

TALKS BY
KRISHNAMURTI
IN EUROPE

1956

(Verbatim Report)

STOCKHOLM—BRUSSELS—HAMBURG—ATHENS

TALKS IN EUROPE 1956
(Stockholm-Brussels-Hamburg-Athens)

ERRATA

<i>Page</i>	<i>Column</i>	<i>Line</i>	
5	left	top	Delete hyphen in dis-agreement
6	right	9 f.b. ¹	Change hepling to helping
7	„	13 f.t. ²	A should be lower case
7	„	11 f.b.	Change and to any
9	left	16 f.b.	Change ourward to outward
15	right	12 f.b.	Capitalize initial s in sanskrit
19	left	10 f.b.	Delete comma at end of line
30	right	22 f.b.	Broken t in what
45	„	2 f.t.	Delete comma after East
46	„	4 f.b.	Place period after all
48	„	27 f.t.	Delete the word of after the word influence
66	„	6 f.b.	Meaning of life should be meaning to life
70	left	7 f.b.	Change “no” to “No”
70	right	23 f.b.	Correct the spelling of the word fa(r)brications
72	„	27 f.b.	Change memorise to memories
73	left	11 f.b.	Change eductaion to education
74	„	top	Delete comma after think
78	„	12 f.b.	Place comma after then
79	„	25 f.b.	Change everyday to everybody
89	right	19 f.b.	Delete s from Germans
96	„	6 f.b.	Place comma after us
97	„	9 f.b.	„ „ „ That is
98	left	15 f.t.	Change surley to surely
109	„	11 f.b.	Change plcase to please
113	right	2 f.b.	Delete comma and place period after question
113	„	bottom	„ period „ „ comma „ attached
114	„	22 f.b.	Place comma after itself
115	left	7 f.b.	Delete period and place comma after thinking

¹ from bottom

² from top

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19

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

STOCKHOLM—BRUSSELS—HAMBURG—ATHENS

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I

TALK IN STOCKHOLM

I think it is important to understand the relationship between the speaker and the audience, between you and me, because I do not represent India at all, or Indian philosophy, nor am I going to speak of the ideals and teachings of the East. I think our human problems, whether we are of the East or the West, are similar. We may each have different customs, different habits, different values and thoughts, but fundamentally I think we all have the same problems.

We have many problems, have we not? — social, economic, and more especially, perhaps, religious problems —, and at present we all approach these problems differently. We approach them only partially, either as a Christian, a Hindu, a Communist, or what you will, or we separate them as problems which are Oriental or Occidental. And because we approach our problems partially, through all these various forms of conditioning, it seems to me that we are thereby not understanding them. I feel that the approach to any problem is of much more significance than the problem itself, and that if we could approach our many difficulties without any particular form of conditioning or prejudice, then perhaps we would come to a fundamental understanding of them.

So I would suggest that it is very important that we should each discover for ourselves in what way we are at present approaching the many human problems which beset us; because unless we are very clear about this, then however much we may struggle to understand the complex issues of life and all the confusion and contradiction in which we are caught, I feel we shall not be able to do so. That is why I think it would be really worth while if we could go into the beliefs, prejudices,

dogmas and ideas which in various forms are at present corrupting the mind and preventing it from being free to discover what is truth, reality, God, or what you will. And I assure you it needs extraordinary earnestness to do this—to uncover as we go along the many hindrances to understanding and to see how the mind—which is, after all, the only instrument of discovery we have—is blunted by the many thoughts, emotions, fears, habits and conditionings of which it is made up.

To do this I think it is essential not to listen to what is being said as if it were merely a lecture or a discourse—which it is not—, but rather to follow as we go along, each one of us, the reactions and responses of our own minds. For what is important, surely, is to understand the actual working of one's own mind. Mere agreement or opposition does not create understanding; it only creates confusion and contradiction, does it not? Whereas, if we can follow patiently and intelligently what is being said, without judging, without comparing, without agreeing or opposing, so that we see the functioning of our own minds, then perhaps we shall discover for ourselves how to approach our many problems.

Our thinking has become dependent on our surroundings, because we are caught in so many prejudices—nationalistic, ideological, religious, and all the rest of it. We are ever looking for security, for some means of self-confidence, both inwardly and outwardly, are we not? And it seems to me that so long as we are caught in this pursuit of security, in this search for self-confidence and certainty, we are not free to examine our problems and to find out if there is a lasting solution. Surely it is only in understanding ourselves, in watching the process of our own minds—which is, after all, self-knowledge—that there is a possibility of discovering for ourselves what is true, what is reality. For this no teacher, no guide, no textbook or other authority

is necessary. To follow and comprehend the ways of our own thinking and feeling is to be able to dissolve our own problems, which are the problems of society also.

But it is very difficult for us not to think in a particular fashion, according to a particular set of values, dogmas, beliefs, or theories. We are so eager to arrive at a solution or an answer to our problems that we never stop to consider whether the instrument we are using, which is the mind—my mind and your mind—is really free to investigate. A mind which is burdened with knowledge, beliefs, theories, is obviously not free to investigate and find out what is true. Whereas, if we can understand and dissolve the conditioning, the prejudices and dogmas which cloud and twist our minds, then perhaps the mind will be free to discover, so that the truth itself can operate on the problem, rather than the mind struggling to come to a solution through its own conditioning—which does not lead anywhere.

That is why I feel it is so important to know how to listen. Very few of us really listen; very few of us hear or see anything really clearly, because what we are observing or listening to is immediately interpreted, translated by our own minds in terms of our particular ideas and idiosyncrasies. We think we are understanding, but surely we are not. We are so distracted by our own opinions and knowledge, by approval or disapproval, that we never see the problem as it is. But if we can put aside our own particular points of view, and by listening, and following the operation of our own minds, see what is actually the fact, then I think we shall find that quite a different process is taking place which will enable us to look at our problems freely and clearly.

