory of today, then obviously there would be no memory tomorrow. But the mind is not capable of freeing itself from memory, because it is itself the result of memory, and its functioning is within the field of time. So memory—the memory of every experience, of every thought, of every reaction—is a state of continuity, and that is what you are. If you say you are the *Atman*, the permanent soul, or the higher self, it is still within the field of the known, because you are merely repeating what you have been taught. You have read about the *Atman* and you like the idea, it satisfies you, it gives you a certain comfort, because life is transient and you hope there will be something permanent.

That is why the mind creates the concept of a permanent God, a permanent spiritual essence, a permanent state of peace. But all this is still within the field of the known. It is the reaction of the known to the unknown: death. The mind that has continuity is in perpetual fear of death, because death is an ending, the ending of the physical. So the mind says: "I have worked, I have suffered, I have experienced, and there must be a future for all that I have gathered, there must be some form of continuity". If my son dies, I say "He must live still, and I must meet him again". I want to meet him exactly as I knew him, never perceiving that life is a movement, a constant change. My only concern is to perpetuate that which I have known. All knowledge is based on the known. There is no knowledge of the unknown, however much you may speculatively translate the unknown in terms of the known.

The mind is a mechanism which by its very nature produces through memory the sense of its own continuity. This continuous mind knows there is an ending, so it believes in reincarnation, or clings to some other belief that offers hope of self-perpetuation. This

is what we do, this is a fact in our everyday experience, is it not?

Now, why are we so frightened of the coming to an end of all the things we have known? What is it that we have known? What do you know except your struggles, your miseries, your little pleasures and vanities, the appalling pettiness of your own thinking—'my wife', 'my house', 'my children', 'my possessions'—, the turmoil and travail of your daily existence? That is all most of us know, and we are frightened to let it go. So time plays an enormous role in our life—not only chronological time as yesterday, today and tomorrow, but also time in the psychological sense of fulfilling oneself, arriving, becoming something. Tomorrow has great significance for us, because tomorrow is the ideal: tomorrow I shall be non-violent, tomorrow I shall have a sense of love, humility, to-morrow I shall achieve greatness, tomorrow I shall reach God, tomorrow I shall find out what is true and know how to live. We are always becoming something within the field of time. The verb 'to become' has assumed extraordinary importance. If this verb is wiped away from the mind, there is then only a sense of being, which is timeless. But you cannot experience that state unless you feel out, perceive for yourself the significance of becoming. A man who is becoming is not living, and therefore he is in constant fear of death. The man who is living is free of becoming, and for him there is no death.

So time is the measure of the mind, and such a mind can function only within its own measure; it cannot function beyond its own measure, which is the measure of man. Within the field of time there is always fear—fear of death, fear of ending, fear of the future, the unknown. I do not know what is going to happen tomorrow; I may fail, I may lose my job, my son may die. I am well today, but tomorrow I may be ill. The very thought of tomorrow is the awakening of fear. I have known illness, I have suffered, and with that memory I live today in fear of tomorrow. So the beginning of fear is the knowledge of time, which is after all the state of a mind that has continuity.

Cause and effect are a continuous process within the field of time. A cause is never static, nor is the effect. What was an effect becomes the cause of still another effect. Follow all this, sirs, see it in your own life. The cause becomes an effect, and the effect becomes a cause. There is no fixed cause with a fixed effect, except perhaps in the case of seeds. An acorn can never become a mango, it will always become an oak. Cause and effect are fixed. But the mind is not fixed, it is not static, and that is the beauty of the mind. In the interval between cause and effect there are various influences at work, subtle pressures and trends which change the effect; and that effect undergoes further changes, it is again shaped and modified in the process of becoming the cause of still another effect. With the mind there is no fixed causation which produces a fixed result.

So one discovers that the mind can change abruptly the moment it perceives the falseness of continuity, in which there is always the fear of death. When the mind is earnestly seeking to understand the whole problem of death, time and love, and is therefore fully aware of the innumerable causes and effects which are pushing it in various directions, it can change suddenly; tomorrow it can be totally new, completely transformed. This is true revolution—not the economic or social revolution, but the revolution of the mind that perceives death and time as a continuous process in which there is no resurrec-

tion, no renewal. What is continuous cannot be renewed. It is only the mind that has come to an end abruptly, not speculatively, not through discipline or any form of self-hypnosis, but through seeing precisely what *is*—it is only such a mind that can go beyond the clutches of death.

Sirs, have you ever tried to die to your pleasures and to your sorrows? As a withered leaf falls off a tree and is blown away by the wind, have you ever let your pleasures, your sorrows, your anxieties just drop away and die? Have you ever tried it? Most of us have not, because we want to carry that burden to the end of our life, and beyond. We hate somebody, and we want to keep on hating him; we say he has done us an injustice, or we offer some other explanation, and carry on as before. Or having had a marvellous experience of great delight, great loveliness, we want to live in the memory of it. We also want to live in the state of ambition, which is really the state of envy. After all, ambition is envy. A man who is not envious is not ambitious.

But our society is based on envy, on jealousy, it has sanctified the words 'ambition' and 'competition'. And is it possible to die to all that? Try dying to your vanity, and you will find it a most extraordinary experience. Don't ask what will happen. Just try it. When death comes, it wipes your mind away. There is no hope; it is a finality, an absolute ending. In the same way, one can die to vanity without explanations, without a motive, without a cause. Try it and you will discover the extraordinary state of a mind that has left everything behind, that has unburdened itself of all the things it has known. If you can die in this way to the continuity of time as memory, then you will be able to meet that extraordinary thing called death, not at the end of your life, not through old age, not through some disease or accident, but while you are living, vitally alert, fully conscious of your whole being. When you have died to your vanity, to your ambition, to your petty demands, then you will discover what death is. And you will find that death is not a thing about which you can hold beliefs or speculate; it is totally the unknown.

But for most of us the unknown is a fearful thing, because we cling to the known. The known is the factor which holds us. I know you and you know me. If I am your wife, you know me, you have lived with me, you have had pleasure from me; you think in terms of 'my house', 'my wife', 'my job', all of which is the known, within the field of time. And can you die to all that? If you cannot die to it, what happens to your mind? What happens to the mind which knows continuity? Do you understand the question? If I cannot die psychologically to my house, to my properties, to my wife, to my children, if I cannot free my mind completely from everything I have known, what happens? Obviously one cannot forget the facts of everyday life, the way to one's house, the techniques one has learnt, and so on. But cannot the mind die to the psychological implications of vanity, of power, of position, of prestige, to all the things that it has inwardly held most dear, and which are also part of memory?

Sirs, if you cannot die to all the past and breathe the fragrance of the new, then obviously your mind has become respectable, which is what most of us are. We are respectable in a society which is based on envy, with its false moralities, its imitated virtues, its empty talk of non-violence and peace. A respectable mind is an imitative mind; and what happens to such a mind? Is it a mind at all, or merely a repetitive recording machine? Do think about it, sirs, give your attention to what is

being said. Such a mind obviously continues as a recording machine which is essentially not different from the millions of Indians, Chinese, Russians, Americans, or what you will, that make up the society to which it belongs. It is this petty, small, limited mind that continues; and you hope to preserve that continuity, you hope to live again, so you believe in reincarnation, in life after death, or in some other form of survival. But it is only the man who perceives the recording machine in operation and dies to that whole process of continuity—it is only such a man that lives anew.

Let us look at it the other way. Are you so very different from your neighbour? You have a different form, a different name, a different job or function, but inwardly are you so very different from the so-called mass? I am afraid you are not. And the ministers, the great of the land, what are they? Strip away their position, their cars, their caps and all the rest they put on, and they are just like you or another: recording machines continuing in the world of time, seeking power, position, struggling, enjoying, suffering. The man who is envious may be driven to the top by his envy, by his desire for position and power, so that in history he lives on; but he is still within the field of time. It is only the mind that is dead to time, dead to the known—it is only such a mind that can find out what love is.

Now, sirs, love is not sentiment, love is not devotion, love is neither carnal nor sacred, neither profane nor pure. It is a state of being, and you cannot divide it. You cannot say "I love one and I do not love the other". Have you ever taken a leaf in your hand and looked at it, a leaf that has just fallen on the dirty road where thousands of people have walked and polluted the ground with their spittle? If you can *feel* that leaf, you will know how to love.

Sirs, don't take notes, experience what is being said, feel your way into all this. Because love is an extraordinary thing, is it not? We have divided it into the love of God and the love of man. To me that is an irreligious thing to do. There is only love.

But a mind that is sentimental, a mind that is jealous, envious, ambitious, a mind that is nationalistic, provincial—such a mind will never know what love is. There is no right and wrong when there is love, for when you have that feeling, then love can do what it will. But that is an extraordinary state of being, because most of us only know continuity in time, the fear of death, and the love which is smothered by jealousy. That is all we know, and we never let go of the known. Holding with one hand to the known, with the other we grope after the unknown. We are not purely materialistic, but neither are we really inquiring into the unknown; so we are miserable human beings, with sorrows that do not pass away and joys that are soon withered by time.

Dying is from moment to moment, and on a mind that is dying no influence leaves its mark. Such a mind offers no soil for experience to take root, and therefore it is always young. But this state of being is possible only when the mind is dying every day to everything it has known, to every experience, to every memory, to every pleasure, to every sorrow. You can never ask how to die, any more than you can ask how to avoid death. The leaf just drops off the tree. When there is dying there is loving. Without dying, love becomes hate, jealousy, and no belief, no temple, no sacred book is going to save you from the fear of death. What liberates the mind from the fear of death is dying

from day to day, and only then is there the timeless state of love.

March 1, 1959.

VIII

TALK IN NEW DELHI

May I suggest that we talk this evening about the mind in meditation, which is a most complex and subtle problem. If one does not know what meditation is, true meditation, I think one misses everything in life. It is like being in a prison where you see only the wall opposite you and know only the limitation, the pain, the sorrow and all the petty little things that make up your life of confinement. So it seems to me that meditation is a very direct and intimate problem for each one of us, because it requires the approach of a mind in meditation to understand the whole movement of life.

But to share this investigation into the mind in meditation, is quite a difficult problem in itself. Sharing implies interest, does it not?, on the part of the people who are listening; it means observing and partaking in the thing we are talking about. If I say to you "Look at that flower, how beautiful it is!", you can share the beauty of the flower only if your mind is at rest and therefore in a state of observation. To put it differently, your own mind must be capable of meeting the other mind on the same level at the same time, otherwise there is no sharing of that experience. We cannot share something in which I am interested and you are not. I may point out, describe, explain, but there is no sharing unless you meet me on the same level of observation and with the same intensiveness, the same feelings of the heart.

This is not a rhetorical statement, it is an everyday fact. You may say to your friend "Do look at that marvellous sunset!", but if your friend is not interested in the beauty of the sunset, you cannot share it with him. Similarly, the sharing of any problem with your wife, with your husband, with your neighbour, requires a communion in which there is a mutual and immediate perception of the same thing.

Now, let us see if we can together feel the importance of meditation, and also perceive the beauty, the implications, the subtleties of it. To begin with, that word 'meditation' has a very special significance for you, has it not? You immediately think of sitting in a certain posture, breathing in a certain way, forcing the mind to concentrate on something, and so on. But to me that is not meditation at all. To me meditation is entirely different; and if you and I are to share this inquiry into what is meditation, you will obviously have to put aside your prejudices, your conditioned thinking about meditation. That is true, I think, whether we discuss politics, or a particular system of economics, or our relationship with each other. Such a talk, such a discussion or exchange, to be of any value, must be a process of sharing; but there is no sharing if either of us starts from a conclusion, from a fixed point of view. If you are given to a particular form of so-called meditation, and the other is not, there can obviously be no sharing. You must let go of your prejudices and experiences, and he must also let go of his, so that both of you can look into the problem and find out together what is meditation.

If you and I are to share and understand this problem, which is a very subtle and complex one, it is essential that you not be mesmerized by what I am saying. If you merely accept or reject it, or interpret it in your own way, instead of trying to find out what

lies beyond the explanation, then there is no sharing, no real communion. So it is very important to approach this problem intelligently.

Now, don't let us seek a definition of intelligence. A specialist may be very clever in his chosen field, whether it be electronics, mathematics, science, economics, or what you will; but as long as he looks at life from that narrow, limited point of view, he is obviously not intelligent. To be intelligent, the mind must be capable of dealing with the whole of life, and not just with a certain part of it.

Being an economist, a scientist, a businessman, a housewife, this or that, you may reject all this and say: "What has meditation got to do with my life? Meditation is all right for the *sannyasi*, for the man who has renounced the world, but my function requires that I live in the world like any ordinary man; so what has meditation got to do with me?" If that is one's approach, then one is merely perpetuating one's own dullness, one's own insensitivity, one's own lack of intelligence. We are talking about human beings, not just about their various functions. I hope you see the difference. Whatever may be the specialized function of a particular human being, we are talking about the total human being himself. But if you regard life merely as a matter of function and cling to your particular status in that function, then you will obviously never meet the whole problem of existence. And it is the capacity to meet this problem totally that constitutes the very essence of intelligence.

It seems to me that it is only a mind in meditation that can affect fundamentally all our actions, our whole way of living. Meditation is not reserved for some hermit in the Himalayas, nor for a monk or a nun in a monastery; and when it is, it becomes an escape from life, a denial of the reality of living. Whereas, if you and I as two human beings, not as specialists, could find out what it means for the mind to be in the state of meditation, then perhaps that very perception would directly affect our actions and our whole way of life in confronting the many complex problems of modern existence.

Now, what is meditation, and what is the state of the mind that is capable of meditating? Who is the meditator, and what is it that he meditates about? There is the meditator and the meditation, is there not? And surely, without understanding the meditator, there can be no meditation. A man may be able to sit in what he calls profound meditation, but if his mind is petty, conditioned, limited, his meditation will have no meaning at all. It will be a form of self-hypnosis—which is what most of us call meditation. So, before asking how to meditate, or what system of meditation to follow, it is very important, isn't it?, to understand the meditator.

Let me put it in a different way. A superficial mind may be capable of quoting word for word various scriptures, but it does not thereby cease to be superficial. It may sit entranced by the object of its devotion, it may repeat *mantras*, it may try to fathom reality, or seek God; but being in its very nature a shallow mind, its so-called meditation will be equally shallow. When a petty mind thinks about God, its God is also petty. When a confused mind thinks about clarity, its clarity is only further confusion.

So it is very important to find out, first of all, what meditation means to the entity that wants to meditate. In what most of us call meditation, there is, is there not?, the thinker, the meditator who wishes to meditate in order to find peace, bliss, reality. The meditator says "If I am to find that reality, that bliss, that peace which I am seek-

ing, I must discipline my mind"; so he takes, inwardly or outwardly, a posture of meditation. But the mind is still petty, still confused, still narrow, prejudiced, jealous, vain, stupid; and such a mind, in seeking or inventing a system of meditation, will only be further limited along the lines of its own narrow conditioning.

That is why I say it is very important to begin by understanding the meditator. A monk in a monastery may spend hours in contemplation, in prayer, he may gaze endlessly upon the object of his devotion, whether made by the hand or by the mind; but such a mind is obviously committed, conditioned, it is seeking salvation according to its own limitations, and though it may meditate till Doomsday, it will never find reality. It can only imagine that it has found reality, and live in that comforting illusion—which is what most of us want. We want to build castles in the air, find a refuge where we shall never be disturbed, where our petty minds will never be shaken.

So, without understanding the mind that is meditating, meditation becomes merely a process of self-hypnosis. By repeating the word 'OM', or any other word, by reciting a *mantra,* or running through the alphabet a sufficient number of times, you can create a rhythm of sound which will mesmerize your mind, and a mesmerized mind becomes very quiet; but that quietness is still within the field of your own pettiness. Unless one deeply understands the thinker, the meditator, there is always a division, a gap between the meditator and that upon which he meditates, and this gap he is everlastingly struggling to bridge.

What matters, then, is to perceive one's own mind in operation—not as an observer, not as an entity who is looking at the mind, but for the mind to be aware of its own movement. I do not know if I am making myself clear.

When you look at something, there is always the observer, is there not? When you look at a flower, you are the observer, and there is the flower. The thinker is apart from the thought, the experiencer is separate from the experienced. If you watch yourself you will see there is always this division of the observer and the observed, the 'I' and the 'not-I', the experiencer and the thing that is experienced.

Now, one of the problems of meditation is how to eliminate this gap which separates the experiencer from the experienced, because as long as this gap exists there will be conflict—not only the conflict of the opposites, but also the conflict of a mind that is everlastingly struggling to achieve an end, to arrive at a goal. So how is one to bring about that extraordinary state of mind in which there is only experiencing and not an experiencer?

Sirs, what happens when you sit very quietly and try to do some kind of meditation? Your mind wanders all over the place, does it not? You think of your shoe, of your neighbour, of your job, of what you are going to eat, of what Shankara, or the Buddha, or the Christ has said, and so on. Your mind drifts off, and you try to bring it back to a particular focus or central issue. This effort on the part of the thinker to control his thoughts is called concentration. So there is always a contradiction between the thinker and his wandering thoughts, which he tries everlastingly to pull in and force along a particular groove. And if you do succeed in forcing all your thoughts into a chosen pattern, you think you have achieved a marvellous state. But that is obviously not meditation, it is not the awakening of perception. That is merely learning the technique of concentration, which any schoolboy can do.

Concentration is a process of exclusion, resistance, suppression; it is a form of compulsion. The schoolboy who forces himself to read his book when he really wants to look out of the window, or go out and play, is said to be concentrating; and that is exactly what you do. You compel your mind to concentrate, and so begins the contradiction between the observer and the observed, the thinker and the thought, which is a state of endless conflict. Becoming aware of this conflict in yourself, you say you must get rid of it, and so you seek a system of meditation—a procedure with which we are all very familiar, especially in India where almost everyone practises some system of meditation.

Now, what does the practising of a system of meditation imply? Let us think it out together. It implies, does it not?, that through a method, a practice, a system, you will arrive at a certain point which you call peace, or liberation, or bliss. You want to realize God, and you practise a system to bring about that realization. But no system can ever lead you to what you say you want, because your mind is crippled by the system. From the *sannyasi* downwards and from you upwards, this is actually what is taking place.

Any system implies a movement from the known to the known, and the known is always fixed. When you say "I want to reach peace", the thing you are striving after is a projection of what you think peace should be; therefore, like your house, it is fixed, it cannot move away, and a path or a system may lead you to it. But reality is a living thing, it is not fixed, it has no abode, and therefore no system can lead you to it. If you once really perceive the truth of this, you are free of all the *gurus*, of all the teachers, of all the books—and that is a tremendous liberation.

So our problem is, is it not?, to experience the fact that the thinker and the thought are one, that the observer is the observed; and if you have ever tried it, you will know that this is an extraordinarily difficult thing to do. It does not mean identifying oneself with the observed. Do you understand, sirs? You can identify yourself with an individual. You can identify yourself with the image in the temple, to which you do *puja* and feel a tremendous emotion which you call devotion. But such identification still maintains the one who identifies himself with something. We are talking of an entirely different state in which there is no identification, no recognition, no experiencer apart from the experienced who creates contradiction by trying to identify himself with the experienced. There is no experiencer at all, but only experiencing.

You may identify yourself with the object of your devotion, but there is still a duality. You think of yourself as an Indian because you have identified yourself with a coloured section of the map called India—which the politicians have exploited, and which you also would like to exploit. But the fact is that this, like every other form of identification, maintains the entity who has identified himself with something.

If you see this fact, then the next question is, is it possible for the mind to bring about a state in which there is only experiencing without the experiencer?

Let me put it differently. Every minute of the day the mind is receiving impressions. It is like a sensitive photographic film upon which every incident, every influence, every experience, every movement of thought is leaving an imprint. Whether we are conscious of it or not, that is what is actually taking place. Burdened with

these imprints of past experiences, the mind meets the new in terms of the old. In other words, there is always the past meeting the present and creating the future.

Now, can the mind receive impressions and not be marked by them? Do you understand, sirs? Let me put it very simply. You are insulted, or flattered, and this has left a mark on your mind; that is, the insult or the flattery has taken root in the soil of the mind. Now, have you ever experimented to see if you can receive insult and flattery so that afterwards your mind is completely unmarked by them? Innumerable experiences, piled one upon another, are leaving their chaotic and contradictory impressions on the mind, like scratches on the surface of memory. And can the mind experience anew, without these scratches? I say it can; and that only then is there the coming into being of a state in which there is thinking without the thinker, experiencing without the experiencer, and therefore never a contradiction.