That is why I feel that one should listen totally. At present we listen with only a part of the mind, and it is very difficult for us to give complete atten-

tion—not only to what is being said now, but to all that is happening to us in our lives. We have so many problems, religious, social and economic, as well as the problems of life, of survival, of death; and the very process of our own thinking is, it seems to me, increasing these problems. The way of our own thinking, which is the mind, yours and mine, is conditioned, is it not? It is conditioned by the religion we have been brought up in, by our nationality, political outlook, economic circumstances, and by innumerable other influences. All of these have shaped, moulded our minds in a certain way; and if we would be free of this pressure and influence it is surely useless merely to discard any particular form of authority in order to seek some new form, some new method, some new belief. Yet this is what we are always doing. Surely it is only the mind that is completely free from all conscious or unconscious authority, that is able to discover if there is any reality beyond the mere conceptions of the mind. The free mind is the mind that is empty of all belief, of all patterns of thought—the unconscious as well as the conscious, the hidden, as well as the obvious. At present all our thinking is the result of our particular conditioning, it comes from our accumulated experiences, memories, fears, hopes. Such a mind is obviously not free. There is freedom only when the entire thought-process is understood and transcended, and only then is it possible for a new mind, a fresh mind, to come into being.

So, can the mind free itself from its own conditioning and look at its problems anew? Can the mind be free?—not as a Christian, a Hindu, a Swede, a Communist, or what you will, nor merely in the sense of giving up some particular ideal, belief, or habit, but free to discover; which means going beyond all the influences and contradictions of the mind and of society.

Now, how does the mind respond to all this? To respond with agreement

or dis-agreement is surely vain, for such response is obviously the product of our own background, our own accumulated knowledge and belief. But to experiment with oneself is, it seems to me, really worth while. So can we investigate intelligently, patiently, and find out if it is at all possible to free one's own mind from all particularity, from all influence and authority, so that it is able to go beyond its own activities? Otherwise our lives will be very shallow, empty—and perhaps that is the case with most of us. We have masses of information, knowledge, innumerable beliefs, creeds, dogmas, but really we are very shallow and unhappy. Although in some countries they have established outward, economic security, nevertheless inwardly, psychologically, the individual remains uncertain, unsure. And the outward, physical security which all human beings want and need, whatever their nationality, is made impossible for us all because of our demand for inward, psychological security. The very demand for inward security prevents understanding. It is only when the mind is no longer acquisitive, no longer seeking or demanding *anything*, that it is free to find out what is true, what is God.

That is why it is very important to understand ourselves—not analytically, with one part of the mind analysing another part, which merely leads to further confusion, but actually to be aware, without judgment or condemnation, of the way we act, the words we use, of all our various emotions, our hidden thoughts. If we can look at ourselves dispassionately, so that the hidden emotions are not pressed back but invited forth and understood, then the mind becomes really quiet; and only then there is the possibility of leading a full life.

These are the things which I think we should explore together. We can help each other to find the door to reality, but each one must open that door for himself; and this, it

seems to me, is the only positive action.

So there must be in each one of us an inward, religious revolution; for it is only this inward, religious revolution which will totally change the way of our thinking. And to bring about this revolution, there must be the silent observation of the responses of the mind, without judgment, condemnation, or comparison. At present the mind is uncreative, in the true sense of that word, is it not? It is a made-up thing, put together through the accumulations of memory. As long as there is envy, ambition, self-seeking, there can be no creativeness. So it seems to me that all we can do is to understand ourselves, the ways of our own mind; and this process of understanding is an enormous task. It is not to be done casually, later on, tomorrow, but rather every day, every moment, all the time. To understand ourselves is to be aware spontaneously, naturally, of the ways of our own thinking, so that we begin to see all the hidden motives and intentions which lie behind our thoughts, and thereby bring about the liberation of the mind from its own binding and limiting processes. Then the mind is still; and in that stillness something which is not of the mind can come into being of its own accord.

There are some questions, and I think it would be worth while to find out what we mean by 'asking a question', and what we mean by 'getting an answer'. After all, to any of the big, fundamental questions—of love, of life, of death and the hereafter—, are there any answers? We ask questions only when we are confused, do we not?; and therefore the answers must also be confused. That is why it is very important not to look to others for answers, but rather to look directly at the problem for ourselves. So the difficulty is not in asking a question, or receiving an answer; it is to see the problem clearly. And when there is clarity, there are no questions and no answers.

Question: We Swedes do not as a rule like to tackle the problems of life only with the mind, leaving the emotions aside. Is it possible to solve any problem only with the mind, or only by the emotions?

KRISHNAMURTI: Do you think you can so easily divide the emotions from the mind? Or do we mean, not emotion, but sentiment? We are all sentimental, are we not?; and we would all like to get answers which give us a sense of satisfaction, security—which is surely a very superficial approach. To understand any problem there must be keenness of mind; and when it is blunted by opinions, judgments, tradition, fears, the mind is not keen. It is not with the mind alone, or with the emotions alone, that we look at anything fully; it is with the totality of our whole being. And that is a very difficult thing to do—to look at something totally, fully and freely. It is very difficult to look at the problem of death, of love, of sex, and so on, with one's whole being, because all the time one is building up an answer, a belief, or a theory. If the answer is pleasant to us, we accept it; if it is unpleasant, we reject it. And we can never look at a problem totally so long as the mind is merely demanding an answer, seeking a way of living, an inward security.

Most of us are trying to understand our problems with a mind that is confused; and we are confused, though most of us do not admit it. When a man is confused, whatever his actions may be, they will only lead to further confusion and misery. So if we are concerned with clearing up the confusion in the world, we must first discover and acknowledge to ourselves that we are confused—completely. But when we do realize that we are confused, most of us want to act immediately on that confusion, to do something about it, to reform, to alter ourselves—which only accentuates the confusion; and it is very difficult to stop all this fruitless

activity, which is merely a running away from the actual, from what is. Only when one stops running away and faces the fact of one's confusion with the totality of one's being, is there the possibility of dissolving that confusion. No one can do this for us; we must do it ourselves.

Question: Juvenile delinquency is increasing. What is the reason and what is the remedy?

KRISHNAMURTI: Are not the roots of this problem buried in the whole structure of modern society? And is not society the outcome of what we are? We are at war with each other, are we not?, because we all want to be somebody in this society; we are all trying to achieve success, to get somewhere, to acquire virtue and become something. Politically, economically, socially and religiously, we want to arrive, to have the best or to be the best, and in this process there is fear, envy, greed, ambition, ruthlessness. Our whole society is based on this process. And we want our children to fit into society, to be like ourselves, to conform to the pattern of so-called culture. But within this pattern there is revolt, among the children as among the grown-ups.

The problem is even more complex when we consider the whole system of education. We have to find out what we mean by education. What is the purpose of education? Is it to make us conform, to fit into society?—which is what we are doing now with our children. Or does education consist in helping the child, the student, to be aware of all the conditioning influences—nationalistic, religious, and so on—and be free of them? If we are serious about this—and we should be serious—, we will really study the child, will we not? We will not subject him to some particular influence or authority and thereby mould him into a pattern,

but will help him to be aware of *all* influences, so that he can grow in freedom. We will observe him constantly and carefully—be aware of the books he reads, with their glorified heroes, watch him in his work, in his play, in his rest—and will help him to be unconditioned and free.

To help the child to be aware of all the nationalistic tendencies, the prejudices and religious beliefs which condition the mind, really means, does it not?, that we must be aware first of our own ways of thinking. After all, we grown-ups do not know how to live together, we are everlastingly battling with each other and within ourselves. This battle, this struggle, projects itself into society; and into that society we want to fit the child. We cannot change society; only the individual can change. But we are not individuals, are we? We are caught up in the mass, in society; and so long as we do not understand ourselves and free the mind from its self-imposed limitations, how can we help the child?

Question: Can one live in the world without ambition? Does it not isolate us, to be without ambition?

KRISHNAMURTI: I think this is a fundamental question. We can see what ambition makes of the world. Everybody wants to be something. The artist wants to be famous, the schoolboy wants to become the President, the priest wants to be the bishop, and so on. Everyone throughout the world is trying, struggling, forcing himself, in order to be important. Even in our education, the boy who is not clever is compared with the boy who is clever—which is utterly stupid. And we see the result of this ambition projected in the world. Each nation is seeking to maintain itself at all costs.

Now, the questioner wants to know whether we can be free from this ambition, and if so, whether we shall not be

isolated from society. Why is there this fear of being free from ambition, this fear of being alone? Can ambition and love go together? The mind that is seeking all the time to be something, to become great, surely does not know what love is. So long as we are pursuing ambition, we *are* isolated. We are isolated already, are we not? But, you see, we accept ambition. Whether a man lives in a small village far away, or in a crowded city, if he can call himself something—A Swede, a Hindu, a Dane, or anything else—, then he feels that he *is* someone. To be respectable, to be known, to have power, position, money, virtue—all these things give us a sense of importance. So it is very difficult not to be ambitious.

The man who is as nothing is without fear, without ambition; he is alone, but not isolated. To free oneself from ambition requires a great deal of insight, intelligence and love; but such a man, who is as nothing, is not isolated.

May 14, 1956

II

TALK IN STOCKHOLM

I think it would be worth while this evening if we could attempt something which might be rather difficult but perhaps important to go into. I wonder if we can discover what it is that most of us are seeking, and whether what we are seeking has any validity, and real basis. Perhaps we are seeking something which we cannot properly articulate to ourselves. Or we may hope to find something that will be deeply satisfactory, that will give us some measure of happiness or certainty. Until we have discovered what it is that we are seeking, I think our lives must be uncertain, chaotic, and contradictory. It is really very difficult to find out what we are seeking, because

we do not know for ourselves the motives, the urges, the drives that are forcing us to seek at all. Obviously, as you have all come here to listen, you are seeking something. But to know what it is we are seeking, we must find out, must we not?, what the drive is behind our search.

Most of us are well settled in life; we have homes, families, responsibilities, some position, a job, and so on. But our lives are generally humdrum, routine; there is boredom, a sense of frustration, and we want something more than mere logical conclusions, religious beliefs and ideologies. So I think it would be worth while if we could spend this evening trying to find out what it is we are groping after. What is the urge behind this search? Can we put our finger on it? Can we know what it is, this urge? We are concerned, not only with the more superficial urges, compulsions and fears, but we want to know, do we not?, what it is we are seeking with our whole life, our total existence. And can we intelligently find out? Surely, without understanding this seeking, and the pressure, the compulsion behind it, our search may be utterly vain and have no meaning.

So, how can one find out for oneself what it is one is after? If we are old we want peace, security, comfort, and if we are young we want pleasure, excitement, success. And if we cannot have success, then we want some kind of self-assertion. So each one of us is groping for something; and what is it? Are we moved by the desire to find out what is true, or whether there is any permanency? Or is it worldly satisfaction we are seeking, a better position in our various environments?

I wish we could really go into this matter, because I think that when the urges within one have become very clear to oneself, then life has quite a different meaning. When the mind is free from the compulsion, the drive, the confusion which now exists, there may be no search at all, but

something entirely different—the sense of being free. So, can we find out for ourselves what is the drive that is making us seek, that has made us come here to listen? Or are there so many different urges, so many pleasures, that we cannot separate them to find out which is the primary urge? I think it is important to discover the primary urge, otherwise our search has no meaning.

Many people are everlastingly talking about seeking God, seeking truth, seeking immortality, virtue, and all the rest of it; but this search has very little meaning, it becomes just a fad. I think it is significant that so few of us who seek have so far discovered for ourselves anything that has real depth and significance. Is it happiness that we are seeking, a sense of self-fulfilment? If we seek without understanding what is behind this urge, our lives remain shallow, for self-fulfilment becomes very important; and to self-fulfilment there is no end. The moment you fulfil yourself, there is always something more in which to be fulfilled.

Our urges are so strong, and unless we understand the whole significance of this inward compulsion, it seems to me that mere search has no meaning at all. To find out what we are after, and what is the motive behind it, is surely essential. Being uncertain, confused, afraid, perhaps we want to escape into some kind of fancy that we call reality, some kind of hope, some kind of belief. If we could understand for ourselves why the mind is always seeking security, then we might have, not security, but a new kind of confidence. That is why I think it is important to go into all this.