If you observe your own mind in what you call meditation, you will see that there is always a division, a contradiction between the thinker and the thought. As long as there is a thinker apart from thought, meditation is merely a ceaseless effort to overcome this contradiction.

I hope all this is not too abstract and too difficult; but even if it is, please listen. Although you may not fully understand what is being said, the very act of listening is like planting a seed in the dark soil. If the seed is vital, and if the soil is rich, it will produce a shoot; you don't have to do a thing about it. Similarly, if you can just listen and let the seed fall in the womb of the mind, it will germinate, it will flourish and bring about an action which is unconsciously true.

Another problem in meditation is that of concentration and attention. Concentration implies, as I pointed out earlier, a restriction, a limitation; it is a narrowing, exclusive process. When the schoolboy concentrates he excludes the desire to look out of the window and says "This is an awful book, but I must read it in order to pass the examination". That is essentially what we all do when we concentrate. There is resistance, a narrowing down of the mind to a certain focus, which is called concentration.

Now, attention is altogether different. Attention has no frontier. Please follow this closely. A mind in the state of attention is not limited by the frontier of recognition. Attention is a state in which there is complete awareness of everything that is taking place within and about one, without the border or frontier of recognition which exists in concentration.

Sirs, for God's sake, do listen to what I am saying, experience what I am talking about. Don't take notes. Would you take notes if someone were telling you he loves you? (*Laughter*). You laugh, but you don't see the tragedy of it. The difficulty with most of us is that we want to remember, we want to have the recognition of what has been said, and we store it away in memory, or put it down in a notebook, so that we can think about it tomorrow. But when someone is saying he loves you, do you take notes? Do you look the other way? It is the same thing here, otherwise these meetings are useless. Empty words have no meaning at all. So listen to what is being said, and if you can, experience it—but not as an experiencer.

I was pointing out the difference between concentration and attention. In concentration there is no attention, but in attention there is concentration. In attention there are no borders to the mind. When you are in the state of

attention, you hear what is being said, you hear the coughing, you see one man scratching his head, another yawning, another taking notes, and you are aware of your own reactions. You listen, you see, you are aware; there is an attention in which there is no effort. Effort exists only when there is concentration, which is opposed to attention. In the state of attention, your whole being is attentive, not just one part of your mind. The moment your mind says "I must have that", there is concentration, which means that you are no longer in the state of attention. Concentration arises with the craving to have or to be something, which is a state of contradiction.

Just see the truth of this. In attention there is a total being, whereas in concentration there is not; it is a form of becoming. A man who is becoming must have authority; he lives in a state of contradiction. But when there is simple awareness, an effortless attention without an end to be realized, then you will find that the mind has no frontier of recognition. Such a mind can concentrate, but its concentration is not exclusion. Don't say "How am I to get that state of attention?" It is not a thing you can 'get'. Just see the truth of this: that in the state of attention the mind has no border; there is no recognition of an end to be gained or achieved. Such a mind can concentrate, and that concentration is not exclusion. This is one of the things to be discovered by a mind in meditation.

Then there is the problem of the many contradictory thoughts that arise in the mind. The mind is vagrant, restless, flying endlessly from one thing to another. That is the lot of most people, is it not?

Now, why does the mind do this? Surely, the mind does it because in its very essence it is lazy. A mind that is vagrant, crowded with thoughts, a mind that goes from one thing to another like a butterfly, is a lazy mind; and when a lazy mind tries to control its wandering thoughts, it merely becomes dull, stupid.

Whereas, if the mind is aware of its own movement, if it sees all its thoughts as they arise one after another, and if it can take any one thought, good or bad, that comes along, and pursue that thought to the very end, then you will find that the mind becomes extraordinarily active. It is this activity of the mind that puts an end to the vagrancy of thought—but not through control, or by force. Such a mind is tremendously active, but its activity is not that of a politician, or an electrician, or a man who quotes books; it is an activity without a centre. The mind that is driven by ambition, that is chasing its own fulfilment, is not active in this sense at all. But if you can take one thought and go into it fully, ravishingly, delightfully, with your whole being, you will find that your mind becomes extraordinarily active; and there must be this precision of the mind.

Our next problem is that the mind is the result of time, the result of the known. All that you have experienced, your memories, your conditioning, everything that to you is recognizable, is within the field of the known, is it not? The mind thinks from the known to the known; its movement is always within the field of the known. And it is of the utmost importance for the mind to free itself from the known, otherwise it cannot enter into the unknown. A mind that is bound by the known is incapable of experiencing that state in which there is complete stillness without deterioration. It is only when the mind has understood the known at the unconscious as well as at the conscious level, when it has understood and therefore freed itself from the desires, the ambitions, the hates, the flatteries,

the pleasures, everything that it has collected—it is only then, in this liberation from the known, that the unknown comes into being. You cannot invite the unknown. If you do, what you experience will again be the result of the known; it will not be the real.

So the mind in meditation is in a state of awareness without the centre of recognition, and therefore without a circumference; it is attention without a frontier. The mind in meditation is that which has freed itself without effort from the known. The known has fallen away as a leaf drops from the tree, and so the mind is motionless, in a state of silence; and such a mind alone can receive the immeasurable, the unknown..

March 4, 1959.

IX

TALK IN NEW DELHI

This evening I would like to think aloud about action, religion, and the nature of beauty. It seems to me that they are all related, and that to be concerned only with action, or with religion, or with the nature of beauty, is to destroy the fullness of action, which then becomes merely an activity. If we are to go very deeply into the question of what is action, I think we must also consider religion and the nature of beauty, as well as the quality or sensitivity of a mind that feels and appreciates what is beautiful.

For most of us action becomes a routine, a habit, something that one does, not out of love, or because it has deep significance for oneself, but because one has to do it. One is driven to it by circumstances, by a wrong kind of education, by the lack of that love out of which one does something real. If we can go into this whole question, I think it will be very revealing, for then perhaps we shall begin to understand the true nature of revolution.

Surely, true action comes from clarity. When the mind is very clear, unconfused, not contradictory within itself, then action inevitably follows from that clarity; we need not be concerned with how to bring about action. But it is very difficult, is it not?, to have undisturbed perception and to see things, not as one would *like* to see them, but as they actually are, undistorted by one's likes and dislikes. It is only out of such clarity that the fullness of action takes place.

Clarity is of far greater significance than action. But our minds are ridden by systems, by techniques, by the desire to know what to do. The 'what to do?' has become very important, it is our everlasting question. We want to know what to do about starvation, what to do about inequality, about the appalling corruption in the world, and about our own sorrow and suffering. We are always looking for a method, a means, a system of action, are we not?

But how to find clarity is obviously a much more significant inquiry; because if one can think very clearly, if one has perception which is not distorted, which is direct, complete, then from that clear perception, action follows. Such clarity creates its own action. But people who are dedicated to various systems are always at loggerheads with each other, are they not? They cannot work together. Each interprets the problem in terms of the system to which he is committed, according to his particular conditioning and self-interest. I do not know if you have ever noticed how most of us divide ourselves into groups, parties and systems, and commit ourselves to certain conclusions. Any such commitment, surely, does not bring clarity. It brings

only enmity, opposition. But if you and I approach our human problems, not with commitments, conclusions and self-interest, but with clarity, then I think these problems can very easily be solved.

So the real problem is the mind that approaches the problem; and may I suggest that we not merely listen to what is being said, but go into ourselves and find out in what manner the mind is confused. If we ask how to clear up our confusion, it will only bring about the cultivation of another system. To actually see that the mind is confused has far greater significance, surely, than the question of action, of what to do. We have to live in this world, we have to act, we have to go to the office and do a hundred different things; and from what sort of a mind does all this action come? I can describe the background of the mind, but I think it will have very little significance if you do not relate what is being said to your own mind. Most of us think that self-knowledge is merely a matter of information, the accumulation of various explanations as to why the mind is confused; and we are easily satisfied by explanations. But really to understand oneself, one has to put away all the explanations and begin to explore one's own mind—which is to perceive directly what *is*. I must know that I am confused, that I am committed, that I have a vested interest in some system, ideology or belief, and see the significance of it; and surely, that very perception is enough in itself. But that direct perception is prevented if I am satisfied merely to explain the various causes of my confusion.

It seems to me that the real revolution is not economic, political, or social, but the bringing about of this new quality of the mind which is always clear. And when the mind is *not* clear, what matters is to perceive directly the cause of confusion without trying to do something about it. Whatever a confused mind does about its confusion, it will still be confused. I do not think we see the significance of this. All that most of us are concerned with is how to clear up our confusion, how to wipe away our darkness. But simply to perceive that the mind is confused is in itself enough. Try the experiment with yourself, and you will see. There is no answer to a confused mind, there is no way out of its confusion, because whatever way it finds, it will still be confused. Whereas, if the mind is vitally aware of and fully attentive to its confusion, if it sees that it is muddled, that there is a distortion, that there is a vested interest—this in itself is enough. It brings about its own action, which I think is the real revolution. Because it approaches the problem negatively, such a mind acts positively. But when the mind approaches a problem positively, it acts negatively and therefore contradictorily.

Do think it over and you will see the truth of this. After all, no amount of argumentation, persuasion or influence, no promise of reward or threat of punishment, can make you see the true as true, the false as false, and the truth in the false. What is needed is the simplicity that looks directly at things as they are—and that is the new quality of mind which is really a revolution. Problems may appear to be positive, but they cannot be solved through a positive approach, because problems are always negative; therefore they must be approached negatively.

Sirs, take the problem of starvation. How do we approach it? The Communists approach it through one system, the capitalists through another, while the organized religions have conflicting systems of their own. Surely, the problem of starvation, like every other human problem, must be approached

negatively; no system is going to solve it, because each man will fight for his particular system, in which he has a vested interest. You can see this happening right now in the world around you. Whereas, if the mind frees itself from the system and approaches the problem negatively because the problem itself is negative, then from that negation will come a positive action. Then there is no quarrel between you as a Communist and me as a capitalist, or between you as a Hindu and me as a Christian or a Moslem, because we are both concerned, not with the system, but with the problem. In the problem there is no vested interest, whereas in the system there is, and it is this vested interest over which we are everlastingly quarrelling.

Now, just to see the truth of this brings clarity, and out of that clarity there is action. And I think it is the same with every problem, because all problems are negative, and you must approach them negatively, not with a positive mind. To be free from greed, or envy, or jealousy, or ambition, you must approach it negatively, and not say "How shall I get rid of it?" The direct perception of what is negative, brings clarity.

I am afraid one has to think a great deal about these things—not think, but rather feel one's way into them, because thoughts never lead to a fundamental revolution, ideas never bring about a radical change in the quality of the mind. Ideas, thoughts, only lead to conclusions, and out of these conclusions there are vested interests. A mind that starts with a conclusion has altogether ceased to think. After all, what we call thinking is merely a reaction, isn't it? It is the reaction of one's background, of one's memory, of one's knowledge. Therefore, thinking is always limited, conditioned. But direct perception is never conditioned. You can perceive directly the fact that you are envious, for example, without having to think about it; and that direct perception has its own action. But once you begin to think about why you are envious, to find reasons for your envy, to explain it, to condemn or justify it, to look for a way to be free of it, then that whole process prevents direct perception which is the negative approach to what you call envy.

Perhaps you will reject all this, because the mind tends to reject what it hears for the first time as something new. But I think it would be a pity if you merely rejected it, saying: "You don't give us a system of meditation, a method by which to do this or that". I think a mind that pursues a system or a method and functions within it, is essentially a lazy mind. It is so easy to function in a system; the mind can operate like a cog in a machine, it doesn't have to think. Whereas, in approaching a problem negatively, you have to be alert, it requires an extraordinarily attentive mind. And I think this is the only real revolution, because it does not create enmity and vested interests, while systems, ideas, conclusions always do.

Now, with the clarity of direct perception let us look at what we call religion. Surely, a religious mind is not a believing mind. Belief is positive, and a mind that believes in something can never find out what is real.

After all, what is the religion which you profess? You believe that to find God, or whatever you may call it, you must discipline your body, control your mind, destroy every form of desire. You would go to that which you call holy with a mind that is crowded with beliefs, desecrated by superstition and fear. You worship the symbol instead of discovering what is real, so the symbol becomes all-important. You pray, and your prayer is supplication,

begging something for yourself or your family from what you call God. It is a thing of the market place. If you beg, your bowl may be filled. If you ask for a refrigerator, you may get a refrigerator. If you ask in prayer for peace, you may find what you call peace; but it is not peace.

So you have made of religion a refuge, an escape, a meaningless thing. You seek reality through constant discipline of the body, through suppression or control of every desire. You approach what you call God with a mind that is worn out, hopeless, in despair, with a heart that is dry, fearful, ugly. The man who repeats a lot of phrases, who reads the *Gita* from moring till night, or who denies himself everything and takes the *sannyasi's* robe—do you think such a man will find the real? Surely, one must set out to discover reality with a fullness of heart, with all one's sensitivities highly developed, with a mind that is rich—rich in clarity and not in experience, rich in the perfume of real affection.

Religion is not that which you now call religion; it is not in the book, it is not in the *mantram,* it is not in the temple, it is not in the graven image, whether made by the hand or by the mind. It is something entirely different. To find out what religion is, the mind must go to it with an extraordinary fullness because it is empty; and it is only then that reality can come into being. This is a complete reversal of everything that you have been taught, and that is why it is very difficult for you to see the truth of it.

For centuries it has been said that you must be desireless, that every form of desire towards any object must be thwarted, cut off. Whereas, I say desire is not to be suppressed, cut off, thwarted, controlled, but to be understood. Control, suppression, is a form of laziness. To understand desire with all its subtleties, with all its promptings, with all its drive and energy, requires constant watchfulness, a mind that is extraordinarily alert and capable of delving deeply into itself, not only at the conscious level, but at the unconscious level as well. The conscious mind is the positive mind; it has learnt, it has experienced, it has gathered, and it wants to translate everything in terms of its own self-interest. The unconscious, on the other hand, is the negative mind, and you cannot go to it positively. It is only when the conscious mind is quiet, undisturbed, that it is able to receive the hints and intimations of the unconscious. That is the way of dreams.

It is not a positive assertion or denial that brings about clarity, but this whole process of understanding. If, as you listen, you go into yourself and observe your own mind, which I hope you are doing, you will find that out of such listening there comes the clarity of understanding. A mind that is clear because it understands itself, can deal with desire; but a mind that is lazy and therefore suppresses, controls, shapes desire, will always live in a state of self-contradiction. I do not know if you have noticed that when a desire is controlled, shaped, driven, suppressed, it reacts, and hence we live everlastingly in the conflict of duality.

Sirs, do listen to what is being said, and as you listen, watch your own mind. It is what is being said that is important, and not the speaker, because what is being said is true; and being true, it is anonymous. It has nothing to do with the speaker.

If, as you listen, you are aware of yourself, observing the movement of your own thoughts, you will see how desire is forever creating its own opposite, which means there is a division, a contradiction in the mind; and out of that contradiction you seek God, you

fashion saints and idols for your worship. Whereas, if you do not oppose desire, but go into yourself and really begin to understand your jealousy, your sexual urge, your ambition, your feeling of envy, and every other form of desire; if you observe and are aware of it totally without accepting or denying it, wihout saying it is bad or good, which is to approach it with a mind that is negative and therefore capable of perceiving directly—if you can do that, then you will discover that God is something entirely different from the God of your seeking. It is the unhappy mind, it is the confused, fearful mind that seeks God. The mind may think it has renounced the world, but if it is still burning with desire, its renunciation is merely a form of self-advancement; its vested interest is now belief in the idea which it calls God. Whereas, if you begin to understand this whole process of the self, the 'me', with its desires, its ambitions, its subtle urges, then you will see that belief is a hindrance to reality, for belief creates authority; and a mind bound by authority will never find out what is real.

So religion is not of the church or the temple; it has no dogma, no belief, no practice. A religious man is one who is inquiring ceaselessly into himself. A politician is not a religious man, though he may call himself one, because he is concerned with a particular result which becomes his vested interest. Only the mind that is in a state of negation will find reality, because it is only such a mind that is capable of seeing the false as the false and the true as the true.

Just as the mind must be sensitive, uncommitted, to perceive directly what is true, so it must be open, sensitive, to feel the naure of beauty. Most of us say "That is beautiful" or "That is ugly" because we have the memory of what is beautiful and what is ugly according to the tradition, the education, the culture in which we were brought up. But surely, like love, beauty has no opposite. A mind that has this extraordinary sensitivity to beauty, is sensitive also to that which is ugly, and does not compare. I do not know if you have ever been aware of your own feelings, of your own reaction when you suddenly see a sunset, or a tree in full bloom against the sky. At that moment, surely, you are not noticing whether it is beautiful or ugly, but there is a total response in which the thinker is absent—which means, does it not?, that the mind has completely abandoned itself. I hope you are following this.

Perhaps you have never experienced that state of mind in which there is total abandonment of everything, a complete letting go. And you cannot abandon everything without deep passion, can you? You cannot abandon everything intellectually, or emotionally. There is total abandonment, surely, only when there is intense passion. Don't be alarmed by the word; because a man who is not passionate, who is not intense, can never understand or feel the quality of beauty. The mind that holds something in reserve, the mind that has a vested interest, the mind that clings to position, power, prestige, the mind that is respectable, which is a horror—such a mind can never abandon itself.

To perceive the nature of that which is called beauty, the mind must completely come to an end, but not in despair. It must be very simple, because only a simple mind can see what is true. But the mind cannot be made simple through discipline. The *sannyasi* who wears a loin-cloth, who takes only one meal a day and feels virtuous about it, is not simple. Simplicity is a state in which the mind has no consciousness of itself as being simple. The moment you are conscious of your humility, you

have ceased to be humble. The moment you are conscious of your non-violence, you are full of violence. The ideal, and all the practices and disciplines to achieve it, are a self-conscious process, and therefore not virtue.

Do look at all this, because your minds are ridden with this sort of thing, you are slaves to it. You may agree with what is being said, but you will fall back into your old ways. It is not a question of agreement, it is a question of perception. Once you perceive for yourself the truth of the matter, you can never go back to the nonsense of ideals and disciplines. This is not being said to make you believe or disbelieve, or to create a new dogma. But you must be intense in perceiving the significance of every thought, every feeling that you have, and out of that intensity comes clarity; and clarity creates its own discipline, you don't have to practise a discipline.

Sensitivity to beauty is not just a matter of seeing beauty as manifested in a painting, in a tree, or in a poem. It is the feeling of beauty, and like the feeling of love, it is not merely in the expression, in the word, in the holding of a hand. The feeling, which is extraordinary, creates its own action. For the man who knows what love is, who is in the state of love, there is no sin, no evil. Do what he may, it will be essentially right. In the same way, a mind that perceives is very simple, and it is simple because it perceives; and that very perception creates its own action. It is only such a mind that can come to the state of total abandonment —which is not a gradual process in time. Just to see the truth of that is enough. Such a mind does not seek truth, it does not go to the temple or to the sacred books; though it is active, it is not concerned with action. Because it has been through an inward revolution which has brought a new quality to it, such a mind can wait in negation to receive that which is eternal.

If one observes, one can see within oneself the past, not merely one's own past, but the whole past of humanity. After all, we are the result of centuries of human existence with its chain of thoughts and experiences, joys and sorrows. But to inquire into and to break through all that, requires a negative approach; the mind must be capable of approaching everything through negation. Don't translate 'negation' as the equivalent of some Sanskrit word and put it by, actually experience it. The moment you begin to translate, compare, you have gone away from the fact; you are living in the memory of what you have read or heard, and therefore you are dead. Whereas, if you are directly experiencing, then the mind is astonishingly clear, precise, unburdened, and therefore its action is revolutionary. It is only such a mind that can receive the benediction of reality.

March 8, 1959.

X

TALK IN NEW DELHI

This is the last talk of the present series, and if I may I would like to talk about ignorance, experience, and the mind which is in the state of creation.

But before we go into all that, I think it is very important to understand the relationship between you and the speaker; because if that relationship is not clearly understood, even after these several talks, it will lead to a great deal of confusion. The speaker is not important at all, he is merely the voice, the telephone; but what is said, when one is in the process of learning, has an immense significance. If you give

importance to the speaker as a teacher, you are merely creating a following, and thereby you are destroying yourself as well as what is being said. Both the follower and the teacher are a detriment to the process of learning; and when one is intent on learning, there is neither the teacher nor the follower.