After all, it is a function of society and of government to help to bring about outward security. But the difficulty is that we also want to be secure psychologically, inwardly, and therefore we identify ourselves with the nation, with a religion, an ideology, a belief. We never question whether there is such

a thing as inward security at all, but we are always seeking it; and the very search for inward, psychological security actually prevents outward security, does it not? Obviously that is what is happening throughout the world. In our search to be psychologically secure through nationalism, through a leader, through an ideology, physical security is destroyed. So, can the mind which is seeking permanency in everything—in 'my country', 'my religion', through innumerable dogmas, beliefs, ideas—discover for itself whether there actually is such a thing as permanency, inward security?

We have never questioned whether there can ever be security inwardly; and perhaps there is no such thing. It may be this very desire to seek security, permanency for ourselves, both inwardly and outwardly, which is conditioning the mind and preventing the understanding of what is true. So, can the mind free itself from this urge to be secure? It can do so, surely, only when it is completely uncertain—not uncertain in opposition to security, but when it is in a state of not-knowing and not-seeking. After all, one can never find anything new so long as one's mind is burdened with the old, with all the beliefs, fears and hidden compulsions which bring about this search for security. So long as we are seeking security in any form, inward or outward, there must be chaos and misery. And if we observe ourselves, that is what we are doing all the time. Through property, through money, through virtue, position, fame, we are constantly trying to bring about a sense of permanency for ourselves. And is it not important to find out whether the mind can be free of that whole process? Can we actually experience for ourselves the significance of the compulsion behind the urge to be secure? Can we experience it *directly*, not later on, at another time, but now, as we are discussing? Can we look at this urge to be secure and find out if it has any

validity, and from what source it springs?

And when we do look, what happens? We feel, do we not?, that if we were not inwardly secure, if we did not identify ourselves with innumerable ideals, ideologies, beliefs, nationalisms, we would be nothing, we would be empty, we would be of no account. So our immediate response is to escape from that sense of emptiness by seeking some form of inward richness, some sense of fulfilment; and we set up leaders to follow, we look for teachings and authorities which we can obey. But the misery, the inward poverty continues; there is everlasting struggle; and we never experience directly, actually, that state of inward insufficiency, inward emptiness. But if we could look at it, experience it directly, which means not running away from it by picking up a book, turning on the radio—you know the innumerable things we do in order to escape—, if we could experience completely what it is, then I think we would find that that emptiness has quite a different significance. But all the time we try to escape, do we not?—through the church, through patriotism, through an ideology or a belief. Whereas, if we could understand the futility of running away from this sense of inward poverty, and would look at it, examine it patiently, without any condemnation, then perhaps it would reveal something totally different.

But it is very difficult, is it not?, to be free of the desire to escape from this sense of emptiness, and to be free of fear, ambition, envy. At present we are forever trying to establish our own security through identifying ourselves with something greater, whether it be a person or an idea. But if one is really serious in the endeavour to find truth, reality, or God, one must first of all totally free oneself from all conditioning. This means that one must be able to stand completely alone and look at the truth of what is without seeking any escape. If you will experiment with

this you will find that the mind which is willing to go into this whole problem of the search for security, which is willing to look at its own emptiness completely, totally, without any desire to escape—that such a mind becomes very quiet, alone, free, creative. This creativeness is not the outcome of struggle, of effort, of search; it is a state in which the mind, seeing the truth about its own fears and envies, is completely alert and silent. That state may be, and I think it is, the real.

Question: Does suffering ultimately lead one to inward peace and awareness?

KRISHNAMURTI: I am afraid not. We think suffering is a means to something else—to heaven, to the attainment of peace, and so on—and hence we have made suffering into a virtue. But what do we mean by suffering? How does suffering arise? Suffering is a sense of disturbance, is it not?—an inward, psychological disturbance. I am not now talking of physical suffering, which has its own significance; but what we are talking about is the psychological suffering which comes when we are frustrated, when we are lonely, when we do not understand the process of our own being, the complexity of our own thinking.

What happens when we suffer? We try to use it as a means to something else, do we not?—we say it makes us more intelligent, that it leads to peace, to awareness; or we immediately seek to escape from it through ideas, through amusements, through every form of distraction. Suffering comes, does it not?, when there is ignorance, when there is a lack of knowledge of the workings of one's own mind, when the mind is torn by contradictory desires, by loneliness, by comparison, by envy. But when we understand the whole process of ignorance, of envy, when we look at it, face it totally, without any desire to escape or condemn it, then perhaps we

shall see that there is no necessity for suffering at all. Peace cannot be found through suffering, or through anything else. It comes only when there is understanding of the workings of one's own mind and when, through that understanding, the thought-process comes to an end.

Question: Why do you go about the world giving talks? Is it for self-fulfilment, or is it because you think you can help people in that way?

KRISHNAMURTI: If I went about talking in order to help people, you would all become followers, would you not? Is that not what is happening throughout the world today? We are all seeking leaders, teachers, to help us out of our confusion, and the only result is that we get more confused, more chaotic. I do not believe in such help, I only believe in total understanding. We all want to be helped, we all want guides, leaders, someone to follow; politically, socially and religiously, that is what we want. And that leads to exploitation, does it not? It leads to the totalitarian spirit—the leader and the led. So long as we depend upon another for inward peace, we shall not find it, for dependence only breeds fear. It is not for that reason I am talking. And is it for self-fulfilment, to have the feeling that one is doing something for others, to feel gratified, popular, and so on? I say it is not. Then why is one talking? I do not think there is any answer to that question, any more than there is an answer if one asks of a flower, "Why do you glow in the sunshine?"

If I were trying to help you, or trying to fulfil myself, it would put me in the position of being the one who knows, and you in the position of not knowing; so I would be using you, and you would be using me. Whereas, I think that the moment one is conscious that one knows, one does not know. When a

person is aware of his virtue, his humility, or what you will, he is no longer virtuous. What we are trying to do here is to understand ourselves, for self-knowledge alone brings reality. We are not trying to discover who knows, who can help, and who does not know. After all, what is it that we really know? Very little, I think. We may have a lot of technical knowledge, we may know how to build a bridge, how to paint, and so on; but we know very little about ourselves, about the ways of the mind and the urge of ambition, envy. Only the mind that is aware that it does not know, that is totally aware of its own ignorance—only such a mind can be at peace. The mind that has merely gathered experience, accumulated knowledge, or acquired a lot of technical information, is everlastingly in conflict.

When the mind is no longer burdened with the memory of the things it has learned, when it is willing to die to all the knowledge it has accumulated, only then can it know what it is to have peace. I think this is a state which most of us have experienced occasionally, a state when the self is entirely absent. But we are so occupied most of the time with superficialities that the real things of life pass us by.

Question: I have read an American book which certainly seems to prove through hypnosis that reincarnation is a fact. What comment will you make on this?

KRISHNAMURTI: This is rather a complex question, and I think one has to go into it fairly deeply. We all know that there is death. The physical organism will come to an end, because it has been used up and is finished; and we want to know if there is continuity after death. The things that we have known and experienced will all come to an end, and so we ask what will happen to us then. This is a problem all over the world. In the East reincarnation is accepted as a belief, and the questioner

says a book has been written which proves, through hypnotism, that a person has lived before; and we want to know whether reincarnation is a fact. I do not know if you have ever felt that thought is independent of the body, independent of the physical organism. We have the organism, the nervous responses, and thought; and so we ask if thought continues after death.

Now, what happens when we ask that question? The fact is that we want to continue, do we not?—or else we say we would like to put an end to everything. In both cases the mind is selecting a theory which suits it. Whether you believe or disbelieve in reincarnation, has little significance; but can we discover the truth of the matter, the truth about death? We all like to think that there is a soul which exists everlastingly, and we accept various beliefs which tell us that the soul is a spiritual entity beyond the physical organism. But belief in an idea, however comforting, however reassuring, does not give us the full understanding of what death is. Surely, death is something totally unknown, it is something completely new, and however anxiously we inquire, we cannot find an answer that will satisfy. All that we know is within the field of time, and all that we are is the accumulation of past memories and experiences. We have established our own identity through memory, as 'my house', 'my name', 'my family', 'my knowledge', 'my country', and we want this 'me' to continue in the future. Or else we say "Death is the end of everything", which is no solution either.

So, can we discover what is the truth about death? We know that we seek the continuity of the 'me'. Thought is ever seeking permanency, and hence we say that there must be some form of continuity. Thought is continuous, is it not?; and so long as there is the desire to continue, we give strength to the idea of the 'me' and

'my importance'. Thought may continue, it may take another shape and form, which is called reincarnation; but does that which continues ever know the immeasurable, the timeless? Can it ever be creative? Surely, God, or truth, or what you will, is not to be found in the field of time. It must be entirely new, not something out of the past, not something created out of our own hopes and fears. And yet the mind wants permanency, does it not? And so it says "God is permanent", and "I shall continue hereafter".

So you see, the problem is not whether or not there is reincarnation, but the fact that we are all seeking permanency, security, here and hereafter. So long as the mind is seeking security in any direction, whether it be through name, family, position, virtue, or what you will, suffering must continue. Only the mind which dies from day to day, from moment to moment, to all that it has accumulated, can know what the truth is. And then perhaps we shall discover that there is no division between life and death, but only a totally different state in which time, as we know it, does not exist.

May 15, 1956

III

TALK IN STOCKHOLM

To those of us who are serious it must be a real problem to find out how to bring about a fundamental change in ourselves. It is obvious that such a change is necessary, and not merely a change forced by circumstances, which is no change at all. The pressure of circumstances may bring about a change, but such change invariably leads to further conflict and stagnation. But if one is concerned with a fundamental change, how is it to be brought about?

One sees in the world a great deal of misery, not only physical but psychological: the limitations of the conditioned mind, the constant threat of war, the national and racial divisions, as well as those which the organized religions create with their dogmatism and vain, repeated rituals—we all know of these things. And seeing all this, it must surely be a matter of serious concern for each individual to find out for himself how he can bring about a fundamental, radical change within himself, a change that will set free the mind from the constant pressure of conflict, suffering and limitation. It is obvious that there must be a change; but the difficulty with most of us is, I think, that we do not know *how* to change.

Now, what I mean by change is not merely conforming to a new pattern of thinking, to a new ideology, but a change that is brought about without any form of compulsion or pressure, without influence, and even without motive. Because if one has a motive in bringing about a change, one is back in the old pattern of achievement, ambition. So it must be our concern, I think, to inquire into this question and find out for ourselves how a deep, inward transformation can be brought about.

I am going to talk as usual this evening for about twenty or thirty minutes, and then I suggest that we discuss together. You ask me questions, and there will be an exchange between us, so that you and I will get to know what we actually feel and think about this problem. I hope you will agree to this.

We think ideals are necessary to bring about this change, do we not? Being violent, we say that the ideal of non-violence will help us to put away that which is violent; we seek to replace violence by what we call non-violence, to replace greed by generosity, and so on. But to me, ideals do not bring about a change; on the contrary, ideals are impediments to a fundamental, radical change. Ideals are merely a means of

postponing, an excuse to avoid bringing about a real change. So long as we have an ideal, there is always a conflict between what *is* and what *should* be, and we spend a great deal of energy in this inward conflict, through which we hope to bring about a fundamental change. If we are envious, we set up the ideal of non-envy, hoping thereby to free the mind from envy. But if you examine closely this whole process, you will see that the ideal actually prevents the understanding of what *is*, which is envy. So the ideal is not important, it is an impediment, a thing to be put away completely.