I think it is also important to understand that I am not talking to you as an individual who is opposed to society, or as one who belongs to this or that group. To me there is only the human being, whether he lives in India, in America, in Russia, in Germany, or anywhere else. So I am not talking to you as an Indian with a particular system of beliefs, but together we are endeavouring to find out what this whole process of living is all about.

This is our earth, it is not the Englishman's or the Russian's, the American's or the Indian's; it is the earth on which we live, you and I. It does not belong to the Communist or the capitalist, the Christian or the Hindu. It is our earth, to be lived on extensively, widely and deeply; but that living is denied when you are a nationalist, when you belong to a party or an organized religion. Please believe me, these are the very things that are destroying human beings. Nationalism is a curse. To call oneself a Hindu or a Christian is also a curse, because it divides us. We are human beings, not members of a sect or functionaries in a system. But the politician, the man who is committed to a conclusion or a system in which he has a vested interest, will exploit each one of us through our nationalism, through our vanity and emotionalism, just as the priest exploits us in the name of so-called religion.

But in considering these things together, I think it is very important for each one of us to understand that hearing is one thing, and listening, which brings action, is quite another. You may superficially agree when you hear it said that nationalism, with all its emotionalism and vested interest, leads to exploitation and the setting of man against man; but to really free your mind from the pettiness of nationalism, is another matter. To be free, not only from nationalism, but also from all the conclusions of organized religions and political systems, is essential if the mind is to be young, fresh, innocent, that is, in a state of revolution; and it is only such a mind that can create a new world —not the politicians, who are dead, nor the priests, who are caught in their own religious systems.

So, fortunately or unfortunately for yourself, you have heard something which is true; and if you merely hear it and are not actively disturbed so that your mind begins to free itself from all the things which are making it narrow and crooked, then the truth you have heard will become a poison. Surely, truth becomes a poison if it is heard and does not act in the mind like the festering of a wound. But to discover for oneself what is true and what is false, and to see the truth in the false, is to let that truth operate and bring forth its own action.

It is obviously of the greatest importance that as individual human beings we understand for ourselves this whole process of living. Living is not just a matter of function and status, and if we are content to be mere functionaries with a certain status, we become mechanical, and then life passes us by. It seems to me that if one does not really participate in life, take to one's heart the fullness of life, then the mind becomes petty, narrow, full of the dogmatic beliefs which are now destroying human beings.

If that is clear let us inquire into the question of ignorance. What is ignorance, what is knowledge, and what is wisdom? Surely, all knowledge is

within the field of time, and a mind that pursues knowledge is bound by time, limited to the field of the known. The things one knows, the facts one has gathered, the technique one has acquired, whether it be bridge-building, accounting, or what you will—it is all within the field of the known.

Now, knowledge is always operating in human relationships, is it not? I know you, and you know me; I know how to write, how to talk, how to do this or that, all of which is born of memory—memory which has been acquired, stimulated, educated. The mind functions from this background of memory which is called knowledge. Knowledge may be indefinitely extended, it may be made wide, deep, certain, encyclopaedic in its scope, but while socially useful, it is still within the field of ignorance. Knowledge does not wipe away ignorance. No amount of your reading the *Gita,* or any other books, will wipe away ignorance.

So, what is ignorance? A man may be very erudite, he may be skilful in the laboratory, or efficient as a bureaucrat, or a great builder of dams and bridges; but if he does not understand himself, he is essentially ignorant. If I am unaware of the way I think, the way I feel, if I do not see my own unconscious motives and hidden demands, if I do not know why I believe, why I am afraid, what are the sources of my ambition and frustrations, if I do not uncover and understand all that is within myself, then however high I may build the superstructure of knowledge, it will inevitably become the means of destruction.

Ignorance is the state of a mind that has no comprehension of itself. You may quote the *Gita,* the Bible, the *Koran,* or whatever book you hold sacred, but if you don't know yourself the quotations will have no meaning. The clearing away of ignorance lies in the understanding of oneself—not the higher self, not the *Paramatman* and all the rest of the superstructure which the mind has built in order to escape from its own pettiness, but the self which is operating every day and which is torn by ambition, frustration, jealousy, envy, hate, fear. It is surely the understanding of this whole process from moment to moment that brings about that state of mind which may be called wisdom. So wisdom has nothing whatever to do with knowledge. Knowledge and ignorance go together, one flows into the other; and ignorance is strengthened by experience.

Please do listen to what is being said, and don't brush it aside. Just listen, even if you don't quite understand. You may understand the word, the phrase, the symbol; but the word, the phrase, the symbol is not the real. If you realize this, then perhaps you will begin very hesitantly to feel your way into the meaning behind the words, which is to inquire into yourself. And after all, that is the function of this meeting—not to impose on the mind any idea or belief, but to help us to think out together the fundamental problems of life.

So you as a human being, and I as a human being, are learning. I am not, as you know, a saint or a teacher sitting here on the platform and telling you what to do, because there is no authority when we are both learning. Learning ceases when there is acceptance of authority. What is important is to listen with a mind that is inquiring, a mind that wants to discover what is true and what is false. But most of us listen with an opinion, with a belief. When we approach a fact, we have opinions about the fact, and therefore the fact never operates on the mind. So may I suggest that you listen to find out for yourself what is true and what is false. Do not wait for someone

else to tell you, because no one else can.

As I was saying, ignorance is strengthened by experience, because experience is cumulative, additive. Experience is essential at one level as function; but experience which is cumulative in the sense that it strengthens the mind in its centre of self-interest, only furthers ignorance, and that ignorance becomes what we call knowledge.

If you watch the operation of your own mind, you will see that it is always translating the new in terms of the old, that is, in terms of previous experience, which in turn is the result of your particular culture, of your beliefs, of your education, of your conditioning. So experience is never a liberating factor. Experience only strengthens the centre of ignorance. You may have a vision of Christ or Krishna, for example, but that experience is the result, is it not?, of your background as a Christian or a Hindu; and the experience further strengthens the background, the conditioning, the belief. So experience is obviously not a means of liberating, freeing the mind. After all, experiencing is a process of pain and pleasure, sorrow and joy, denial and acceptance. That is all we know. That process of experiencing is going on all the time, and without understanding it, the mind will never come to that state in which it is fully active, but in which there is no experiencing.

I do not know if you have ever noticed that the mind is capable of perceiving without experiencing. When you suddenly see a lovely tree expanding into the sky, what happens? You experience it, that is, you name it, you say "What a beautiful tree, I must admire it". That is what most people do, consciously or unconsciously, when they see a beautiful thing; they experience it. But if you just perceive a sunset, a lovely flower, or the splendour in the grass, there is no experiencing. It is not that you identify yourself with what is seen, but it is a state in which there is neither the observer nor the observed, a state of pure perception without interpretation, without the recall of memory. That is the liberating factor, for it frees the mind from the past.

In function, experience is necessary. I am not a mechanic if I have no experience with machines. I am not a gardener if I do not know the soil. Experience teaches me about the things I have to do in discharging a certain function. But experience is destructive, it is a deteriorating factor when it becomes a tradition in terms of which everything is translated. That is what is happening the world over, and particularly here in India where everything is bound by tradition and you are a big man if you can write a commentary on the *Gita*.

So experience is destructive when it becomes merely an additive process. Do please listen to this. A traditional mind is a dead mind; it is limited to the field of the known, which is the field of function and status. It is only the mind that is in a state of attention, in a state of perception, which means that it is not experiencing or translating in terms of the old—it is only such a mind that is fresh, young, innocent, and therefore creative.

In knowledge there is ignorance, and experience is binding; but the understanding of oneself—which is to know the whole process of oneself, the unconscious as well as the conscious, the hidden as well as the open—frees the mind, it makes the mind fresh, young. The young mind is always moving, changing, deciding, it is always approaching the frontier of itself and breaking through. But the mind that has experienced and is acquiring further experience, though this is valuable

at a certain functionary level, is never a fresh mind, it is never eager, new. The Communist mind, or the capitalist mind, or the mind that thinks in terms of a sovereign political state—how can such a mind be young? How can it make decisions that are new, decisions not based on old ideas?

Without understanding oneself, without uncovering and fully comprehending the hidden ways of one's thought and desire, the hidden want, there will always be hate, pride, fear. So let us look at this hidden want.

I do not know if you have ever gone deeply within yourself. To do that, surely, you must put aside all explanations, all conclusions about yourself, all the knowledge you have acquired about the self. Only a free mind is capable of inquiring, not a mind that is tethered to some conclusion, belief, or dogma.

If you have ever inquired very deeply into yourself, you are bound to have come upon that state which we call loneliness, a sense of complete isolation, of not being related. As a human being, you must at some time have felt that desperate, agonizing, despairing sense of isolation, from which consciously or unconsciously we are always running away. In our flight from the reality of that extraordinary sense of loneliness, we are driven, are we not?, by a deep urge that is everlastingly seeking fulfilment through books, through music, through work and activity, through position, power, prestige.

If at any time you have felt that sense of utter loneliness, or if you have ever consciously, deliberately allowed yourself to be aware of it, you will know that you immediately want to run away, to escape from it. You go to the temple, worship a God, plunge into perpetual activity, talk everlastingly, explain things away, or turn on the radio. We all do this, as we well know if we are at all conscious of ourselves.

Now, to realize that escape in any form will never satisfy this deep urge for self-fulfilment, to see that it is insatiable, a bottomless pit, you must be aware of it totally, which means that you must see the truth that escapes have no reality. You may escape through God or through drink, but they are both the same; one is not more sacred than the other. You have to understand this hidden urge and go beyond it; and you cannot understand and go beyond it if you have not tasted that extraordinary loneliness, that darkness which has no way out, no hope. Hope comes into being when there is despair. A mind is in despair only because it is frustrated in its hope. To understand this deep urge, this hidden want, you must perceive it totally, as you might perceive a tree or a lovely flower. Then you can go beyond it; and once beyond it, you will find there is a complete aloneness which is entirely different from being lonely. But you cannot discover that state of complete aloneness without understanding the deep urge to fulfil yourself, to escape from loneliness.

All this may sound unusual, unreal, and perhaps you will say, "What has this got to do with our daily living?" I think it is intimately related to your daily living, because your daily living is a misery of frustration; there is an everlasting striving to be, to become something, which is the real outcome of this deep urge, this hidden want. On the surface you may practise discipline, control your mind, do your *puja*, meditate, go to the temple, read the *Gita*, talk about peace, or what you will, but it is all nonsense as long as you do not understand the hidden want that is driving you.

So that state of aloneness is essential, because our minds are worn out with constant effort. What is your life? You are constantly trying to be *this* and

not to be *that,* striving everlastingly to become famous, to get a better job, to be more efficient; you are making endless effort, are you not? I wonder if you have ever noticed what a miserable existence we have, always striving to be something, to be good, to be non-violent, ceaselessly talking about peace while indulging in political emotionalism and preparing for war. Our life is one of strife, turmoil, travail, and a mind in that condition can never be fresh, young, new. Surely, seeing all this, one must have asked oneself whether such effort is necessary to live in this world. There may be a different way of living altogether, a way of living without effort—not at the lowest level, like a cow, nor like a human being who is forever doing what he likes, but at the highest level, a level where there is no effort.

But you cannot say "How am I to realize that state of mind in which there is no effort?", because the very desire to acquire that state is another form of attachment; and all attachment is to things that are dying, or dead. You are attached to the dead, not to the living. You are attached, not to your wife who is a living human being, but to the wife of pleasurable memory. You cannot be attached to the living, moving river; you are attached to the pleasure of having seen that river, which is a memory, a dead thing.

There is a way of living which is completely effortless. Please, sirs, I am not asking you to accept this. It has nothing to do with acceptance or denial. You simply don't know it. All you know is effort, strife; you are perpetually driving yourself to be or not to be something, and your aggressive pursuit of your own ambitions, with its tensions and contradictions, is the outcome of this hidden want. You cannot remove this hidden want by mesmerizing yourself. You have to look at it; and you cannot look at it as long as you are escaping. You can look at it only when you come to it completely without fear because it is the fact. Don't dictate what the fact should be; let the fact tell you what it is. Most of us come to the fact with an opinion about the fact, with knowledge, with belief, which is an immature, a childish thing to do. You must come to the fact with innocency, with a fullness of heart, which is humility. Then the fact will tell you what it is.

This hidden want is extraordinarily deep and subtle; but if you are able to look at it without any opinion, without any fear, then you will discover that you can go beyond its darkness to a state in which the mind is totally alone and therefore no longer the result of influence. This aloneness is the state of attention.

As I said the other day, attention and concentration are two different things. In this aloneness, which is the state of attention, there is no shadow of concentration. Being alone, uninfluenced, not caught in opinion, the mind is completely attentive; it is motionless, silent, utterly still. But you cannot *make* the mind still. You can mesmerize the mind by repeating certain phrases, or quiet it by prayer, but that is not stillness, that is death. It is like putting the mind in a straight-jacket to hold it still —and therefore the mind decays.

What is essential is to understand this deep, hidden want, which is always changing—and that is the beauty of it. You think you have understood it, only to find that it has moved somewhere else. So one has to pursue this hidden want down all the dark corridors of the mind. Then there comes that aloneness which is attention, and which is really a motionless state. I am not using that word 'motionless' in opposition to activity. A mind that is motionless, still, is not a dead mind. It is an

active mind, it is activity itself, because it is still, and only such a mind is creative—not the mind which paints, dances, or writes books. That is merely the outward expression of a mind which may not be creative at all. A mind may have the gift of writing, it may catch an occasional vision of something and express it in a poem or on canvas; but creativity of the mind is entirely different. The mind that is in a state of creation is really perfectly still; and only such a mind can receive the immeasurable. To know the real, the imperishable, the measureless, the mind must be silent, in a state of complete humility; and the mind has no humility as long as there is the deep, hidden want.

March 11, 1959.

I

TALK IN MADRAS

It seems that communion is a very difficult art. To commune with one another over the many problems that we have, requires listening and learning, which are both very difficult to do. Most of us hardly listen and we hardly learn. To commune with each other, which is what these meetings are intended for, requires a certain capacity, a certain way of listening—not merely to gather information, which any schoolboy can do, but rather listening in order to understand. This means being critically aware of all the implications of what is being said, as well as observing very carefully your own evaluation of what is being said. During the process of evaluating what you hear, obviously you are not listening, because the speaker has already gone beyond your idea, your opinion, your fixed thought. You have already stopped listening, and so communion becomes very difficult, especially when there is a large audience. When two or three are gathered quietly in a room, then it is possible to talk over together the meaning, the semantic significance of the word. But when one is talking like this to many people, it becomes almost impossible for us to commune with each other, to share with each other the many problems that must obviously confront every thoughtful man.

It seems to me of the utmost importance that we do listen in order to learn. Learning is not merely the accumulation of knowledge. Knowledge never brings perception; experience never flowers into the beauty of understanding. Most of us listen with the background of what we know, of what we have experienced. Perhaps you have never noticed the difference between the mind that really learns, and the mind that merely accumulates, gathers knowledge. The mind that is accumulating knowledge, never learns. It is always translating what it hears in terms of its own experience, in terms of the knowledge which it has gathered; it is caught up in the process of accumulating, of adding to what it already knows, and such a mind is incapable of learning. I do not know if you have noticed this. It is because we are never capable of learning that we pass our lives in sorrow and misery, in conflict and calumny; and hence the beauty of life, the vast significance of living, is lost. Each hungry generation destroys the coming generation. So it seems to me very important that we commune with each other quietly, in a dignified manner, and for that there must be a listening and a learning.

When you commune with your own heart, when you commune with your friend, when you commune with the skies, with the stars, with the sunset, with a flower, then surely you are listen-

ing so as to find out, to learn—which does not mean that you accept or deny. You are learning, and either acceptance or denial of what is being said, puts an end to learning. When you commune with the sunset, with a friend, with your wife, with your child, you do not criticize, you do not deny or assert, translate or identify. You are communing, you are learning, you are searching out. From this inquiry comes the movement of learning, which is never accumulative.

I think it is important to understand that a man who accumulates can never learn. Self-learning implies a fresh, eager mind, a mind that is not committed, a mind that does not belong to anything, that is not limited to any particular field. It is only such a mind that learns.

Do please experiment with what is being said as we go along. I would like to consider with you, the vast and complex problem of freedom; but to inquire into that problem, to commune with it, to go into it hesitantly, tentatively, requires a very sharp, clear and incisive mind, a mind that is capable of listening and thereby learning. If you observe what is taking place in the world, you will see that the margin of freedom is getting narrower and narrower. Society is encroaching upon the freedom of the individual. Organized religions, though they talk about freedom, actually deny it. Organized beliefs, organized ideas, the economic and social struggle, the whole process of competition and nationalism—everything around us is narrowing down the margin of freedom, and I do not think we are aware of it. Political tyrannies and dictatorships are implementing certain ideologies through propaganda and so-called education. Our worship, our temples, our belonging to societies, to groups, to political parties—all this further narrows the margin of freedom. Probably most of you do belong to various societies, you are committed to this or that group, and if you observe very closely you will see how little freedom, how little human dignity you have, because you are merely repeating what others have said. So you deny freedom; and surely it is only in freedom that the mind can discover truth, not when it is circumscribed by a belief or committed to an ideology.

I wonder if you are at all aware of this extraordinary compulsion to belong to something? I am sure most of you belong to some political party, to a certain group or organized belief; you are committed to a particular way of thinking or living, and that surely denies freedom. I do not know if you have examined this compulsion to belong, to identify oneself with a country, with a system, with a group, with certain political or religious beliefs. And obviously, without understanding this compulsion to belong, merely to walk out of one party or group has no meaning, because you will soon commit yourself to another.

Have you not done this very thing? Leaving one ism, you go and join something else—Catholicism, Communism, Moral Rearmament, and God knows what else. You move from one commitment to another, compelled by the urge to belong to something. Why? I think it is an important question to ask oneself. Why do you want to belong? Surely it is only when the mind stands completely alone that it is capable of receiving what is true—not when it has committed itself to some party or belief. Please do think about this question, commune with it in your heart. Why do you belong? Why have you committed yourself to a country, to a party, to an ideology, to a belief, to a family, to a race? Why is there this desire to

identify yourself with something? And what are the implications of this commitment? It is only the man who is completely outside, that can understand—not the man who is pledged to a particular group, or who is perpetually moving from one group to another, from one commitment to another.

Surely, you want to belong to something because it gives you a sense of security—not only social security, but also inward security. When you belong to something, you feel safe. By belonging to this thing called Hinduism, you feel socially respectable, inwardly safe, secure. So you have committed yourself to something in order to feel safe, secure—which obviously narrows down the margin of freedom, does it not?

Most of us are not free. We are slaves to Hinduism, to Communism, to one society or another, to leaders, to political parties, to organized religions, to *gurus,* and so we have lost our dignity as human beings. There is dignity as a human being only when one has tasted, smelt, known this extraordinary thing called freedom. Out of the flowering of freedom comes human dignity. But if we do not know this freedom, we are enslaved. That is what is happening in the world, is it not? And I think the desire to belong, to commit ourselves to something, is one of the causes of this narrowing down of freedom. To be rid of this urge to belong, to be free of the desire to commit oneself, one has to inquire into one's own way of thinking, to commune with oneself, with one's own heart and desires. That is a very difficult thing to do. It requires patience, a certain tenderness of approach, a constant and persistent searching into oneself without condemnation or acceptance. That is true meditation; but you will find it is not easy to do, and very few of us are willing to undertake it.

Most of us choose the easy path of being guided, being led; we belong to something, and thereby lose our human dignity. Probably you will say, "Well, I have heard this before, he is on his favourite subject", and go away. I wish it were possible for you to listen as if you were listening for the first time—like seeing the sunset, or the face of your friend for the first time. Then you would learn, and thus learning, you would discover freedom for yourself—which is not the so-called freedom offered by another.

So let us inquire patiently and persistently into this question of what is freedom. Surely, only a free man can comprehend the truth, which is to find out if there is an eternal something beyond the measure of the mind; and the man who is burdened with his own experience or knowledge, is never free, because knowledge prevents learning.

We are going to commune with each other, to inquire together into this question of what is freedom, and how to come by it. And thus to inquire, there must obviously be freedom right from the start; otherwise you cannot inquire, can you? You must totally cease to belong, for only then is your mind capable of inquiring. But if your mind is tethered, held by some commitment, whether political, religious, social, or economic, then that very commitment will prevent you from inquiring, because for you there is no freedom.