Now, what is it that will bring about a change? Can the mind which has been conditioned in a particular pattern, bring about a change? Or does such a mind merely modify the pattern of its thinking, and imagine that it has thereby radically changed? Does not a fundamental change come about only in understanding the whole background in which one has been brought up? Surely, so long as the mind operates within the pattern of a particular society, or a particular religion, there can be no change. However much we may struggle within the pattern, however much we may suffer, a change is not possible so long as we do not understand the pattern in which we live and in which our whole being is caught. The desire to change within the pattern only creates further complications. We spend our time in ceaseless struggle, making vain efforts to change, and there is constant friction between what *is* and what *should* be, which is the ideal.

So it seems to me that if we are to bring about a fundamental change, it is first necessary to understand the background in which we have been brought up, the pattern in which the mind operates. If we do not understand that pattern, if we are not familiar with our own conditioning, if the whole trend of our education, in which the mind is caught, is not understood, then we merely follow a tradition,

which invariably leads to mediocrity. Tradition inevitably cripples and dulls the mind. So it is imperative, surely, to bring about a fundamental change within ourselves; because, though we may be very clever and know a great deal, most of us are very mediocre, empty, shallow, inwardly insufficient, are we not? And to bring about such a change, it is necessary to understand the totality of our background. Until we understand that background, however much we may struggle to change ourselves, it will lead us nowhere.

What do we mean by the background? The background is made up of the traditions, the influences in which we have been raised, and the education, the theories, the formulas, the conclusion that we have acquired. If we are not free of all that, which is mere occupation with ideas, any effort to change ourselves must invariably lead to the same kind of respectability or mediocrity; and this struggle, in which we are all caught, can only bring about non-creative thinking.

It is only the free mind, surely, that can find out what is true, not the mind that is conditioned by beliefs, ideals and compulsions. If we want to find out if there is a reality beyond the limitations and projections of thought, surely the mind must first be free of all the beliefs, dogmas and traditions, of all the patterns in which it is caught. For it is only the free mind that can discover, and not the mind that is constantly struggling to adjust itself to a particular pattern or ideal, whether imposed upon it by society, or by the mind itself.

It seems to me that one of our main difficulties is that we really *want* to live casual, sluggish, dull lives, with perhaps a little excitement now and then. Our pattern of existence is very shallow, and we are everlastingly struggling in a superficial way to deepen this shallowness through various formulas. I think this shallowness, this emptiness within ourselves, is brought

about by not understanding the whole background in which we live, the habitual ways of our thinking; we are not aware of that at all. We are not aware of our thoughts, we do not see from whence they come, what their significance is, what values we are giving to them, and how the mind is caught in dead dreaming, in competition, in ambition, in trying to be something, in adjusting to all the narrow formulas of society.

Therefore it is really important, if one would bring about a fundamental change, to be totally free of society. And that is the real revolution: the revolution which comes when we begin to understand the whole pattern of society, of which we are a part. We are not different from society, we are the result of social influences; and we cannot be free from the stamp of social influences so long as we do not understand the whole composition of society. The composition of society is a mixture of greed, envy, ambition, and of all those conditioning beliefs based on fear which are called religion. So it is only the man who steps out of society, who is free from the compulsion of neighbours and tradition, as well as from his own inward envy and ambition—it is only such a man who is really revolutionary, really religious, and only he can find out if there is a reality beyond the projections of our petty little minds.

I think this is a very important problem, especially in our world today, which is facing such great crises. Science and so-called civilization may bring about a change, but any such change is invariably superficial; it is merely a yielding to the pressure of circumstances, and so it is no real change at all. Therefore there is no creative release, but merely the pursuit of a routine which is called virtue. But if we can go very deeply into this problem, as we should, then I think we shall be able to understand the background of which we form a part. The background is not different from our-

selves, because we *are* the background. Our minds are a result of the past, with all its traditions, beliefs and dogmas, both conscious and unconscious. And can such a mind ever be free? It can be free only when it begins to understand the whole structure of this background, of the society in which we live. Then only is it possible for the mind to be truly religious, and therefore truly revolutionary.

To go into this a little more, verbally at least—and non-verbally also—, perhaps we can try discussing it together. What I have said may be contradictory to what you think, and it might be profitable if we could discuss it easily, naturally, and in a friendly manner, so as to find out more about this problem. But to discuss it is going to be quite difficult. We must all stick to the point and not bring in various issues which are irrelevant. And obviously, to discuss wisely we must not make long speeches.

Questioner: Can we reach an understanding of ourselves other than by conscious effort?

KRISHNAMURTI: Do we understand anything through effort? If I make an *effort* to understand what you say, do you think I shall understand? All my attention is given to making the effort, is it not? But if one can listen effortlessly, then perhaps there is a possibility of understanding.

In the same way, how am I to understand myself? First of all, surely, I must not assume anything about myself, I must not have a mental picture of myself. I must look at my thoughts, at the way I talk, at my gestures, at my beliefs, as easily as I look at my face in a mirror—just watch them, be aware of them without condemnation; because the moment I condemn, there is no furthering of understanding. If I want to understand, I must look; and I cannot look if I condemn. If I want to

understand a child, it is no good comparing him with his older brother, or condemning him. I must watch him when he is playing, crying, eating; and I can watch him only if I have no sense of condemnation or evaluation. In the same way, I can watch myself—not little bits of myself, but the totality of myself—only when there is an awareness in which there is no choice, no condemnation, no comparison.

Questioner: Is it possible for any of us, who are living in this particular society, to bring about the change of which you are talking?

KRISHNAMURTI: If we as individuals do not bring about this change, how is it to be done? If you and I, living in this society, do not do it, who will? The powerful, the millionaires, the people of great possessions, are not going to do it. It must surely be done by ordinary people like you and me—and I am not saying this rhetorically, stupidly. If you and I see the importance of this change, then it is not courage, but the very perception of the importance of change, which will bring it about. A man may have the courage to stand against the dictates of society; but it is the man who understands the complex problem of change, who understands the whole structure of society, which is himself—it is he alone who becomes an individual and is not merely a representative of the collective. Only the individual who is not caught in society, can fundamentally affect society. You think that courage, strength, conviction is necessary to understand and withstand society. I think that is entirely false. If one deeply feels it is important to effect a real change, that very feeling brings about such a change within oneself.

Questioner: A man has a right to go his own way; and if he does so, will not this change come about?