Do please listen to what is being said, and see for yourself the fact that the very first movement of inquiry must be born of freedom. You cannot be committed, and from there inquire, any more than an animal tied to a tree can wander far. Your mind is a slave as long as it is committed to Hinduism, to Buddhism, to Islam, to Christianity, to Communism, or to something it has invented for itself. So we cannot proceed together unless we comprehend from the very beginning, from now on,

that to inquire there must be freedom. There must be the abandonment of the past—not unwillingly, grudgingly, but a complete letting go.

After all, the scientists who got together to tackle the problem of going to the moon, were free to inquire, however much they may have been slaves to their country, and all the rest of it. I am only referring to that peculiar freedom of the scientist at a research station. At least for the time being, in his laboratory, he is free to inquire. But *our* laboratory is our living, it is the whole span of life from day to day, from month to month, from year to year, and our freedom to inquire must be total, it cannot be a fragmentary thing, as it is with technical people. That is why, if we are to learn and understand what freedom is, if we are to delve deeply into its unfathomable dimensions, we must from the very start abandon all our commitments, and stand alone. And this is a very difficult thing to do.

The other day in Kashmir, several *sannyasis* said to me, "We live alone in the snow. We never see anybody. No one ever comes to visit us." And I said to them, "Are you really alone, or are you merely physically separated from humanity?" "Oh, yes," they replied, "we are alone." But they were with their *Vedas* and *Upanishads*, with their experiences and gathered knowledge, with their meditations and *japams*. They were still carrying the burden of their conditioning. That is not being alone. Such men, having put on a saffron cloth, say to themselves, "We have renounced the world"; but they have not. You can never renounce the world, because the world is part of you. You may renounce a few cows, a house, some property; but to renounce your heredity, your tradition, your accumulated racial experience, the whole burden of your conditioning—this requires an enormous inquiry, a searching out, which is the movement of learning. The other way —becoming a monk or a hermit—is very easy.

So, do consider and see how your job, your going from the house to the office every day for 30, 40 or 50 years, your knowledge of certain techniques as an engineer, a lawyer, a mathematician, a lecturer—how all this makes you a slave. Of course, in this world one has to know some technique and hold a job; but consider how all these things are narrowing down the margin of freedom. Prosperity, progress, security, success—everything is narrowing down the mind, so that ultimately, or even now, the mind becomes mechanical and carries on by merely repeating certain things it has learnt.

A mind that wants to inquire into freedom and discover its beauty, its vastness, its dynamism, its strange quality of not being effective in the worldly sense of that word—such a mind from the very beginning must put aside its commitments, the desire to belong, and with that freedom, it must inquire. Many questions are involved in this. What is the state of the mind that is free to inquire? What does it mean to be free from commitments? Is a married man to free himself from his commitments? Surely, where there is love, there is no commitment; you do not belong to your wife, and your wife does not belong to you. But we *do* belong to each other, because we have never felt this extraordinary thing called love, and that is our difficulty. We have committed ourselves in marriage, just as we have committed ourselves in learning a technique. Love is not commitment; but again, that is a very difficult thing to understand, because the word is not the thing. To be sensitive to another, to have that pure feeling uncorrupted by the intellect—surely,

that is love.

I do not know if you have considered the nature of the intellect. The intellect and its activities are all right at a certain level, are they not? But when the intellect interferes with that pure feeling, then mediocrity sets in. To know the function of the intellect, and to be aware of that pure feeling, without letting the two mingle and destroy each other, requires a very clear, sharp awareness.

Now, when we say that we must inquire into something, is there in fact any inquiring to be done, or is there only direct perception? Do you understand? I hope I am making myself clear. Inquiry is generally a process of analyzing and coming to a conclusion. That is the function of the mind, of the intellect, is it not? The intellect says, "I have analyzed, and this is the conclusion I have come to". From that conclusion it moves to another conclusion, and so it keeps going.

Surely, when thought springs from a conclusion, it is no longer thinking, because the mind has already concluded. There is thinking only when there is no conclusion. This again you will have to ponder over, neither accepting nor rejecting it. If I conclude that Communism, or Catholicism, or some other 'ism' is so, I have stopped thinking. If I conclude that there is God, or that there is no God, I have ceased to inquire. Conclusion takes the form of belief. If I am to find out whether there is God, or what is the true function of the State in relation to the individual, I can never start from a conclusion, because the conclusion is a form of commitment.

So the function of the intellect is always, is it not?, to inquire, to analyze, to search out; but because we want to be secure inwardly, psychologically, because we are afraid, anxious about life, we come to some form of conclusion, to which we are committed. From one commitment we proceed to another, and I say that such a mind, such an intellect, being slave to a conclusion, has ceased to think, to inquire.

I do not know if you have observed what an enormous part the intellect plays in our life. The newspapers, the magazines, everything about us is cultivating reason. Not that I am against reason. On the contrary, one must have the capacity to reason very clearly, sharply. But if you observe you find that the intellect is everlastingly analyzing why we belong or do not belong, why one must be an outsider to find reality, and so on. We have learnt the process of analyzing ourselves. So there is the intellect with its capacity to inquire, to analyze, to reason and come to conclusions; and there is feeling, pure feeling, which is always being interrupted, coloured by the intellect. And when the intellect interferes with pure feeling, out of this interference grows a mediocre mind. On the one hand we have intellect, with its capacity to reason based upon its likes and dislikes, upon its conditioning, upon its experience and knowledge; and on the other, we have feeling, which is corrupted by society, by fear. And will these two reveal what is true? Or is there only perception, and nothing else? I am afraid I am not making myself clear. I will explain what I mean.

To me there is only perception—which is to see something as false or true immediately. This immediate perception of what is false and what is true is the essential factor—not the intellect, with its reasoning based upon its cunning, its knowledge, its commitments. It must sometimes have happened to you that you have seen the truth of something immediately—such as the truth that you cannot belong to anything. That is perception: seeing the truth of something immediately,

without analysis, without reasoning, without all the things that the intellect creates in order to postpone perception. It is entirely different from 'intuition', which is a word that we use with glibness and ease. And perception has nothing to do with experience. Experience tells you that you must belong to something, otherwise you will be destroyed, you will lose your job, or your family, or your property, or your position and prestige.

So the intellect, with all its reasoning, with its cunning evaluations, with its conditioned thinking, says that you must belong to something, that you must commit yourself in order to survive. But if you perceive the truth that the individual must stand completely alone, then that very perception is a liberating factor; you do not have to struggle to be alone.

To me there is only this direct perception—not reasoning, not calculation, not analysis. You must have the capacity to analyze; you must have a good, sharp mind in order to reason; but a mind that is limited to reason and analysis is incapable of perceiving what is truth. To perceive immediately the truth that it is folly to belong to any religious organization, you must be able to look into your heart of hearts, to know it thoroughly, without all the obstructions created by the intellect. If you commune with yourself, you will know why you belong, why you have committed yourself; and if you push further, you will see the slavery, the cutting down of freedom, the lack of human dignity which that commitment entails. When you perceive all this instantaneously, you are free; you don't have to make an effort to be free. That is why perception is essential. All efforts to be free come from self-contradiction. We make an effort because we are in a state of contradiction within ourselves; and this contradiction, this effort, breeds many avenues of escape which hold us everlastingly in the treadmill of slavery.

So it seems to me that one must be very serious—but I do not mean serious in the sense of being committed to something. People who are committed to something, are not serious at all. They have given themselves over to something in order to achieve their own ends, in order to enhance their own position or prestige. Such people I do not call serious. The serious man is he who wants to find out what is freedom, and for this he must surely inquire into his own slavery. Don't say you are not a slave. You belong to something, and that is slavery, though your leaders talk of freedom. So did Hitler; so does Krushchev. Every tyrant, every *guru,* every president or vice-president, everyone in the whole religious and political set-up, talks of freedom. But freedom is something entirely different. It is a precious fruit without which you lose human dignity. It is love, without which you will never find God, or truth, or that nameless thing. Do what you will—cultivate all the virtues, sacrifice, slave, search out ways to serve man—; without freedom, none of these will bring to light that reality within your own heart. That reality, that immeasurable something, comes when there is freedom—the total inward freedom which exists only when you have not committed yourself, when you do not belong to anything, when you are able to stand completely alone without bitterness, without cynicism, without hope or disappointment. Only such a mind-heart is capable of receiving that which is immeasurable.

November 22, 1959.

II

TALK IN MADRAS

This evening I would like to talk over with you the rather complex problem of sorrow. Sorrow is not just a matter of wanting something which one cannot get. It is deeper and much more subtle than that, and to understand it requires a great deal of inquiry, penetration. As I was saying the other day, understanding is not the result of intellectual perception. Understanding does not come by thinking things over. I want to understand this whole process of sorrow, with all the pain, the anxiety, the fear, the extraordinary heaviness and despair involved in it. I want to *understand* it; and merely thinking about it, reasoning about it, seeing different aspects of it, and coming to a conclusion, will never bring about the total understanding that liberates the mind from sorrow. It is only when your whole being, as it were, invites sorrow, when it is open to the significance, the inwardness, the subtleties, the purity, the extraordinary movement of sorrow—only then, I feel, is there total understanding. If one is capable of this total understanding, which means that one is listening to sorrow, learning about sorrow, then I think the miracle takes place. To be free of sorrow is to give one's heart totally and entirely to the problem. But we very rarely give our hearts to a problem; we give only our minds, our thoughts. Thought alone will never resolve any vital human problem. We can think about the problem, and we must. We can also play with words, indulge in arguments, come to conclusions, and quote authorities, which is what most of us do; but this will not help us to open the door to understanding and thereby free the mind from the turmoil and entanglements of sorrow.

I do feel that sorrow can be ended. There is an ending to all sorrow; but the ending of sorrow begins with the understanding of sorrow. In the beginning is the end, not in thinking it over and then having sorrow come to an end eventually. At the very beginning is the ending, because the end and the beginning are one; they are not two different things.

Most of us are held in some kind of sorrow, whether it be the petty little sorrow of a schoolboy, or the equally petty sorrow of an adult who is caught in the conflict of his wants, his anxieties, his hates, his fears, his ambitions, his frustrations and fulfilments. Being caught in all this, we think in terms of a beginning and an ending; we do not see that in the very beginning of the understanding of sorrow, is the ending of sorrow. I think this fact must be grasped, not just intellectually or verbally, but with love, with a sense of completely seeing the truth of it—which is not acceptance. The moment you merely accept something, there is its opposite, the denial of it. That is one of our difficulties: we either accept or reject, or play in between. But if we actually see that in the beginning is the ending, if we perceive it as a fact, feel the truth of it totally, with all our being, then we shall understand sorrow and not merely escape from sorrow.

After all, sorrow is the state of a mind which is in contradiction with itself—'I want' and 'I don't want'. The mind is driven by compulsions, desires, it struggles in the grip of ambition, with its fulfilments and frustrations. There are innumerable contradictions in our life, both inward and outward. In our speech, in our behaviour, in our thoughts and feelings, there is a constant state of self-contradiction; and the tension, the pain, the turmoil of this self-contradiction is what we call sorrow.

I do not know if we are at all aware of this state of contradiction in ourselves. I think most of us are aware of it only when it reaches a crisis. Then we are thoroughly upset, and we want to find a way out of it, so we seek a method, a system, an escape. But we are not aware of our everyday state of self-contradiction. We do, or are forced to do, a certain job, and we really want to do something else. The life we lead, socially and economically, is not the life we would like to lead. In our relationships there is an element of compulsion, and we are subject to innumerable self-contradictions. I do not know if we are aware of all this. If we are aware of it, we bring it all to a head, and act. But if we are not aware of this state of contradiction in ourselves, it goes on quietly smoldering until a tension is built up which eventually bursts into flame and either drives us into a neurotic state, or forces us to find a temporary solution. Or there is a total understanding of all the hidden wants, a grasping of the whole significance of self-contradiction, and hence the ending of it.

Now, I do not know which it is you actually do, or whether you are even aware of your self-contradictions. Your tradition of centuries as a Hindu, which requires you to put ashes on your forehead and all the rest of it, meeting the pressure of the modern world, creates a contradiction in you. You want to lead a spiritual life, whatever that may mean, and at the same time there are the demands of your daily life, and you are inwardly torn by innumerable desires. I wonder if you are aware of these contradictions in yourself. I think you should be; because the moment you begin to be aware of yourself, it stirs up all the hidden corners of the mind, which most of us do not know—and do not wish to know, because we do not want to be disturbed. We want to carry on with our traditions, and we also want to lead very modern lives. We go to a modern office and function there, and when we return home we are orthodox Hindus, Moslems, or whatever it is we are. We never face in ourselves this contradiction—the contradiction of authority and freedom, of leadership and the deep urge not to obey, but to find out for oneself.

We must all have tasted this extraordinary contradiction in our lives, we must be somewhat aware of it, but unfortunately we never bring it to a crisis, and for a very simple reason: because a crisis would mean action, something would have to be done about it. We are not willing to bring our self-contradiction to that boiling point when we have to act, and so we lead tortuous, contradictory lives, pining away for some haven where we hope we shall be at peace.

Please really listen to what I am saying, and do not take it as a lecture which you attend, and then go home and carry on as before. I am describing the state of your own mind. If you do not wish to listen, then do not come here, and that is the end of it. But since you are here, you are being driven to listen, even though the mind obviously resists listening. It wants to find an answer, a way out; but there is no answer, there is no way out of contradiction. Any way out of contradiction is the creation of another contradiction. One has to understand contradiction totally, go into it deeply and feel one's way through it.

I have said that sorrow is a state of contradiction which becomes acute when something vital happens in your life—when your son dies, when your wife or husband turns away from you. It becomes acute when, seeking fulfilment, you find that in the shadow of fulfilment there is always frustration. You love, and you are not loved in return.

You want to be good, and you are not. You pursue the outer, hoping to find the inner; or, in pursuing the inner, you struggle to reject the outer. This is your actual state, is it not? In your life there is a ceaseless contradiction.

Now, why does this contradiction exist? Please do not give me an answer, a verbal explanation or definition, because that is not going to solve the problem. You know all the definitions, all the answers, but you are still in sorrow. So mere explanation does not dissolve sorrow. Yet how easily we are satisfied with explanations, and that is the curious part of it. I wonder if you have noticed how quickly words, explanations, satisfy most of us. This indicates a peculiarly shallow mind, does it not? But we are now considering a problem which has no answer of that kind. There is no answer to sorrow. There is no way out of sorrow. Do what you will—go to church, mesmerize yourself with *mantras*, stand on your head, run away —nothing will free you from sorrow. What will put an end to sorrow is the understanding of sorrow.

So, why does contradiction exist in us? I want something, and I cannot get it. I want to become a great man, and on the way to becoming great I find many temptations, many trials, many despairs, frustrations. In fulfilment there is the constant shadow of pain. So I ask myself—and may I suggest that you also should ask yourself—why is there this inner contradiction? Don't you think contradiction exists because the mind is capable of choice? I choose to go to the right instead of to the left. That very choice implies an attraction towards the left. If there were no attraction, I should not have to choose. Choice exists, surely, between two ways of action, two ways of thinking, living. That is fairly simple. The way of action I choose is for the purpose of fulfilment. I have a compulsion to fulfil myself in a certain direction—as a minister, as a writer, as a poet, as a singer, or through the family, begetting children. In that very process of choosing, there is the opposite.

Have you ever noticed yourself acting without choice? Has it ever happened to you that you have performed an action in which there is no choice at all? Surely it must have happened. You do something totally, completely, without thought, without the distraction of the intellect; your whole being, emotionally and intellectually, is there. Has this not happened to you? Perhaps rarely; but it does happen. At such moments you know action in which there is no choice, hence no contradiction, and therefore no sorrow. Do not ask, "How am I to know that action? How am I to reach that choiceless state?" The very question "How?" creates a contradiction.

I think the mind that seeks a system by which to understand something, is a most stupid mind. It is all right to use a system as an engineer, as a mechanic, as a technician or a scientist, because you are dealing with mechanical things. But life is not mechanical; it is an imponderable thing, limitless, fathomless. Only a very superficial mind wants an answer to a problem that has no answer. When such a mind finds an answer, the answer reflects its own superficiality, and with that it is satisfied.

I am certainly not complaining, I am not irritated, I am just pointing out that there is no answer to sorrow; and this, I think, is an extraordinary thing to realize. What matters is to perceive the ways of sorrow. Out of choice there is contradiction, conflict, and therefore sorrow. After all, if we did not have to choose, if there were no conflict, we should not have the problem of sorrow. But this does not

mean that one must be contented, satisfied, and lead a comfortably bovine life. One has to grasp the inward significance of this. Where there is contradiction, there is effort; and where there is effort, there is choice. Choice implies the lack of totality of action. Only when you give to something your mind, your heart, your whole being—it is only then that there is no sorrow, because there is no contradiction. It is not a state to be arrived at by meditation, or through awareness, or through self-knowledge, or through quoting various texts. The whole process of sorrow has to be understood.

What do we mean by understanding? What do we mean by perception? Surely, perception is a timeless state. As long as the mind is as it is now—the result of time, the residue of many thousands of yesterdays in relation to the present—sorrow cannot be understood. The mind is the result of time, it is the instrument of time, and with that instrument we are trying to understand or to dispel a problem which is itself the product of time.

Look, sirs, there is sorrow. We all feel the shadow of sorrow, so we find ways and means to get rid of it, to escape from it. We say "Let us reason about it, let us bring together all the facts", and so on. This is the process of the mind, the intellect, which is obviously the result of time—time in the sense of what has happened, what one has learnt, experienced. With this instrument, we are trying to dispel sorrow. But sorrow itself is the product of time. I do not know if I am making this thing clearer, or more obscure.

You say: "To understand sorrow, I need time to think about it. I must grow in understanding. To be free of sorrow, I must practise a system until I arrive at a state in which my mind will no longer be disturbed". These are all steps in time, are they not? And through this process you are trying to dispel sorrow, the product of time—which is impossible. You need a totally new factor, a different quality, another dimension, and that is perception—perception in which there is no time at all. You see it instantaneously. But that requires astonishing attention, it requires all your vitality. The mind, being totally gathered, precipitates itself upon the problem and sees the depth, the width, the beauty of the problem. But unfortunately, your mind is not really attentive, because you have been to the office, you have your quarrels, you have a miserable existence, you are driven as a slave by society, which grinds you down. So when you listen, you are tired out; and how can you give complete attention? I do not think you have ever given complete attention to anything. If you had, you would not be doing what you are actually doing. You would not be a clerk wanting to become the manager, or a politician wanting to be the governor, or some other glorified person. You would not belong to any group, to any nationality, to any party, to any organized religion.

So I would suggest that the ending of sorrow is not a matter of evolution, a matter of growth, a matter of development. The truth about sorrow is to be perceived in the immediate. Surely, you have on occasions perceived something which has struck you so forcibly that it has altered your whole way of thinking. That something you have seen is the truth—and the truth brings its own action, its own revolution. You do not have to do a thing about it. That is why it is very important to perceive the truth of any problem.

Our problem is not sorrow and the ending of sorrow, so much as it is the fact that the mind is caught up in tradition, in the ways of mechanical think-

ing. That is really our problem. When the mind is free from all that, then one can look at sorrow. I wonder if we are at all aware of how tradition surrounds us, of how the mind is bound by tradition? Social tradition is very superficial, and one can throw it off as one throws off an old garment; but there is also tradition of a different kind, which is much stronger, much more profound, and that is the tradition of experience. I do not know if you are aware of how experience shapes the mind. Experience does shape the mind, does it not, sirs? And what is this experience? Surely, it is the reaction of the past to the present. The present is a challenge, and I respond according to my conditioning, according to my culture, according to my education—all of which is the past. This response of the past to the challenge of the present, is experience; therefore experience can obviously never be new, and that experience only strengthens the past. Experience, which is the response of the past to the present, only strengthens the past; so experience is never a liberating factor. On the contrary, it is a binding factor. I hope I am making myself somewhat clear.

We are all familiar with the idea that experience is necessary. Experience is necessary in dealing with mechanical things. I need experience to drive a car; I need experience to run a factory, to be a foreman, to work at a technical job. I can't do these things without experience. But is experience necessary for a mind that wants to perceive? Take a simple example. One wants to know what is reality, God, or truth, that something which is not measurable by the mind. Everybody fundamentally wants to know this, it does not matter who they are or what they call themselves. The Atheists, the Communists, the Catholics, the Hindus, the Moslems —everybody wants to find out this one thing, because without it, life is empty. All the prayers, rituals, ideologies, ambitions, family quarrels, mean nothing without it. And everybody repeats what their *gurus*, or the saints, or their leaders have said. In this matter they have said, "You must grow in experience; you must practise this discipline, follow these teachings, and ultimately, in the long distance of time, you will attain the truth". I do not believe all that, to me it is all nonsense, because through time you are hoping to capture the timeless, which is an impossibility. You have to go beyond and find out how to liberate the mind from the enslavement of experience.

Do listen; this is very important. And it is quite difficult to understand, because you have never thought about it at all. Great seers have always told us to acquire experience. They have said that experience gives us understanding. But it is only the innocent mind, the mind unclouded by experience, totally free from the past—it is only such a mind that can perceive what is reality. If you see the truth of that, if you perceive it for a split second, you will know the extraordinary clarity of a mind that is innocent. This means the falling away of all the encrustations of memory, which is the discarding of the past. But to perceive it, there can be no question of 'how'. Your mind must not be distracted by the 'how', by the desire for an answer. Such a mind is not an attentive mind. As I said earlier in this talk, in the beginning is the end. In the beginning is the seed of the ending of that which we call sorrow. The ending of sorrow is realized in sorrow itself, not away from sorrow. To move away from sorrow is merely to find an answer, a conclusion, an escape; but sorrow continues. Whereas, if you give it your complete attention,

which is to be attentive with your whole being, then you will see that there is an immediate perception in which no time is involved, in which there is no effort, no conflict; and it is this immediate perception, this choiceless awareness, that puts an end to sorrow.

November 25, 1959.

III

TALK IN MADRAS

It would perhaps be worthwhile to talk over together the rather complex problem of action—not a specialized action in relation to a particular problem, but action as a whole. We are not here concerned with political action, or with whether you should choose a particular job, or with what you should do under certain circumstances. I think such an approach to the problem of action is invalid, because we always seem to get lost in the part and are therefore incapable of tackling the problem as a whole. So if it is possible, I would like to consider, rather hesitantly, this question of action, of what to do.

Are we not faced with this problem, all of us, in different ways? But we unfortunately translate it in terms of what to do in a particular set of circumstances, what to do when a challenge arises, and so on. Surely, action born of choice is partial, it is never total; and our problem is how to capture the significance, the meaning of total action, and not be caught in a particular form of action demanded by society. If we can be very clear in our approach to this problem, then I think we shall find the right answer. But most of us invariably put wrong questions and get wrong answers, which only creates further problems.

So, what is total action? If one understands the totality of action, one will respond rightly to a particular demand; but to respond to a particular demand without this understanding, only creates further confusion. If I act merely politically, without completely understanding the totality of action, such partial activity itself breeds contradiction. That is the case with most of us. Being caught in a network of special ideas, we try to solve our problems through partial action, which only increases and expands our problems.

Then what is total action? It is action in which there is no contradiction, is it not? And such action must obviously come about without effort, because effort is the result of contradiction. I would like to go into this problem and understand it as much as possible within this given hour.

But before we go into the question of total action, must we not inquire into the present action of the individual in relation to society, in relation to an organized political group, in relation to everything that is going on about us? What is the action of the individual at present, and what can he do when society is crushing him, perverting his thinking, so that he has no freedom? The more society is organized, the more ruthless it is with the individual. We see this happening in different parts of the world. The Communists have no place for the individual; though they talk about his ultimate freedom, the individual is completely destroyed. It is essentially the same with the organized religions. Though they talk about the individual attaining salvation, the individual is conditioned according to a particular creed, whether it be Catholic, Moslem, Hindu, Buddhist, or what you will.

So the encroachment of society upon the individual is constantly increasing, and his margin of freedom, his clarity of thinking, is becoming very narrow. I do not know if you are aware of this. You must be. And being aware of it,

what are you to do? I am merely putting this question so that we shall begin to think it out together. What is the individual to do, under present circumstances, in his relationship with the family, with society? What is he to do with regard to religion? Should he join the overwhelmingly organized Communist society? Surely, the moment you join an organization, you are already a slave to that organization. To fight a Hitler, or to fight the Communists, you have to employ the same methods which they use. We all know this. And what is the position of the individual who is confronted with all these things? Most of us are just swallowed up, because to struggle against the pressure of society would involve a great deal of discomfort and uncertainty; it would mean a revolution in the life of the individual. To break away from the habit of belonging to something, requires immense clarity in thinking, because clarity in thinking is character. Without such clarity, there is no character, no individuality.

Now, what is the nature of total action? I think, tentatively, that there are two ways of action. One is action from a centre, and the other is action which has no centre. Most of us act from a centre—the centre which is made up of knowledge, of experience, the centre which is conditioned according to the culture, the religion, the economic status in which we have lived. When you go to the factory or to the office, when you carry on your business, when you perform ceremonies, rituals, when you worship what you call God—in all this you are consciously or unconsciously acting from the centre of knowledge, of tradition, of experience. That centre can be controlled, it can be strengthened or weakened by a carefully organized society. I may leave Hinduism and become a Catholic or a Communist, but whatever I do, that centre will always remain; only the technique, the coating, has changed.

I am not saying anything very strange. This process is obviously taking place in each one of us. As a Hindu, you think in a certain way. If you become a Communist, you will think in a different way, but your thinking is always from the centre of conditioning. All self-conscious exertion to achieve arises from that centre, which is also made up of ambition, fear, envy, hate, of the desire to do good, and the desire to be good. So we are functioning from that centre all the time—or rather, that centre is functioning all the time, because the mind is not different from that centre. The thinker is the thought; the thought is not apart from the thinker. The centre is the process of thinking according to a certain pattern, thinking according to our conditioning as Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, Communists, or what you will. As long as that centre is functioning, obviously there must be innumerable contradictions, conflicts, there must be fear, hope, despair. Out of the desire to fulfil ourselves, and to avoid frustrations, we invent many illusions, myths, which we dignify with such words as 'God', 'truth'.

There is, I feel, an action which is not the outcome of a centre. But that action can be known only when one does not belong to any society, to any nationality, to any organized religion—which means that one is capable of withstanding all the influences of the group, of society. This, it seems to me, is the only hope for the individual in a world where Communism is spreading, and where organized religion, which is fighting Communism, is also spreading. After all, the Roman Catholic Church is a highly organized religious body, and it is fighting Communism, which is also highly organized, and which is its own

religion. These two—Communism, and organized resistance to Communism—are spreading. So what is the individual to do? To belong to any group, to any religious or political organization, implies the functioning of a centre, of a conditioned mind.

I do not know, sirs, if I am making myself clear. If not, we can discuss this point again later on.

That centre, from which most of us function, is made up of knowledge in different forms—knowledge as technique, knowledge as experience, knowledge as tradition, knowledge as memory of the things we have been told. It is essentially a centre of habit, a centre of authority. That centre is authority itself. So I think we should examine the whole process of knowledge and authority.

A mind that is a slave to knowledge, is bound by authority. Please think it over as I am talking to you, and do not wait until you go home. The mind that has accumulated knowledge of what to do, what to think, or how to think; the mind that has merely acquired the technique of a professor, of a mechanic, of a priest, of a bureaucrat—such a mind is obviously a slavish mind, bound to its own knowledge. It is never free. The mind is free only when it is aware of its authoritarian knowledge, and puts it aside. Then it can use knowledge without being enslaved by knowledge.

But this is an extremely difficult thing to do. Knowledge gives us a sense of functioning in society with stability, with clarity; it gives us a feeling of certainty, a sense of security; so knowledge breeds authority, and we worship authority. We worship the man who knows, the professor, the *guru,* the writer of books, and so on. But the mind that is inquiring, that is seeking to understand what is freedom, cannot be a slave to knowledge.

If you observe your own mind in operation, you will see how extraordinarily difficult it is to be free of past experiences, previous thoughts, established habits. I do not know if you have observed and have tried to understand yourselves in this way; but if you have, then you will know how arduous it is to free the mind from the pattern of yesterday. Yesterday may be tradition, it may be your own experience, it may be what you have read, what you have gathered, what you have listened to, what you have learnt. Essentially it is based on the opinions, the ideas of others—on what Shankara, Buddha, Christ, Marx, or Stalin has said. This yesterday has already set going a momentum, it has established a pattern which has become your authority; and unless this momentum of yesterday, which has created in your mind a pattern of authority, is understood, you are blocked in the pursuit of self-knowledge. You cannot proceed further, because authority, whether political or so-called religious, makes the mind a slave; it cannot think freely, it cannot be totally aware.

When knowledge becomes the core of authority, it is very difficult for the mind to be free of authority. The electronic brain can perform certain functions much faster and far more efficiently than the human mind, but it is not free. It cannot think of something new, it can only function in accordance with what it has been taught to do—and that is exactly the situation with the human mind, except that in the case of the human mind there is hope of freedom, of freshness, of newness. But the freshness, the newness cannot come into being as long as the mind is unaware of and does not understand the binding quality of authority, of knowledge.

Knowledge is a peculiar thing, is it not? We not only know the past, but we also know the future, or think we

do, because the past projects itself through the present into the future. The Communists, like the organized religious people, claim to know the future, and they are willing to sacrifice the present generation to achieve that future, the ultimate and perfect Utopia. They are slaves, not only to the past, but also to their projected future.

Now, realizing that our minds are crippled, that we are not free either from the past or from the projected future, should we not ask ourselves whether there is action which has no centre? But first of all, is it possible for one to communicate to another the significance of such action? I am speaking English, and you understand the English words, which have a certain meaning, so we understand each other to some extent at the verbal level. But surely the significance of total action is communicable only when you and I go beyond the verbal level. Mere description cannot bring about understanding; on the contrary, description perverts understanding if your mind clings to words, because you give a certain interpretation to the words, which creates a blockage between us. The moment we try to communicate with each other merely at the verbal level, there is agreement or denial. You say "I am of the same opinion" or "You are wrong, I do not agree with you", and so on. I think this approach is completely false. Understanding is not a matter of agreement and disagreement. Either you understand, or you do not understand. The mind that approaches the problem with a set of opinions, conclusions, will agree or disagree, and so there is no perception of the actual.

I would like to talk about action which is not partial, which is not the outcome of knowledge, which is not the product of authority, but something entirely different—which means, really, action without a centre. It must have happened to you that you have done something without calculation, without argumentation, without the cunning machinations of thought, without thinking of what has been or what may be, without choice. You must have done something in your life without this whole process taking place. But to understand this kind of action requires a great deal of self-knowledge, which is comprehension of the workings of one's own mind; because it is so easy to deceive oneself and say, "I have acted without a centre, I have joined such and such a group without the process of thought"—which is idiotic and immature, for what is functioning is one's own hidden desire. Whereas, action which is total, and which has no centre, requires exploration into oneself—and this means, really, going into the whole process of thinking, into the whole mechanism of the mind, without a limit, without an end in view.

I do not know if any of you have ever seriously gone into yourselves with complete willingness, with wholeheartedness, with joy, without any sense of compulsion, and have tried to discover what you are. Merely to say "I am this" or "I am not that", is again immature, it has no meaning. To explore, to discover, there must be joy, there must be enthusiasm, vitality, especially when going into this complex thing called the mind. But most of us explore either out of despair, or to find something which will give us nourishment, which will give us stability, an assurance of continuity. Real inquiry must be without any of these things. One inquires just to find out what is actually taking place. I do not know if you have ever done that, if you have ever studied yourself as a woman studies her face in a mirror. There is nothing wrong with studying your face in a mirror, which is to see it exactly as it is—straight hair, crooked nose, and so

on. You can embellish it, colour it, try to make it more beautiful, but that is another matter. Similarly, to study yourself is to see what is actually the state of your mind—why you think and do certain things, why you go to the office, or to the temple, why you talk in a certain way to your wife, to your servant, why you read the sacred books, why you attend these talks. You have to know all this from moment to moment, not as accumulated knowledge on the basis of which you function. Learning is a movement of the mind in which there is no accumulation. You can learn only when knowledge is not being gathered from the movement of learning. The moment you gather knowledge, add to what you have learnt, you have ceased to learn. A mind that gathers knowledge through learning, is driven by the desire for safety, security, or is out for some profit. Whereas, in the movement of learning there is no accumulation—and that is the beauty of learning. To learn is just to see what you are—the hate, the calumny, the vulgarity, the fears, the hopes, the anxieties, the ambitions—without judging, without evaluating, without condemning or accepting.

Understanding or perception comes when there is a movement of learning which is not additive. If the mind can observe and comprehend itself in this way, you will find that out of such observation and comprehension there is an action which is total, which has no centre as the 'I', the self.

Sirs, do try it. Do not attempt to cultivate a particular kind of action, but inquire into the whole problem of action—which you cannot do as long as you are merely seeking an answer to the problem. It is because we give so little thought to these things that our lives are miserable, petty, narrow, sorrow-laden. What most of us want is respectability.

A man who would really inquire, must first understand his own mind. Without understanding your own mind, you will understand nothing. You may go to church, perform rituals, you may repeat like a gramophone record what you have read in the Scriptures; but that does not make for religion. A religious mind is one that has understood its own processes, its hidden motives, its untrodden paths. It has delved into the profound depths of itself; because it is living, moving, functioning, and never coming to a conclusion, it is discovering all the time what is truth. Truth is not static; it is moving, dynamic, it has no abode, and the mind that is incapable of following it swiftly can never understand the quality, the immeasurable nature of truth. That is why self-knowledge is essential—not knowledge of the higher self, the *Atman*, and all that immature stuff, but knowledge of yourself, which is to see how your own mind is conditioned.

Without perceiving the significance of knowledge and authority, it is impossible to know the totality of action in which there is no contradiction. Total action is action without the sense of compulsion, and therefore without regret. Surely, such action is wisdom. Wisdom is not to be taught. There can be no school of wisdom. Wisdom is not something that you buy, or that comes to you through service, self-sacrifice, and all the rest of it. Wisdom does not come from reading books, or through having many experiences, or through doing what your father, or your grandmother, or your leaders tell you to do. Wisdom comes only to the mind that perceives what is true, and when perception is total. There is no perception without self-knowledge. Wisdom comes only when there is no conflict. You will understand what is total action only when you begin to inquire into the whole process of the mind;

and then you will also know how to act in a particular situation, what to do to-day, or any day. Through the part you can never understand the whole; but when you perceive the significance of the whole, out of that comprehension you can understand the part.

To go into all this requires an understanding of the process of one's own thinking. And the beauty of this inquiry lies, not in what is achieved, in what is learnt or gained, but in the complete innocence of a mind that is free to see anew the skies, the many faces, the rivers and the rich land. Only a mind that has understood itself is capable of receiving the benediction which has no ending.

November 29, 1959.

IV

TALK IN MADRAS

It must be very difficult to live in goodness, to be humble, to have no anger, not to be envious, not to be acquisitive. To make us somewhat civilized, to keep us within the margin of decency, there are all the various religious sanctions, the taboos, the fears, the promise of heaven and the threat of hell; and to change without any of these influences, without any compulsion, without reward or punishment—which is to bring about, through comprehension, a radical transformation within the mind—seems to be extraordinarily difficult. To change is apparently one of the most arduous things to do—if we ever change at all. This is not said in any spirit of cynicism. But without understanding the whole process of change, we seek various systems of discipline by which to control or shape the mind. We suppress what we feel should be cast off, and thereby hope to sublimate or transcend it.

That is the case with most of us, is it not? When we are angry, we try to suppress our anger; we seek a solution, a way out of it. We never go into the problem and understand it totally, completely—yet this may be the only way of resolving the problem of anger, or any other problem that creates conflict in the mind. We live with conflict throughout our lives; from childhood till we die, we are in eternal conflict, both within and without. We are used to exerting will, making an effort to suppress or control ourselves; we practise various methods of discipline, meditation; we read the sacred books, and all that sort of thing, hoping to escape from the things which create conflict in our lives. To keep us within the bounds of respectable behaviour, there are the various religious sanctions, and the moral codes of public opinion, and we try to live in accordance with all that.

So our existence is really a state of contradiction, in which there is a constant effort to be *this* and not to be *that*. We are everlastingly trying to become something, to avoid something, to repress, conform, adjust. If you observe yourselves—as one must if one is at all intelligent—you will know that this process goes on in us from day to day, year in and year out until we die. We are making a constant effort to conform, to adjust, to comply, to imitate; this is our life, and from this pattern we hardly ever break away. There is no cessation of that which causes in us a contradiction. We never totally free ourselves from anger, greed, envy, jealousy, although we are forever struggling against these things.

Now, I would like, if I may, to talk about this effort to change, and about what is implied in change. I would like to go into it by thinking aloud and

talking it over with you; because I feel that there must be a fundamental change in the quality of the mind itself, and that the mere outward adjustments of a cunning mind seeking its own profit, will lead us nowhere. Such a mind can never really know the quality of peace. It cannot possibly be aware without choice, or be in that state of creative reality.

If one is to go very deeply into this question of change, one must approach it, I think, by understanding what consciousness is—not the consciousness which the books describe, and about which many people have certain theories, conclusions, but the consciousness operating in oneself. That is surely the only point from which one can start. One cannot assume anything, one cannot start with any theory, conviction, or conclusion. I think we must proceed very simply, and not bring in what Shankara and other people have said about consciousness. It is only then that we shall be able to go into this problem as two human beings who are attempting to uncover the ways of our own thinking, to understand our conflicts and why we do certain things.

In trying to understand what we call consciousness, I think we must be aware of certain things. We are not analyzing, we are merely observing—which is quite different from the analytical process, which has a purposive intent, for by its means you hope to get somewhere. So our examination of consciousness is not a process of analysis intended for self-improvement. To me, the desire to improve oneself is a horror; it is a most childish, immature way of thinking. It makes living into a profession; it is on the same level with struggling to get ahead in science, in business, in mathematics, or what you will. We are here not analyzing or trying to improve the self. We are trying to observe the self, to understand this consciousness which is the 'me' in everyday action, in everyday thought and feeling—the desires, the passions, the angers, the brutalities, the cruelties and fears. It is to discover the ways of the 'me' that we are here, not in order to improve the 'me'. There is no improvement of the 'me'. It is only the mediocre mind that says, "I must be much more clever, much more intelligent, much more erudite". However much a petty mind tries to improve itself, it will always be petty.

So please understand from what point of view we are approaching this thing called consciousness. If we do not understand in what manner to look at consciousness, we invariably try to change or control it, and this effort further limits consciousness. It is the very nature of such effort to create a centre as the 'me' from which to control consciousness. I do not know if you have noticed that the moment you make an effort, you have already an objective, and this objective limits your vision.

Please come with me in looking at this problem. Do not say, "Is not effort necessary? Is not our very existence—with its pains, pleasures, conflicts, contradictions—a process of effort?" We know all that; you do not have to tell me that, and I do not have to tell you. But I am trying to point out to you something totally different, and that is why you must approach it a little cautiously, hesitantly.

As I was saying, if we do not understand the nature of effort, all action is limiting. Effort creates its own frontiers, its own objectives, its own limitations. Effort has the time-binding quality. You say, "I must meditate, I must make an effort to control my mind". That very effort to control puts a limit on your mind. Do watch this, do think it out with me. To live

with effort is evil; to me it is an abomination, if I may use a strong word. And if you observe, you will realize that from childhood on we are conditioned to make an effort. In our so-called education, in all the work we do, we struggle to improve ourselves, to become something. Everything we undertake is based on effort; and the more effort we make, the duller the mind becomes.

So there can be a radical change only when there is the cessation of effort. Most of us are conditioned to make an effort in order to produce the change, and that is why there is no real change at all. Such effort merely produces a modification, with its own limitations.

Please do not accept my word for it, or reject what is being said. It is for you to find out if what I am saying is true. Your whole conditioning is based on the assumption that effort is necessary; but now somebody comes along and says "Look, that assumption is all wrong". How are you going to find out for yourself what is true? What I am saying may be entirely false, without any reality behind it; it may be born of the idiosyncrasies of a man who is having an easy life and therefore does not want to make any effort. You may think, "It is all very well for you to talk as you do, but we are born with various limitations, and in varying degrees of poverty, and we must make an effort, otherwise we shall be crushed. Besides, our *Shastras* all tell us to make an effort, to discipline, control, shape our minds".