KRISHNAMURTI: Are you suggesting, sir, that there can be change through an action of will? Most of us are accustomed to the idea that through will we can bring about a change. Now, what do we mean by will? We generally mean, do we not?, making an effort in one particular direction, suppressing what is in order to reach something else. We exercise will in order to achieve, or to bring about a certain desired change. Will is another word for desire, is it not? Each one of us has many contradictory desires; and when one desire dominates other desires, this domination of one desire over the others we call will. But it is still the domination of one desire over other desires; so there is contradiction, suppression, a ceaseless conflict going on between the dominant desire, which we call will, and the other desires.

Now, this conflict can never bring about a change—which is psychologically obvious. So long as I am in conflict within myself there can be no change. There can be a change, not by one desire dominating other desires, but only when I understand the whole structure of desire. That is why it is important to understand the background, the values, the influences, the motives in which the mind is caught.

Questioner: You say that in order to bring about a change we must understand the background. Do you mean by this that we must understand reincarnation and karma?

KRISHNAMURTI: 'Karma' is a Sanskrit word which means action. And reincarnation—you know what that means!

I think it is fairly clear that a mind that believes in anything, that adheres to any psychological wish or hope—which comes from fear—lives always within the pattern of that belief; and to struggle within the pattern of any belief is no change at all. A man who merely believes in reincarnation has not

understood the whole problem of death and sorrow, and when he believes in that particular theory he is trying to escape from the fact of death.

The word 'karma' has many problems involved in it. One has to understand the motives of one's actions—the influences, the compulsions, the causes which have brought about the action. Surely, all this is part of the background which must be understood; and belief in reincarnation is also part of the background. The mind that believes is not capable of understanding, because belief is obviously an escape from reality.

Questioner: I think it is rather important to know what we mean by seeing and watching. You have said that there is no motive or centre, but only a process. How can a process watch another process?

KRISHNAMURTI: This is like a cross-examination! Surely you are not trying to trap me, and I am not trying to answer cleverly. What we are trying to do is to understand the problem, which is very complex; and one or two questions and responses are not going to solve it. But what we can do is to approach it from different directions and look at it as patiently as possible.

So the question is this: If there is only a process, and not a centre which observes the process, then how can a process observe itself? The process is active, moving, changing, all the time in motion; and how can that process watch itself if there is no centre? I hope the question is clear to you, otherwise what I am going to say will have no meaning.

If the whole of life is a movement, a flux, then how can it be watched unless there is a watcher? Now, we are conditioned to believe, and we feel we know, that there is a watcher as well as a movement, a process; so we think we are separate from the process. To most of us there is the thinker and the thought, the experiencer and the experi-

ence. For us that is so, we accept it as a matter of fact. But is it so? Is there a thinker, an observer, a watcher apart from thought, apart from thinking, apart from experience? Is there a thinker, a centre, without thought? If you remove thought, is there a centre? If you have no thought at all, no struggle, no urge to acquire, no effort to become something, is there a centre? Or is the centre created by thought, which feels itself to be insecure, impermanent, in a state of flux? If you observe, you will find that it is the thought-process that has created the centre, which is still within the field of thinking. And is it possible—this is the point—to watch, to be aware of this process, without the watcher? Can the mind, which is the process, be aware of itself?

Please, this requires a great deal of insight, meditation and penetration, because most of us assume that there is a thinker apart from thinking. But if you go into it a little more closely, you will see that thought has created the thinker. The thinker who is directing, who is the centre, the judge, is the outcome of our thoughts. This is a fact, as you will see if you are really looking at it. Most people are conditioned to believe that the thinker is separate from thought, and they give to the thinker the quality of eternity; but that which is beyond time comes into being only when we understand the whole process of thinking.

Now, can the mind be aware of itself in action, in movement, without a centre? I think it can. It is possible when there is only an awareness of thinking, and not the thinker who is thinking. You know, it is quite an experience to realize that there is only thinking. And it is very difficult to experience that, because the thinker is habitually there, evaluating, judging, condemning, comparing, identifying. If the thinker ceases to identify, evaluate, judge, then there is only thinking, without the centre.

What is the centre? The centre is the 'me'—the 'me' that wants to be a great person, that has so many conclusions, fears, motives. From that centre we think; but that centre has been created by the reaction of thinking. So, can the mind be aware of thinking without the centre—just observe it? You will find how extraordinarily difficult it is just to look at a flower without naming it, without comparing it with other flowers, without evaluating it out of like or dislike. Experiment with this and you will see how really difficult it is to observe something without bringing in all your prejudices, all your emotions and evaluations. But however difficult, you will find that the mind can be aware of itself without the centre watching the movement of the mind.

Questioner: If anyone wishes to find freedom along the lines you have spoken of, is it not also necessary for that person to renounce the church or whatever other religious organizations he is taking an interest in?

KRISHNAMURTI: If one wishes to free oneself, should one give up, renounce, or set aside organizations that demand belief? Obviously. If one belongs to an organization which demands belief, which is based on fear, on dogma, then the mind is a slave to that organization and cannot be free. Only the mind that is free—and this is an extraordinarily complex and difficult problem—can find out if there is reality, if there is God, not the mind that believes in God.

Now, why do we cling to the dogmas, beliefs and rituals which religions introduce? When we understand *that*, then they will drop away like leaves in the autumn, without any effort.

Why do you belong to any particular religious organization? We must obviously have organizations to deliver letters, milk, and so on; but why does

the mind cling to dogmas? Does it not cling because in dogma, in belief, it finds security, something to rely on? Being uncertain, fearful, insecure, it projects a belief or clings to a dogma that some church or other organization offers. The mind clings to dogma, to belief, as an escape from its own uncertainty, its inward poverty, insufficiency. It tries to fill that emptiness with dogmas, beliefs, superstitions, rituals. You may renounce a belief and put aside a dogma; but so long as you have not understood this inward poverty, insufficiency, so long as the mind has not understood its own emptiness, merely relinquishing organized religion has no meaning. It will have meaning only when you understand the inward nature that forces you to cling to a conclusion, a belief. That is why it is very important to have knowledge of oneself, to know why one believes, rejects, renounces. It is only through self-knowledge that there is wisdom—not in beliefs, not in books, but in understanding the whole structure of the mind. Only the free mind can understand that which is beyond time.