So, how will you find out whether what is being said is true? You are used to conflict, it is part of your tradition; you are used to discipline, to control, to adjustment. Public opinion is tremendously important to you. What somebody else says is your god—whether it be Shankara, or your neighbour. Do watch your own minds as I am talking; observe how you think. With that mentality, how are you going to find out if what is being said is true or false? To find out, surely, you have to question your own ways of thinking, and not just question what is being said. You obviously cannot find out what is true and what is false, with a mind which from childhood has been taught to conform, to imitate, to follow. So you have to begin by inquiring into the state of your own mind. You have to look into your own consciousness and see why you follow, why you imitate, why you conform. Surely, that is the beginning of any inquiry into consciousness. In such inquiry, there is no analysis, no purposive intent. You are observing to find out if it is possible for the mind to function, to live, to act every day without effort. You see, sirs, a mind that is in a constant state of contradiction, effort, is wearing itself out. It is never fresh, innocent. And surely, you need a fresh mind, an innocent mind, a good, clear mind to perceive the truth or the falseness of anything.

We are inquiring into this thing called consciousness, which should be a total entity, a fully integrated state. But there is a part of consciousness which is in darkness, and a part which is in light—not the spiritual light of Brahma, of Jesus, and all that nonsense which you have been conditioned to believe in. The part which is in light is the superficial mind that goes to the office, that quarrels, that wants a better job—the mind that functions every day. Then there is the hidden mind, the unconscious mind, with its motives, its desires, its intimations of a struggle that is going on below the level of the superficial mind. The whole of that is consciousness. To understand this consciousness, you cannot refer to the books, to what Shankara and others have said about consciousness. If you do, you are lost, because you are not

aware of what you are, and you merely quote the statements of others. Any fool can quote; and the more foolish he is, the more he quotes. To quote is to stop thinking, to stop inquiring, and therefore the mind becomes dull, insensitive.

I know, sirs, that in listening to me you may say "It is a good harangue". You do not realize what quoting does to your minds, how dull it makes you. I was talking the other day with a man who was very erudite, who could quote any of the Scriptures, whether from the East or from the West, from the North or from the South. But he was totally incapable of thinking for himself. So please do stop quoting, and think for yourselves; find out what your own thoughts and feelings are. When you quote, you are relying on the authority of another, which is a very easy escape from looking at your own minds and perceiving yourselves as you actually are.

Now you and I, as two human beings, can see that consciousness is everything we think, feel, smell, desire —all the sensations, and behind the sensations, the desires of wanting and not wanting. We cannot go into too many details, but we can see that all of this makes up the totality of consciousness. In this consciousness, there is contradiction; though at certain moments we may know a state free of contradiction, it is merely a reaction.

Let us approach it differently. There is the conscious, and the unconscious mind. I am not using these words in any special psychoanalytical way; I am just using them as you and I use them in everyday conversation. There is the conscious mind, the mind that is educated in modern society, with all its demands, compulsions, hopes and fears. If I am born a communist, I generally continue to be a communist. My conscious mind, having been educated in communism, continues to function within that pattern, just as a Catholic, a Hindu, or a Buddhist, functions within *his* particular pattern. It is the conscious mind that acquires a technique—the technique of how to run a motor, or of how to get rid of your unwanted desires. It is the conscious mind that learns from a *guru* how to imitate virtue, what to do in order to be 'spiritual', how to suppress this and cultivate that. It is the conscious mind that acquires knowledge, that adjusts at the superficial level.

Then there is the so-called unconscious. What is the unconscious? How are you going to find out for yourself, and not merely quote the psychologist, the expert, the analyst? The unconscious mind is obviously something which most of us have not looked into. And are we capable of looking into it? The only instrument we have for looking into something, is the conscious mind, which is learning, acquiring knowledge, and which is always positive in its approach; and can such a mind inquire into the unconscious? I do not know if I am making myself clear. Probably I am not.

I want to know why I am envious—I am taking that as an example. Why am I envious? The conscious mind can understand and explain why it is envious. When it does, it also creates the opposite and says "I must *not* be envious". So there is conflict, an effort to be *this* and not to be *that*. But envy implies competition, comparison; it implies wanting to be something—to be the prime minister, to be the most famous scholar, to be the biggest lawyer in town, and so on. So envy is very deeply rooted; it is not a thing that can be pushed aside by saying "I must not be envious".

Now, to inquire into envy, to follow its deep roots, requires a mind that is

not positive at all. I do not know if you see that. With most of us, the conscious mind has only two approaches: the positive, or its opposite, the so-called negative. Either it wants, or it does *not* want. It wants to get rid of envy, or else it wants to keep envy and enjoy it. It says, "Envy has its pain and pleasure; I will try to remove the pain, but keep the pleasure of envy". Thus it approaches envy positively, or so-called negatively. But to find the roots of envy requires quite a different state of mind altogether. If envy were a shallow plant, one could simply pull it out and throw it away. But the plant has become a tree with deep roots, it covers the whole of modern civilization; and so the problem continues.

To inquire into envy, to go down into the unconscious where its deep roots are hidden, you require, not the conscious mind that has been educated, but quite a different mentality, an entirely different state of mind. You do not know the unconscious except through intimations and hints, through dreams and certain moments of clarity; and the unconscious is surely not explorable by the conscious mind. When the conscious mind does try to explore or examine it, there is always the observer watching the observed. That is all the conscious mind can do. It can watch as an observer, as an experiencer, as a thinker, apart from the observed, the experienced, the thought. This is still a positive process, though it may appear to be negative. The positive process has a negative which is still part of itself.

What we are trying to do, as I said at the beginning of the talk, is to understand effort, and to find out if it is possible for the mind to be totally free of effort—free to function integrally, with joy, with delight, without effort.

So what is the conscious mind to do? There are dreams, hints, intimations from the unconscious; but when the conscious mind tries to interpret them, it is still within the field of the positive, with its opposite, the so-called negative. To understand something of which it knows nothing, except vaguely, the conscious mind must surely be completely silent—if I may use that word. I hope you understand what I mean. The silent mind is not dormant, it is not sluggishly asleep. The conscious mind must be in abeyance, which is to be in that state of attention where there is no positive or negative response.

Look here, sirs, I am trying to tell you something. It is something of which you do not know, except that you have heard of it, or read about it in books. You have never felt the beauty of it in your hearts, in your minds. What is the state of a mind that listens? Obviously, an interpretative mind cannot listen. When you interpret what you hear according to your knowledge, you are not listening. In order to explore, to find out, your mind must be in a truly negative state—which is not the opposite of being positive, but a wholly different thing. It is the total absence of the positive, with its negative. Your conscious mind must be open, without any purpose, to the intimations of the unconscious; it must be in that state of attention which is really a total negation.

I am sorry if you do not understand all this, but I hope you will. I think every human being can live with dignity, with a sense of freedom, in the state of effortlessness; and it is only in this state of living without effort that there can be creativeness, the perception of reality. The conscious mind must be capable of total attention, which is total negation—and that is the totally positive state. But I won't go into all that now. When the conscious mind is totally attentive, it can look into the

unconscious, which is something that it does not know. The unconscious, surely, is the racial inheritance, the traditional values which have been given to you for untold ages. Though you may be ultra-modern in the techniques you have learnt, in the unconscious you are still a Brahmin, a Vaisya, a Hindu, a Catholic, or whatever, because for centuries it has been dinned into your racial unconscious. The unconscious is the accumulated experience, not only of the individual, but also of the family, the race. It is the result of man's effort to be, to become, to grow, to survive. So consciousness, which is the outcome of effort, is limited. As I said at the beginning, where there is effort, there is an objective; where there is effort, there is a limitation on attention and on action. To do good in the wrong direction, is to do evil. Do you understand? For centuries we have done 'good' in the wrong direction by assuming that we must be *this*, we must not be *that*, and so on, which only creates further conflict.

So the mind has been trained for centuries to suppress, to discipline itself in an effort to overcome its own limitations; and though it may invent the idea of the soul, the *Atman*, the higher self, it is still within the confines of its own thought, within the limits of its own endeavour; therefore, what it calls reality is only a projection of its own delusion. With most of us, this is the actual state of the mind. And how is such a mind to be free? That is the next question.

I recognize that my mind is the result of time, of effort; and I see that effort creates bondage, places a limitation on the extent of consciousness. How is the mind to be free of this limitation? I am not asking 'how' in order to find a method by which to free the mind. To ask for a method is a most immature way of thinking, and that is not my purpose. I am asking 'how' only to inquire if there is a way out of this bondage of the mind; and it may be that there is no way out at all.

So you are left with the problem. Is there a possibility of freeing the mind totally? This problem, like every other human problem, has no answer. Do you understand, sirs? Here is a problem which, if one really goes into it, is found to be tremendously complex, and it would be silly on my part to say "This is the answer". Therefore you are left with the problem. But if you have deeply followed all that has been said, the problem is no longer a problem, because you will already have perceived the totality of it; and a mind that perceives the totality of any problem, is free of the problem.

You may say this is a very dirty trick I am playing on you—giving you the problem, and not showing you a way out. I say there is no way out. But the problem itself is resolved if you see the totality of it. The state of love is entirely different from the feeling that we call love. For most of us, love is a contradiction, full of jealousy, envy, possession, acquisitiveness, despair—you know all that rattling of the mind. But if one hears the noise, if one sees all the implications of so-called love, then the problem itself is resolved. What is required is perception, and not this constant trying to find an answer to the problem.

So, effort always limits the mind. If you see the truth of that, it is enough. That very perception will operate; you do not have to do a thing. To see the truth of something, is the liberating factor. It is only when you do not see the truth of any problem that you ask "What am I to do?" If you see how your mind has been conditioned for centuries, and how that conditioning from the past is projecting itself through the present into the future; if you see

how your mind is a slave to time, to environment, to the various beliefs which it has inherited and acquired; if you see how you are constantly adding to your conditioning through experience born of that very conditioning—if you see all this very clearly, then liberation comes without your seeking it, and life is then something entirely different.

December 2, 1959.

V

TALK IN MADRAS

I think it would be profitable and worthwile to find out for ourselves why the mind is so restless. It is as restless as the sea, never stable, never quiet; though outwardly it may be still, inwardly it is full of ripples, full of grooves and every kind of disturbance. I think it is essential to go into this question rather deeply, and not merely ask how to quiet the mind. There is no way to quiet the mind. Of course, one can take pills, tranquillizers, or follow blindly some system; one can drug the mind with prayers, with repetitions; but a drugged mind is no mind at all. So it seems to me of the utmost importance to go deeply into this question of why the mind is everlastingly seeking something, and having found it, is not satisfied, but moves on to something else—an unceasing movement from satisfaction to disappointment, from fulfilment to pain and frustration. We must all be aware of this endless cycle of pleasure and sorrow. Everything is passing, impermanent; we live in a constant state of flight, and there is no place where one can be quiet, especially inwardly, because every recess of the mind is disturbed. There is no untrodden region in the mind. Consciously or unconsciously we have tried in various ways to bring quietness, stillness, a state of peace to the mind; and having got it, we have soon lost it again. You must be aware of this endless search, which is going on in your own mind.

So I would like to suggest that—with hesitance, without dogmatism, without quoting or coming to conclusions—we try to probe into this restless activity of our minds. And I think we shall have to begin by asking ourselves why we seek at all, why we inquire, why there is this longing to arrive, to achieve, to become something. After all, you are probably here a little bit out of curiosity, but even more, I hope, out of the desire to seek, to find out. What is it that you are seeking? And why do you seek? If we can go deeply into this question by asking ourselves why we are seeking, if we can, as it were, open the door by means of that question, then I think we may perhaps have a glimpse into something which is not illusory, and which does not have the transient quality of that which is merely pleasurable or gratifying.

Why is it, and what is it, you are seeking? I wonder if you have ever put that question to yourselves? You know, a challenge is always new, because it is something that demands your attention. You have to respond, there is no turning your back on it, and either you respond totally, completely, or partially, inadequately. The incapacity to respond totally to a challenge, creates conflict. The world in its present state is a constant challenge to each one of us, and when we do not respond with the fullness, with all the depth and beauty of the challenge itself, then inevitably there is turmoil, anxiety, fear, sorrow. In the same way, this question—what are you seeking, and why do you seek?—is a challenge, and if you

do not respond with your whole being, but treat it merely as an intellectual problem, which is to respond partially, then obviously you will never find a total answer. Your response to the challenge is partial, inadequate, when you merely make statements, or think in terms of definite conclusions to which you have come. The challenge is always new, and you have to respond to it anew—not in your habitual, customary way. If we can put this question to ourselves as though we are considering it for the first time, then our response will be entirely different from the superficial response of the intellect.

What is it that you are seeking, and why do you seek it? Does not this very seeking instigate restlessness? If there were no seeking, would you stagnate? Or would there then be a totally different kind of search? But before we go into the more complex aspects of our inquiry, it seems to me important to find out what you and I, as individual human beings, are seeking. Obviously, the superficial answer is always to say "I am seeking happiness, fulfilment". But in seeking happiness, in seeking fulfilment, we never stop to ask ourselves if there *is* such a thing as fulfilment. We long for fulfilment, or satisfaction, and we go after it, without looking to see if there is any reality behind the word. In pursuing fulfilment, its expression varies from day to day, from year to year. Growing weary of the more worldly satisfactions, we seek happiness in good conduct, in social service, in being brotherly, in loving one's neighbour. But sooner or later this movement towards fulfilment through good conduct also comes to an end, and we turn in still another direction. We try to find happiness through intellectual pursuits, through reason, logic, or we become emotional, sentimental, romantic. We give to the word 'happiness' different connotations at different times. We translate it in terms of what we call peace, God, truth; we think of it as a heavenly abode where we shall be completely fulfilled, never disturbed, and so on. That is what most of us want, is it not? That is why you read the *Shastras,* the Bible, the *Koran,* or other religious books—in the hope of bringing quietness to the restless mind. Probably that is why you are here.

Seeking implies an object, an end in view, does it not? There can be no search for what is unknown. You can only seek something which you have known and lost, or which you have heard of and want to gain. You cannot seek that which you do not know. In a peculiar way, you already know what happiness is. You have tasted the flavour of it, the past has given you the sensation, the pleasure, the beauty of it; so you already know its quality, its nature, and that memory you project. But what you have known is not what *is;* your projection is not what you really want. What you have tasted is not sufficient, you want something more, more, more, and so your life is an everlasting struggle.

I hope you are listening to what is being said, not as to a lecture, but as though you were looking at a film of yourself struggling, groping, searching, longing. You are sorrowful, anxious, fearful, caught up in tremendous hope and despair, in the extremes of contradiction, and from this tension there is action. That is all you know. You seek fulfilment outwardly, in the house, in the family, in going to the office, in becoming a rich man, or the chief inspector, or a famous judge, or the prime minister—you know the whole business of climbing the ladder of success and achievement. You climb that ladder till you are old, and then you seek God. You collect money, honours, position, prestige, and when you have reached a

certain age, you turn to poor old God. God does not want such a man, sirs. God wants a complete human being who is not a slave. He does not want a dehydrated human being, but one who is active, who knows love, who has a deep sense of joy.

But unfortunately, in our search for happiness, fulfilment, there is an endless struggle going on. Outwardly we do everything possible to assure ourselves of that happiness; but outward things fail. The house, the property, the relationship with wife and children —it can all be swept away, and there is always death waiting around the corner. So we turn to inward things, we practise various forms of discipline in an effort to control our minds, our emotions, and we conform to a standard of good conduct, hoping that we shall one day arrive at a state of happiness that cannot be disturbed.

Now, I see this whole process going on, and I am asking myself: why do we seek at all? I know that we do seek. We join societies which promise a spiritual reward, we follow *gurus* who exhort us to struggle, to sacrifice, to discipline ourselves, and all the rest of it; so we are seeking, endlessly. Why is there this seeking? What is the compulsion, the urge that makes for seeking, not only outwardly, but inwardly? And is there any fundamental difference between the outward and the inward movement of seeking, or is it only one movement? I do not know if I am making myself clear. We have divided our existence into what we call the outward life and the inward life. Our daily activities and pursuits are the outward life; and when we do not get happiness, pleasure, satisfaction in that area, we turn to the inward as a reaction. But the inward also has its frustration and despair.

So, what is it that is making us seek? Do please ask yourself this question, go into it with me. Surely, a happy, joyous man does not seek God, he is not trying to achieve virtue; his very existence is splendid, radiant. So, what is it that is urging us to seek, and to make such tremendous effort? If we can understand that, perhaps we shall be able to go beyond this restless search.

Do you know what is the cause of your seeking? Please do not give a superficial answer, because then you will only blind yourself to the actual. Surely, if you go deeply into yourself, you will see that you are seeking because there is, within each one of us, a sense of isolation, of loneliness, of emptiness; there is an inner void which nothing can fill. Do what you will—perform good works, meditate, identify yourself with the family, with the group, with the race, with the nation—that emptiness is still there, that void which cannot be filled, that loneliness which nothing can take away. That is the cause of our endless seeking, is it not? Call it by a different name, it does not matter. Deep within one there is this sense of emptiness, of loneliness, of utter isolation. If the mind can go into this void and understand it, then perhaps it will be resolved.

At one time or another, perhaps while you were walking, or while you were sitting by yourself in a room, you must have experienced this sense of loneliness, the extraordinary feeling of being cut off from everything—from your family, from your friends, from ideas, hopes—so that you felt you had no relationship with anybody or anything. And without penetrating into it, without actually living with it, understanding it, the mind cannot resolve that feeling.

I think there is a difference between knowing and experiencing. You probably know what this feeling of loneliness is, from what you have heard or read about it; but knowing is entirely

different from the state of experiencing. You may have read extensively, you may have accumulated many experiences, so that you know a great deal; but knowledge is not living. If you are an artist, a painter, every line, every shadow means something. You are observing all the time, watching the movement and the depth of shadows, the loveliness of a curve, the expression of a face, the branch of a tree, the colours everywhere —you are alive to everything. But knowledge cannot give you this perception, this capacity to feel, to experience something that you see. Experiencing is one thing, and experience is another. Experience, knowledge, is a thing of the past, which will go on as memory; but experiencing is a living perception of the now; it is a vital awareness of the beauty, the tranquillity, the extraordinary profundity of the now. In the same way, one has to be aware of loneliness; one has to feel it, actually experience this sense of complete isolation. And if one is capable of experiencing it, one will find how really difficult it is to live with it. I do not know if you have ever lived with the sunset.

You know, sirs, there is a radiancy of love which cannot be cultivated. Love is not the result of good conduct; no amount of your being kind, generous, will give you love. Love is both extensive and particular. A mind that loves is virtuous, it does not seek virtue. It cannot go wrong, because it knows right and wrong. It is the mind without love that seeks virtue, that wants God, that clings to a system of belief, and thereby destroys itself. Love—that quality, that feeling, that sense of compassion without any object, which is the very essence of life—is not a thing to be grasped by the mind. As I said the other day, when the intellect guides that pure feeling, then mediocrity comes into being. Most of us have such highly developed intellects, that the intellect is always corrupting the pure feeling; therefore our feelings are mediocre, though we may be excellent at reasoning.

Now, this sense of loneliness is pure feeling, uncorrupted by the mind. It is the mind that is frightened, fearful, and therefore it says "I must get away from it". But if one is simply aware of this loneliness, if one lives with it, then it has the quality of pure feeling. I do not know if I am making myself clear.

Have you ever really observed a flower? It is not easy. You may think you have observed it, you may think you have loved it, but what you have actually done is this: you have seen it, you have given it a name, you have smelt it, and then you have gone away. The very naming of the species, the very smelling of the flower, causes in you a certain reaction of memory, and therefore you never really look at the flower at all. Just try sometime looking at a flower, at a sunset, at a bird, or what you will, without any interference on the part of the mind, and you will see how difficult it is; yet it is only then that there is the complete perception of anything.

This loneliness, this pure feeling which is a sense of total isolation, can be observed as you would observe the flower: with complete attention, which is not to name it, or try to escape from it. Then you will find, if you have gone so far in your inquiry, that there is only a state of negation. Please do not translate this into Sanskrit, or any other language, or compare it with something you have read. What I am telling you is not what you have read. What has been described is not what *is*.

I am saying that if the mind is capable of experiencing this sense of aloneness, not verbally, but actually living with it, then there comes an awareness of complete negation—negation which is not an opposite. Most of us only know the

opposites: positive and negative, 'I love' and 'I do not love', 'I want' and 'I do not want'. That is all we know. But the state of which I am telling you is not of that nature, because it has no opposite. It is a state of complete negation.

I do not know if you have ever thought about the quality or the nature of creation. Creativity in the sense of having talent, being gifted, is entirely different from the state of creation. I do not know if it has happened to you that, while walking alone, or sitting in a room, you have suddenly had a feeling of extraordinary ecstasy. Having had that feeling, you want to translate it, so you write a poem, or paint a picture. If that poem or that picture becomes fashionable, society flatters you, pays you for it, gives you a profit, and you are carried away by all that. Presently you seek to have again that tremendous ecstasy, which came uninvited. As long as you seek it, it will never come. But you keep on seeking it in various ways—through self-discipline, through the practice of a system, through meditation, through drink, women—you try everything in an effort to get back that overwhelming feeling of radiance, of joy, in which all creation is. But you will never get it back. It comes darkly, uninvited.

So it is the state of negation from which all creation takes place. Whether you spontaneously write a poem, or smile without calculation; whether there is kindness without a motive, or goodness without fear, without a cause, it is all the outcome of this extraordinary state of complete negation, in which is creation. But you cannot come to it if you do not understand the whole process of seeking, so that all seeking completely ceases. The understanding and cessation of seeking is not at the end, but at the beginning. The man who says, "Eventually I shall understand the process of seeking, and then I shall no longer seek", is thoughtless, stupid, because the end is at the beginning, which has no time. If you begin to inquire into yourself and perceive why you seek, and what it is you are seeking, you can capture the whole significance of it instantaneously; and then you will find that, without any intent, without any causation, there is a fundamental revolution, a complete transformation of the mind. It is only then that truth comes into being.

Truth does not come to a mind that is burdened with experience, that is full of knowledge, that has gathered virtue, that has stifled itself through discipline, control. Truth comes to the mind that is really innocent, fearless. And it is the mind that has completely understood its own seeking, that has gone to the fullest depth of this state of negation —it is only such a mind that is without fear. Then that extraordinary thing, which we are all wanting, will come. It is elusive, and it will not come if you stretch out your hand to capture it. You canot capture the immeasurable. Your hands, your mind, your whole being, must be quiet, completely still, to receive it. You cannot seek it, because you do not know what it is. The immeasurable will be there when the mind understands this whole process of search, not at the end, but at the beginning—which is the continuous movement of self-knowledge.

December 6, 1959.

VI

TALK IN MADRAS

If we are at all thoughtful, we must often have wondered from what source our activities come. We must have examined ourselves, wondering why we do certain things—why we join certain

organizations, undertake certain jobs, why we think in a certain manner, hold certain beliefs, why there are the innumerable complex and contradictory desires from which all our actions spring. Some of us, at least, must have watched these contradictory desires operating in ourselves and in others. Just as we have divided the earth into many conflicting parts, calling them by different names—England, India, Russia, America, and so on—so also we are inwardly broken up into many parts, each part in conflict with the others. But the earth is ours, yours and mine; it is not Indian or English, Chinese or Russian, German or American. It is our earth, to be lived on, to be enjoyed, to be nourished, to be looked after and beautified. It is a total thing, not to be broken up. Yet we continue to break up the earth, just as we are broken up in ourselves; and this breaking-up process is a source of constant deterioration.

Now, is there a wholeness, a completeness of being from which total action can take place, instead of this self-contradictory state with which we are so familiar? Let us go into this question together. Why is the mind always broken up in its thinking, in its feeling, in its activity, in the very manner of its existence? If we can go into this problem deeply, perhaps we shall find an action, a way of living, a state of being which is not self-contradictory. But to be free of self-contradiction requires, not merely an outward change, but a revolution in the quality of the mind itself.

We can see that a fundamental change is necessary at every level of our being, and also at every level of society. You and I need to change very drastically, because, as it is now, our way of life is so fragmentary; it is a self-contradictory process, with the various parts of ourselves at war with each other. A revolution in our lives is obviously essential. I do not mean economic revolution—that is a very small thing. What is needed is a revolution in our very being, a crisis in the mind, in consciousness, not just a crisis in society. There must be this inner crisis to bring about a fundamental revolution in our lives.

So, how to change radically is the problem. How is a shallow, petty mind, a mind that is not used to thinking very deeply, a mind that is carried away by outward events, a mind that is caught in a system, whether it be yogic, communistic, religious, or technological—how is such a mind to change fundamentally? I am asking myself, and you, this question; I am thinking aloud about the problem. Is it possible to bring about a radical revolution in the quality of the mind, in the ways of our thinking and feeling? Can one live with one's whole being, so that the job, the technique, is not separated from one's daily thoughts and emotions? Is there a way of living which is not fragmentary, not self-contradictory, but which is an integrated whole, like a tree with its many branches, many leaves? Is it possible to live in such a way that every action is a total action, every feeling is whole, every movement of the mind complete? Can you and I live totally, from the very depth of our being, so that there is no self-contradiction? If we can seriously go into this question, as two individual human beings, then perhaps we shall find the answer; and that is what I would like to do this evening.

Why is there little or no action in our lives which is not broken up, self-contradictory? I do not know if you have ever asked yourselves this question. You are in a state of self-contradiction, are you not? And the more you think, the more self-contradictory you become. Being aware of this contradictory state in yourselves, you invoke God, or join

some religious society—which merely puts you to sleep. Outwardly you may appear peaceful, calm, but inside there is still contradiction, conflict.

So, is it possible to live with a sense of harmony, beauty, with a sense of never-ending fulfilment—or rather, I won't say fulfilment, because fulfilment brings frustration, but is there a never-ending state of action in which there is no sorrow, no repentance, no cause for regret? If there is such a state, then how is one to come to it? One obviously cannot cultivate it. One cannot say "I shall be harmonious"—it means nothing. To assume that one must control oneself in order to be harmonious, is an immature way of thinking. The state of total integration, of unitary action, can come only when one is not seeking it, when the mind is not forcing itself into a patterned way of living.

Most of us have not given much thought to all this. In our daily activities we are only concerned with time, because time helps us to forget, time heals our wounds, however temporarily, time dissipates our despairs, our frustrations. Being caught in the time-process, how is one to come upon this extraordinary state in which there is no contradiction, in which the very movement of living is integrated action, and everyday life is reality? If each one of us seriously puts this question to himself, then I think we shall be able to commune with each other in unfolding the problem; but if you are merely listening to words, then you and I are not in communion. We are in communion with each other only if this is a problem to both of us—and then it is not just my problem, which I am imposing on you, or which you are trying to interpret according to your beliefs and idiosyncrasies. This is a human problem, a world problem, and if it is very clear to each one of us, then what I am saying, what I am thinking and feeling, will bring about a state of communion between us, and together we can go to great depths.

So, what is the problem? The problem is that there must obviously be a tremendous change, not only at the superficial level, in one's outward activities, but inwardly, deeply; there must be an inner revolution which will transform the manner of one's thinking and bring about a way of life which in itself is total action. And why doesn't such a revolution take place? That is the problem as one sees it. So let us go deeply into ourselves and discover the root of this problem.

The root of the problem is fear, is it not? Please look into it for yourselves, and don't just regard me as a speaker addressing an audience. I want to go into this problem with you; because, if you and I explore it together, and we both understand something which is true, then from that understanding there will be an action which is neither yours nor mine, and opinions, over which we battle everlastingly, will have ceased to exist.

I feel there is a basic fear which has to be discovered—a fear much more profound than the fear of losing one's job, or the fear of going wrong, or the fear of outward or inward insecurity. But to go into it very deeply, we must begin with the fears that we know, the fears of which we are all conscious. I do not have to tell you what they are, for you can observe them in yourselves: the fear of public opinion; the fear of losing one's son, one's wife or husband, through the sad experience called death; the fear of disease, the fear of loneliness, the fear of not being successful, of not fulfilling oneself; the fear of not attaining to a knowledge of truth, God, heaven, or what you will. The savage has a few very simple fears; but we have innumerable fears, whose com-

plexity increases as we become more and more 'civilized'.

Now, what is fear? Have you ever actually experienced fear? You may lose your job, you may not be a success, your neighbour may say this or that of you; and death is always waiting just around the corner. All this breeds fear in you, and you run away from it through *yoga,* through reading books, through belief in God, through various forms of amusement, and all the rest of it. So I am asking: have you ever really experienced fear, or does the mind always run away from it?

Take the fear of death. Being afraid of death, you rationalize your fear away by saying that death is inevitable, that everything dies. The rationalizing process is merely an escape from the fact. Or you believe in reincarnation, which satisfies, comforts you; but fear is still there. Or you try to live totally in the present, to forget all about the past and the future, and be concerned only with the now; but fear goes on.

I am asking you whether you have ever known real fear—not the theoretical fear which the mind merely conceives of. Perhaps I am not making it very clear. You know the taste of salt. You have experienced pain, lust, envy, and you know for yourselves what these words mean. In the same way, do you know fear? Or have you only an *idea* of what fear is, without having actually experienced fear? Am I explaining myself?

You are afraid of death; and what is that fear? You see the inevitability of death, and because you do not want to die, you are afraid of it. But you have never known what death is, you have only projected an opinion, an idea about it; so you are afraid of an idea about death. This is rather simple, and I do not quite understand our difficulty.

To really experience fear, you must be totally *with* it, you must be entirely *in* it, and not avoid it; you cannot have beliefs, opinions about it. But I do not think many of us have ever experienced fear in this way, because we are always avoiding, running away from fear; we never remain with it, look into it, find out what it is all about.

Now, is the mind capable of living with fear, being a part of it? Can the mind go into that feeling, instead of avoiding it or trying to escape from it? I think it is largely because we are always running away from fear that we live such contradictory lives.

Sirs, one is aware, especially as one grows older, that death is always waiting. And you are afraid of death, aren't you? Now, how are you to understand that fear? How are you to be free from the fear of death? What is death? It is really the ending of everything you have known. That is the actual fact. Whether or not you survive, is not the point. Survival after death is merely an idea. You do not know, but you believe, because belief gives you comfort. You never go into the question of death itself, because the very idea of coming to an end, of entering the totally unknown, is a horror to you, which awakens fear; and being afraid, you resort to various forms of belief as a means of escape.

Surely, to free the mind from fear, you have to know what it is to die while you are physically and mentally vigorous, going to the office, attending to everything. You have to know the nature of death while living. Belief is not going to remove fear. You may read any number of books about the hereafter, but that is not going to free the mind from fear; because the mind is used to just one thing, which is continuity through memory, and so the very idea of coming to an end is a horror. The constant recollection of the things you have experienced and enjoyed, everything you have possessed, the cha-

racter you have built up, your ideals, your visions, your knowledge—all that is coming to an end. And how is the mind to be free of fear?—*that* is the problem, not whether there is a continuity after death. I hope you are following all this.

If I am to be free of the fear of ending, surely I must inquire into the nature of death; I must experience it, I must know what it is—its beauty, its tremendous quality. It must be an extraordinary thing to die, to enter into something never imagined, totally unknown.

Now, how is the mind to experience, while living, that ending called death? Death is ending; it is the ending of the body, and perhaps also of the mind. I am not discussing whether there is survival or not. I am concerned with ending. Can I not end while I am living? Cannot my mind—with all its thoughts, its activities, its memories—come to an end while I am living, while the body is not broken down through old age and disease, or swept away by an accident? Cannot the mind, which has built up a continuity, come to an end, not at the last moment, but *now*? That is, cannot the mind be free of all the accumulations of memory?

You are a Hindu, a Christian, or what you will. You are shaped by the past, by custom, tradition. You are greed, envy, joy, pleasure, the appreciation of something beautiful, the agony of not being loved, of not being able to fulfil—you are all that, which is the process of continuity. Take just one form of it. You are attached to your property, to your wife. That is a fact. I am not talking about detachment. You are attached to your opinions, to your ways of thinking.

Now, can you not come to the end of that attachment? Why are you attached?—*that* is the question, not how to be detached. If you try to be detached, you merely cultivate the opposite, and therefore contradiction continues. But the moment your mind is free of attachment, it is also free from the sense of continuity through attachment, is it not? So, why are you attached? Because you are afraid that without attachment you will be nothing; therefore you are your house, you *are* your wife, you *are* your bank account, you *are* your job. You are all these things. And if there is an ending to this sense of continuity through attachment, a total ending, then you will know what death is.

Do you understand, sirs? I hate, let us say, and I have carried this hatred in my memory for years, constantly battling against it. Now, can I instantly stop hating? Can I drop it with the finality of death? When death comes, it does not ask your permission; it comes and takes you, it destroys you on the spot. In the same way, can you totally drop hate, envy, pride of possession, attachment to beliefs, to opinions, to ideas, to a particular way of thinking? Can you drop all that in an instant? There is no 'how to drop it', because that is only another form of continuity. To drop opinion, belief, attachment, greed, envy, is to die—to die every day, every moment. If there is the coming to an end of all ambition from moment to moment, then you will know the extraordinary state of being nothing, of coming to the abyss of an eternal movement, as it were, and dropping over the edge—which is death.

I want to know all about death, because death may be reality, it may be what we call God, that most extraordinary something that lives and moves, yet has no beginning and no end. So I want to know all about death—and for that I must die to everything I already know. The mind can be aware of the unknown only when it dies to the known—dies without any motive, without the hope of reward or the fear of punishment. Then I can find out what

death is while I am living—and in that very discovery there is freedom from fear.

Whether or not there is a continuity after the body dies, is irrelevant; whether or not you are born again, is a trivial affair. To me, living is not apart from dying, because in living there is death. There is no separation between death and life. One knows death because the mind is dying every minute, and in that very ending there is renewal, newness, freshness, innocence—not in continuity. But for most of us, death is a thing that the mind has really never experienced. To experience death while living, all the trickeries of the mind—which prevent that direct experiencing—must cease.

I wonder if you have ever known what love is? Because I think death and love walk together. Death, love and life are one and the same; but we have divided life, as we have divided the earth. We talk of love as being either carnal or spiritual, and have set a battle going between the sacred and the profane. We have divided what love *is* from what love *should* be; so we never know what love is. Love, surely, is a total feeling which is not sentimental, and in which there is no sense of separation; it is complete purity of feeling, without the separative, fragmentary quality of the intellect. Love has no sense of continuity. Where there is a sense of continuity, love is already dead, and it smells of yesterday, with all its ugly memories, quarrels, brutalities. To love, one must die. Death is love—the two are not separate. But do not be mesmerized by my words, because you have to experience this, you have to know it, taste it, discover it for yourself.

The fear of complete loneliness, isolation, of not being anything, is the basis, the very root of our self-contradiction. Because we are afraid to be nothing, we are splintered up by many desires, each desire pulling in a different direction. That is why, if the mind is to know total, non-contradictory action—an action in which going to the office is the same as not going to the office, or the same as becoming a *sannyasi,* or the same as meditation, or the same as looking at the skies of an evening—there must be freedom from fear. But there can be no freedom from fear unless you experience it; and you cannot experience fear as long as you find ways and means of escaping from it. Your God is a marvellous escape from fear; all your rituals, your books, your theories and beliefs, prevent you from actually experiencing it. You will find that only in ending is there a total cessation of fear—the ending of yesterday, of what has been, which is the soil in which fear sinks its roots. Then you will discover that love and death and living are one and the same. The mind is free only when the accumulations of memory have dropped away. Creation is in ending, not in continuity. Only then is there the total action which is living, loving and dying.

December 9, 1959.

VII

TALK IN MADRAS

If we could take a journey, make a pilgrimage together without any intent or purpose, without seeking anything, perhaps on returning we might find that our hearts had unknowingly been changed. I think it worth trying. Any intent or purpose, any motive or goal implies effort—a conscious or unconscious endeavour to arrive, to achieve. I would like to suggest that we take a journey together in which none of these elements exist. If we can take such a journey, and if we are alert enough to observe what lies along the

way, perhaps when we return, as all pilgrims must, we shall find that there has been a change of heart; and I think this would be much more significant than inundating the mind with ideas, because ideas do not fundamentally change human beings at all. Beliefs, ideas, influences may cause the mind superficially to adjust itself to a pattern; but if we can take the journey together without any purpose, and simply observe as we go along the extraordinary width and depth and beauty of life, then out of this observation may come a love that is not merely social, environmental, a love in which there is not the giver and the taker, but which is a state of being, free of all demand. So, in taking this journey together, perhaps we shall be awakened to something far more significant than the boredom and frustration, the emptiness and despair of our daily lives.

Most human beings, as they live from day to day, gradually drift into despair, or they get caught up in superficial joys, amusements, hopes, or they are carried away by rationalizations, by hatred, or by the social amenities. If we can really bring about a radical inward transformation, so that we live fully and richly, with deep feelings which are not corrupted by the mutterings of the intellect, then I think we shall be able to act in a totally different way in all our relationships.

This journey I am proposing that we take together, is not to the moon, or even to the stars. The distance to the stars is much less than the distance within ourselves. The discovery of ourselves is endless, and it requires constant inquiry, a perception which is total, an awareness in which there is no choice. This journey is really an opening of the door to the individual in his relationship with the world. Because we are in conflict with ourselves, we have conflict in the world. Our problems, when extended, become the world's problems. As long as we are in conflict with ourselves, life in the world is also a ceaseless battle, a destructive, deteriorating war.

So the understanding of ourselves is not to the end of individual salvation, it is not the means of attaining a private heaven, an ivory tower into which to retire with our own illusions, beliefs, gods. On the contrary, if we are able to understand ourselves, we shall be at peace, and then we shall know how to live rightly in a world that is now corrupt, destructive, brutal.

After all, what is wordliness? Worldliness, surely, is to be satisfied—to be satisfied, not only with outward things, with property, wealth, position, power, but with inward things as well. Most of us are satisfied at a very superficial level. We take satisfaction in possessing things—a car, a house, a garden, a title. Possession gives us an extraordinary feeling of gratification. And when we are surfeited with the possession of things, we look for satisfaction at a deeper level; we seek what we call truth, God, salvation. But we are still moved by the same compulsion; the demand to be satisfied. Just as you seek satisfaction in sex, in social position, in owning things, so also you want to be satisfied in 'spiritual' ways.

Please do not say "Is that all?" and brush it off, but as you are listening, observe, if you will, your own desire for satisfaction. Allow yourselves, if you can, to see in what way you are being satisfied. The intellectual person is satisfied with his clever ideas, which give him a feeling of superiority, a sense of knowing; and when that sense of knowing ceases to give him satisfaction, when he has analyzed everything and intellectually torn to shreds every notion, every theory, every belief, then he seeks a wider, deeper satisfaction. He is converted, and begins to believe;

he becomes very 'religious', and his satisfaction takes on the colouring of some organized religion.

So, being dissatisfied with outward things, we turn for gratification to the so-called spiritual things. It has become an ugly term, that word 'spiritual'; it smacks of sanctimoniousness. Do you know what I mean? The saints with their cultivated virtues, with their struggles, their disciplines, their suppressions and self-denials, are still within the field of satisfaction. It is because we want to be satisfied that we discipline ourselves; we are after something that will give us lasting satisfaction, a gratification from which all doubt has been removed. That is what most of us want—and we think we are spiritual, religious. Our pursuit of gratification we call 'the search for truth'. We go to the temple or the church, we attend lectures, we listen to talks like this, we read the *Gita,* the *Upanishads,* the *Bible,* all in order to have this strange feeling of satisfaction in which there will never be any doubt, never any questioning.

It is our urge to be satisfied that makes us turn to what we call meditation and the cultivation of virtue. How virtue can be 'cultivated', I do not know. Surely, humility can never be cultivated; love can never be cultivated; peace can never be brought about through control. These things are, or they are not. The person who cultivates humility, is full of vanity; he hopes to find abiding satisfaction in being humble. In the same way, through meditation we seek the absolute, the immeasurable, the unknown. But meditation is part of everyday existence; it is something that you have to do as you breathe, as you think, as you live, as you have delicate or brutal feelings. That is real meditation, and it is entirely different from the systematized meditation which some of you so sedulously practise.

I would like, if I may, to go into this question of meditation, but please do not be mesmerized by my words. Don't become suddenly meditative; don't become very intent to discover what is the goal of true meditation. The meditation of which I speak has no goal, no end. Love has no end. Love is not successful, it does not reward you or punish you. Love is a state of being, a sense of radiancy. In love is all virtue. In the state of love, do what you will, there is no sin, no evil, no contradiction; and without love we shall ever be at war with ourselves, and therefore with each other and with the world. It is love alone that transforms the mind totally.

But the meditation with which most of us are familiar, and which some of us practise, is entirely different. Let us first examine *that*—not to justify or condemn what you are doing, but to see the truth, the validity or the falseness of it. We are going on a journey together, and when on a journey you can take along only what is absolutely essential. The journey of which I am speaking is very swift, there is no abiding place, no stopping, no rest; it is an endless movement, and a mind that is burdened is not free to travel.

The meditation that most of us practise is a process of concentration based on exclusion, on building walls of resistance, is it not? You control your mind because you want to think of a particular thing, and you try to exclude all other thoughts. To help you to control your mind, and to exclude the unwanted thoughts, there are various systems of meditation. Life has been divided as knowledge, devotion, and action. You say "I am of such and such a temperament", and according to your temperament you meditate. We have divided ourselves into tempera-

ments as neatly as we have divided the earth into national, racial and religious groups, and each temperament has its own path, its own system of meditation. But if you go behind them all, you will find in every case that some form of control is practised; and control implies suppression.

Do please observe yourselves as I am going into this problem, and don't just follow verbally what I am saying, because what I am saying is not at all important. What is important is for you to discover yourselves. As I said at the beginning, we are taking a journey together into ourselves. I am only pointing out certain things, and if you are satisfied by what is pointed out, your mind will remain empty, shallow, petty. A petty mind cannot take the journey into itself. But if through these words you are becoming aware of your own thoughts, your own state, then there is no *guru*.

Behind all these systems of meditation which develop virtue, which promise a reward, which offer an ultimate goal, there is the factor of control, discipline, is there not? The mind is disciplined not to wander off the narrow, respectable path laid down by the system, or by society.

Now, what is implied in control? Do please observe yourselves, because we are all inquiring into this problem together. We are coming to something which I see, and which at the moment you do not, so please follow without being mesmerized by my words, by my face, by my person. Cut through all that—it is utterly immature—and observe yourselves. What does control imply? Surely, it implies a battle between what you want to concentrate on, and the thoughts that wander off. So concentration is a form of exclusion—which every schoolboy, and every bureaucrat in his office knows. The bureaucrat is compelled to concentrate, because he has to sign so many papers, he has to organize and to act; and for the schoolboy there is always the threat of the teacher.

Concentration implies suppression, does it not? I suppress in myself what I do not like. I never look at it, delve deeply into it. I have already condemned it; and a mind that condemns cannot penetrate, cannot understand what it has condemned.

There is another form of concentration, and that is when you give yourself over to something. The mind is absorbed by an image, as a child is absorbed by a toy. Those of you who have children must have observed how a toy can absorb them completely. When a child is playing with a new toy, he is extraordinarily concentrated. Nothing interferes with that concentration, because he is enjoying himself. The toy is so entrancing, so delightful, that for the moment it is all-important, and the child does not want to be disturbed. His mind is completely given over to the toy. And that is what you call devotion: giving yourself up to the symbol, the idea, the image which you have labelled God. The image absorbs you, as the child is absorbed by a toy. To lose themselves in a thing created by the mind, or by the hand, is what most people want.

Concentration through a system of meditation offers the attainment of an ultimate peace, an ultimate reality, an ultimate satisfaction, which is what you want. All such effort involves the idea of growth, evolution through time—if not in this life, then in the next life, or a hundred lives hence, you will get there. Control and discipline invariably imply effort to be, to become, and this effort places a limit on thought, on the mind—which is very satisfying. Placing a limit on the mind, on consciousness, is a most gratifying thing, because then you can see how far you

have advanced in your efforts to become what you want to be. As you make effort, you push the frontier of the mind farther and farther out; but it is still within the boundaries of thought. You may attain a state which you call *Ishvara,* God, *Paramatman,* or what you will, but it is still within the field of the mind—the mind which is conditioned by your culture, by your society, by your greed, and all the rest of it.

So meditation, as you practise it, is a process of control, of suppression, of exclusion, of discipline, all of which involves effort—the effort to expand the boundaries of consciousness as the 'I', the self; but there is also another factor involved, which is the whole process of recognition.

I hope you are taking the journey with me. Don't say, "It is too difficult, I don't know what you are talking about", for then you are not watching yourselves. What I am talking about is not just an intellectual concept. It is a living, vital thing, pulsating with life.

As I was saying, recognition is an essential part of what you call meditation. All you know of life is a series of recognitions. Relationship is a process of recognition, is it not? You know your wife or your husband, you know your children, in the sense that you recognize them, just as you recognize your own virtue, your own humility. Recognition is an extraordinary thing, if you look at it. All thought, all relationship is a process of recognition. Knowledge is based on recognition. So what happens? You want to recognize the unknown through meditation. And is that possible? Do you understand what I am talking about? Perhaps I am not making myself clear.

You recognize your wife, your children, your property; you recognize that you are a lawyer, a businessman, a professor, an engineer; you have a label, a name, a title. You know and recognize things with a mind that is the result of time, of effort, a mind that has cultivated virtues, that has always tried to be or to become something—all of which is a process of recognition. Knowledge is the result of experience which can be recalled, recognized, either in an encyclopædia, or in oneself.

Do consider that word 'recognize'. What does it signify? You want to find out what God is, what truth is, which means that you want to recognize the unkown; but if you can recognize something, it is already the known. When you practise meditation and have visions of your particular gods and goddesses, you are giving emphasis to recognition. These visions are the projections of your background, of your conditioned mind. The Christian will invariably see Jesus, or Mary, the Hindu will see Shri Krishna, or his god with a dozen arms, because the conditioned mind projects these images and then recognizes them. This recognition gives you tremendous satisfaction, and you say "I have found, I have realized, I know".

There are many systems which offer you this sort of thing, and I say none of that is meditation. It is self-hypnosis, it has no depth. You may practise a system for ten thousand years and you will still be within the field of time, within the frontiers of your own knowledge, your own conditioning. However far you extend the boundaries within which you can recognize your projections, it is obviously not meditation, though you may give it that name. You are merely emphasizing the self, the 'me', which is nothing but a bundle of associated memories; you are perpetuating, through your so-called meditation, the conflict of the thinker and the thought, the observer and the observed, in which the observer is always watching, denying, controlling, shaping the

observed. Any schoolboy can play this game, and I say it has nothing to do with meditation, though the greybeards insist that you must thus 'meditate'. The *yogis,* the *swamis,* the *sannyasis,* the people who renounce the world and go away to sit in a cave—they are all still caught in this pursuit of their own visions, however noble, which is the indulgence of an appetite, a process of self-gratification.

Then what is meditation? Surely, you are in the state of meditation only when the thinker is not there—that is, when you are not giving soil to thought, to memory, which is the centre of the 'me', the self. It is this centre that marks the boundaries of consciousness, and however extensive, however virtuous it may be, or however much it may try to help humanity, it can never be in the state of meditation. You can come to that state of awareness, which is meditation, only when there is no condemnation, no effort of suppression or control. It is an awareness in which there is no choice; for choice implies an effort of will, which in turn implies domination, control. It is an awareness in which consciousness has no limits, and can therefore give complete attention—which is not concentration. I think there is a vast difference between attention and concentration. There is no attention if there is a centre from which you are attentive. You can concentrate upon something from a centre; but attention implies a state of wholeness in which there is no observer apart from the observed.

Meditation, as we have gone into it today, is really the freeing of the mind from the known. This obviously does not mean forgetting the way to your home, or discarding the technical knowledge required for the performance of your job, and so on. It means freeing the mind from its conditioning, from the background of experience from which all projection and recognition take place. The mind must free itself from the process of acquisitiveness, satisfaction and recognition. You cannot recognize or invite the unknowable, that which is real, timeless. You can invite your friends, you can invite virtue, you can invite the gods of your own creation; you can invite them and make them your guests. But do what you will—meditate, sacrifice, become virtuous—you cannot invite the immeasurable, that something about which you do not know. The practice of virtue does not indicate love; it is the result of your own desire for gratification.

So, meditation is the freeing of the mind from the known. You must come to this freedom, not tomorrow, but in the immediate, now, because through time you cannot come to the timeless, which is not a duality. The timeless is whispering round every corner, it lies under every leaf. It is open, not to the *sannyasis,* not to the dehydrated human beings who have suppressed themselves and who no longer have any passion, but to everyone whose mind is in the state of meditation from moment to moment. Only such a mind can receive that which is unknowable.

December 13, 1959.

VIII

TALK IN MADRAS

This is the last talk of the present series.

I think it would be marvellous if, without words, one could convey what one really feels about the whole problem of existence. Besides the superficial necessity of having a job and all the rest of it, there are the deep, inward urges, the demands, the contradictory states of being, both conscious and unconscious; and I wonder if it is not possible to go beyond them all, be-

yond the frontiers which the mind has imposed upon itself, beyond the narrow limits of one's own heart, and to live there—to act, to think and to feel from that state while carrying on one's everyday activities. I think it can be done—not merely the communication of it, but the fact of it. Surely, we can break through the limitations which the mind has placed upon itself; because, after all, we have only one problem. As the tree with its many roots, its many branches and leaves, is a totality, so we have only one basic problem. And if, by some miracle, by some grace, by some way of looking at the clouds of an evening, the mind could become extraordinarily sensitive to every movement of thought, of feeling—if it could do that, not theoretically but actually, then I think we would have solved our problem.

As I said, there is essentially only one problem: the problem of 'me and my urges', from which all our other problems arise. Our real problems are not how to land on the moon, or how to fire off a rocket to Venus; they are very intimate, but unfortunately we do not seem to know how to deal with them. I am not at all sure that we are even aware of our real problem. To know love, to feel the beauty of nature, to worship something beyond the creations of man—I think all this is denied to us if we do not understand our immediate problems.

So I would like, if I may, to think aloud with you on this question of whether the mind can break through its own frontiers, go beyond its own limitations: because our lives are obviously very shallow. You may have all the wealth that the earth can give you; you may be very erudite; you may have read many books and be able to quote very learnedly all the established authorities, past and present; or you may be very simple, just living and struggling from day to day, with all the little pleasures and sorrows of family life. Whatever one is, surely it is of the utmost importance to find out in what manner the barriers which the mind has created for itself, can be swept away. That, it seems to me, is our fundamental problem. Through so-called education, through tradition, through various forms of social, moral and religious conditioning, the mind is limited, caught up in a moving vortex of environmental influences. And is it possible for the mind to break away from all this conditioning, so that it can live with joy, perceiving the beauty of things, feeling this extraordinary sense of immeasurable life?

I think it is possible, but I do not think it is a gradual process. It is not through evolution, through time, that the breaking away takes place. It is done instantly, or never. The perception of truth does not come at the end of many years. There is no tomorrow in understanding. Either the mind understands immediately, or not at all. It is very difficult for the mind to see this, because most of us are so accustomed to thinking in terms of tomorrow. We say: "Give me time, let me have more experience, and eventually I shall understand". But have you not noticed that understanding always comes in a flash—never through calculation, through time, never through exercise and slow development? The mind which relies on this idea of gradual comprehension is essentially lazy. Don't ask: "How is a lazy mind to be made alert, vital, active?" There is no 'how'. However much a stupid mind may try to become clever, it will still be stupid. A petty mind does not cease to be petty by worshipping the god it has invented. Time is not going to reveal the truth, the beauty of anything. What really brings understanding is the state of attention—just to be attentive, even for

one second, with one's whole being, without calculation, without premeditation. If you and I can be totally attentive on the instant, then I think there is an instantaneous comprehension, a total understanding.

But it is very difficult to give one's total attention to something, is it not? I do not know if you have ever tried to look at a flower with your whole being, or to be completely aware of the ways of your own mind. If you have done that, you will know with what clarity total attention brings into focus any problem. But to give such attention to anything is not easy, because our minds are very respectable, they are crippled with words and symbols, with ideas about what *should* be and what *should not* be.

I am talking about attention; and I wonder if you are paying attention—not just to what is being said, because that is of secondary importance, but are you attentive in the sense of being fully aware of the impediments, the blockages that your mind has created for itself? If you can be aware of these bondages—just aware of them, without saying "What shall I do about them?"—you will find that they begin to break up; and then comes a state of attention in which there is no choice, no wandering off, because there is no longer a centre from which to wander. That state of attention is goodness, it is the only virtue. There is no other virtue.

So, we realize that our minds are very limited. We have reduced the earth and the heavens, the vast movement of life, to a little corner called the 'me', the self, with its everlasting struggle to be or not to be. In what way can this mind, which is so small, so petty, so self-centred, break through the frontiers, the limitations which it has placed upon itself? As I said, it is only through attention, in which there is no choice, that the truth is seen; and it is Truth that breaks the bondage, that sweeps away the limitations—not your effort, not your meditation, not your practices, your disciplines, your controls.

To be in this state of attention requires, surely, a knowledge of the 'me' and its ways. I must know myself; my mind must know the movement of every emotion, every thought. But knowledge is a peculiar thing. Knowledge is cumulative, it is ever in the past. In the present there is only knowing. Knowledge always colours knowing. We are concerned with knowing, and not with knowledge, because knowledge about oneself distorts the knowing of oneself. I hope I am making myself clear. I think there is a difference between knowing myself all the time, and knowledge *about myself*. When self-knowledge is an accumulation of information which I have gathered about myself, it prevents the understanding of myself.

Look here, sirs. The self, the 'me' is restless, it is always wandering, never still. It is like a roaring river, making a tremendous noise as it rushes down the valley. It is a living, moving thing; and how can one have knowledge about something which is constantly changing, never the same? The self is always in movement; it is never still, never quiet for a moment. When the mind has observed it, it is already gone. I do not know if you have ever tried to look at yourself, to pin down your mind to any one thing. If you do that, the thing you have pinned down is constantly before you—and so you have come to the end of self-knowledge. Am I conveying something? Am I explaining myself?

Knowledge is always destructive to knowing. The knowing of oneself is never cumulative; it does not culminate in a point from which you judge the fact of what is the 'me'. You see, we

accumulate knowledge, and from there we judge—and that is our difficulty. Having accumulated knowledge through experience, through learning, through reading and all the rest of it, from that background we think, we function. We take up a position in knowledge, and from there we say, "I know all about the self. It is greedy, stupid, everlastingly wanting to be superior"—whatever it is. So there is nothing more to know. The moment you take up a position in knowledge, your knowledge is very superficial. But if there is no accumulation of knowledge upon which the mind rests, then there is only the movement of knowing; and then the mind becomes extraordinarily swift in its perceptions.

So it is self-knowing that is important, and not self-knowledge. Knowing the movement of thought, knowing the movement of feeling without accumulation—and therefore with never a moment of judgment, of condemnation —is very important; because the moment there is accumulation, there is a thinker. The accumulation of knowledge gives a position to the mind, a centre from which to think; it gives rise to an observer who judges, condemns, identifies, and all the rest of it. But when there is self-knowing, there is neither the observer nor the observed; there is only a state of attention, of watching, learning.

Surely, sirs, a mind that has accumulated knowledge can never learn. If the mind is to learn, it must not have the burden of knowledge, the burden of what it has accumulated. It must be fresh, innocent, free of the past. The accumulation of knowledge gives birth to the 'me'; but knowing can never do that, because knowing is learning, and a mind that is constantly learning can have no resting place. If you really perceive the truth of this, not tomorrow, but now, then you will find there is only a state of attention, of learning, with never a moment of accumulation; and then the problems which most of us now have are completely gone. But this is not a trick by which to resolve your problems, nor is it a lesson for you to learn.

You see, a society such as ours—whether Indian, Russian, American, or what you will—is acquisitive, not only in the pursuit of material things, but also in terms of competing, gaining, arriving, fulfilling. This society has so shaped our ways of thinking that we cannot free ourselves from the concept of a goal, an end. We are always thinking in terms of getting somewhere, of achieving inward peace, and so on. Our approach is always acquisitive. Physically we have to acquire to some extent; we must obviously provide ourselves with food, clothing and shelter. But the mind uses these things as a means of further acquisition—I am talking about acquisition in the psychological sense. Just as the mind makes use of the physical necessities to acquire prestige and power, so through knowledge it establishes itself in a position of psychological certainty. Knowledge gives us a sense of security, does it not? From our background of experience, of accumulated knowledge about ourselves, we think and live, and this process creates a state of duality—what I am, and what I think I *should* be. There is therefore a contradiction, a constant battle between the two. But if one observes this process comprehensively, if one understands it, really feels its significance, then one will find that the mind is spontaneously good, alert, loving; it is always learning and never acquiring. Then self-knowledge has quite a different meaning, for it is no longer an accumulation of knowledge about oneself. Knowledge about oneself is small, petty, limiting; but knowing oneself is infinite, there is no

end to it. So our problem is to abandon the ways of habit, of custom, of tradition, on the instant, and to be born anew.

Sirs, one of our difficulties in all this is the problem of communion, or communication. I want to tell you something, and in the very telling it is perverted by the expression, the word that is used. What I would like to communicate to you, or to commune with you about, is very simple: total self-abandonment on the instant. That is all—not what happens after self-abandonment, or the system that will bring it about. There is no system, because the moment you practise a system you are obviously strengthening the self. Cannot the mind suddenly drop the anchors it has put down into the various patterns of existence? Some evening when the sun was just going down, when the green rice-fields were sparkling, when there was a lone passer-by and the birds were on the wing, it must have happened to you that there was all at once an extraordinary peace in the world. There was no 'you' watching, feeling, thinking, for you *were* that beauty, that peace, that infinite state of being. Such a thing must have happened to you, if you have ever looked into the face of the world, into the vastness of the sky. How does it happen? When suddenly there is no worry when you are no longer thinking that you love someone, or wondering if someone loves you, and you are in that state of love, that state of beauty—what has happened? The green tree, the blue sky, the dancing waters of the sea, the whole beauty of the earth—all this has driven out the ugly, petty little self, and for an instant you *are* all that. This is surely the state of self-abandonment without calculation.

To feel this sense of abandonment, you need passion. You cannot be sensitive if you are not passionate. Do not be afraid of that word 'passion'. Most religious books, most *gurus, swamis,* leaders, and all the rest of them, say "Don't have passion". But if you have no passion, how can you be sensitive to the ugly, to the beautiful, to the whispering leaves, to the sunset, to a smile, to a cry? How can you be sensitive without a sense of passion in which there is abandonment? Sirs, please listen to me, and do not ask how to acquire passion. I know you are all passionate enough in getting a good job, or hating some poor chap, or being jealous of someone; but I am talking of something entirely different: a passion that loves. Love is a state in which there is no 'me'; love is a state in which there is no condemnation, no saying that sex is right or wrong, that this is good and something else is bad. Love is none of these contradictory things. Contradiction does not exist in love. And how can one love if one is not passionate? Without passion, how can one be sensitive? To be sensitive is to feel your neighbour sitting next to you; it is to see the ugliness of the town with its squalor, its filth, its poverty, and to see the beauty of the river, the sea, the sky. If you are not passionate, how can you be sensitive to all that? How can you feel a smile, a tear? Love, I assure you, is passion. And without love, do what you will—follow this *guru* or that, read all the sacred books, become the greatest reformer, study Marx and have a revolution—it will be of no value; because when the heart is empty, without passion, without this extraordinary simplicity, there can be no self-abandonment.

Surely, the mind has abandoned itself and its moorings only when there is no desire for security. A mind that is seeking security can never know what love is. Self-abandonment is not the state of the devotee before his idol or his mental image. What we are talking

about is as different from that as light is from darkness. Self-abandonment can come about only when you do not cultivate it, and when there is self-knowing. Do please listen and feel your way into this.

When the mind has understood the significance of knowledge, only then is there self-knowing; and self-knowing implies self-abandonment. You have ceased to rest on any experience as a centre from which to observe, to judge, to weigh; therefore the mind has already plunged into the movement of self-abandonment. In that abandonment there is sensitivity. But the mind which is enclosed in its habits of eating, of thinking, in its habit of never looking at anything—such a mind obviously cannot be sensitive, cannot be loving. In the very abandonment of its own limitations, the mind becomes sensitive and therefore innocent. And only the innocent mind knows what love is—not the calculating mind, not the mind that has divided love into the carnal and the spiritual. In that state there is passion; and without passion, reality will not come near you. It is only the enfeebled mind that invites reality; it is only the dull, grasping mind that pursues truth, God. But the mind that knows passion in love—to such a mind the nameless comes.

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