May 21, 1956

IV

TALK IN STOCKHOLM

I think it is important to consider the negativeness of experience; because our whole life is a series of accumulated experiences, and a false centre forms around these accumulations. Whether experience is destructive or so-called creative, what is it that nevertheless makes the mind insensitive and brings about deterioration? Does experience liberate the mind from the deteriorating factor? Or must there be freedom from this craving for experience, from the accumulative process of experience?

We take experience as a necessary factor for the enrichment of life; and I think it is, at one level. But experience nearly always forms a hardened centre in the mind, as the self, which is a deteriorating factor. Most of us are seeking experience. We may be tired of the worldly experiences of fame, notoriety, wealth, sex, and so on, but we all want greater, wider experience of some kind, especially those of us who are attempting to reach a so-called spiritual state. Being tired of worldly things, we want a more extensive, a wider, deeper experience; and to arrive at such an experience, we suppress, we control, we dominate ourselves, hoping thereby to achieve a full realization of God, or what you will. We think the pursuit of experience is the right way of life in order to attain greater vision, and I question whether that is so. Does this search for experience, which is really a demand for greater, fuller sensation, lead to reality? Or is it a factor which cripples the mind?

In our search for sensation, which we call experience, we do various things, do we not? We practise so-called spiritual disciplines; we control, suppress, put ourselves through various forms of religious exercise—all in order to arrive at a greater experience. Some of us have actually done all this, while others only play with the idea. But through it all, the fundamental desire is for greater sensation—to have the sensation of pleasure extended, made high and permanent, as opposed to the suffering, the dullness, the routine and loneliness of our daily lives. So the mind is ever seeking experience, and that experience hardens into a centre; and from this centre we act. We live and have our being in this centre, in this accumulated, hardened experience of the past. And is it possible to live without forming this centre of experience and sensation? Because it seems to me that life will then have a significance quite different

from that which we now give it. At present we are all concerned, are we not?, with the extension of the centre, recruiting greater and wider experience which ever strengthens the self; and I think this invariably limits the mind.

So, is it possible to live in this world without forming this centre? I think it is possible only when there is a full awareness of life—an awareness in which there is no motive or choice, but simple observation. I think you will find, if you will experiment with this and think about it a little deeply, that such awareness does not form a centre around which experience and the reactions to experience can accumulate. Then the mind becomes astonishingly alive, creative—and I do not mean writing poems, or painting pictures, but a creativeness in which the self is totally absent. I think this is what most of us are really seeking—a state in which there is no conflict, a state of peace and serenity of mind. But this is not possible so long as the mind is the instrument of sensation and is ever demanding further sensation.

After all, most of our memory is based on sensation, either pleasurable or painful; from the painful we try to escape, and to the pleasurable we cling; the one we suppress or seek to avoid, and the other we grope after, hold on to, and think about. So the centre of our experience is essentially based on pleasure and pain, which are sensations, and we are always pursuing experiences which we hope will be permanently satisfying. That is what we are after all the time, and hence there is everlasting conflict. Conflict is never creative; on the contrary, conflict is a most destructive factor, both within the mind itself and in our relationship with the world around us, which is society. If we can understand this really deeply—that a mind which seeks experience limits itself and is its own source of misery—then perhaps we can find out what it is to be aware.

Being aware does not mean learning and accumulating lessons from life; on the contrary, to be aware is to be without the scars of accumulated experience. After all, when the mind merely gathers experience according to its own wishes, it remains very shallow, superficial. A mind which is deeply observant does not get caught up in self-centred activities; and the mind is not observant if there is any action of condemnation or comparison. Comparison and condemnation do not bring understanding, rather they block understanding. To be aware is to observe—just to observe—without any self-identifying process. Such a mind is free of that hard core which is formed by self-centred activities.

I think it is very important to experience this state of awareness for oneself, and not merely to know about it through any description which another may give. Awareness comes into being naturally, easily, spontaneously, when we understand the centre which is everlastingly seeking experience, sensation. A mind which seeks sensation through experience becomes insensitive, incapable of swift movement, and therefore it is never free. But in understanding its own self-centred activities, the mind comes upon this state of awareness which is choiceless, and such a mind is then capable of complete silence, stillness.

The capacity of the mind to be still, which is so essential, is not of the Occident or the Orient, though in the Orient some people may talk about it more. Without this extraordinary stillness of the mind which is not seeking further experience, all our activities, will merely add to the dead centre of accumulation.

Only when the mind is completely still can it know its own movement—and then its movement is immense, incalculable, immeasurable. Then it is possible to have that feeling of something which is beyond time. Then life has quite a different significance,

a significance which is not to be found through capacities, gifts, or intellectual gymnastics.

Creative stillness is not the end-result of a calculating, disciplined and widely-informed mind. It comes into being only when we understand the falsity of the whole process of endlessly seeking sensation through experience. Without that inward stillness, all our speculations about reality, all the philosophies, the systems of ethics, the religions, have very little significance. It is only the still mind which can know infinity.

Question: Can you tell us more clearly what it is you mean by consciousness?

KRISHNAMURTI: What is consciousness? Is it not everything that we think and everything that we have thought in the past? Is it not the past which we project through the present into the future? Are not both the conscious and the unconscious mind within the field of time? Consciousness is made up, is it not?, of the responses of the past propelled into the present through memory, as the 'I', as the mind, which then seeks further forms of fulfilment in the future. The whole of that is consciousness, is it not? It is the result of inherited ideas, of accumulated experiences, of fears, inspirations, motives, beliefs, hopes, and innumerable other influences. All that is what we are. We may divide ourselves into the 'I' and the 'not-I', into the 'lower self' and the 'higher self', but this whole field of consciousness, you will find, is made up of reactions, of the past, of conditioned thinking, and is therefore obviously limited.

After all, it is only because we are forever thinking about something, pursuing something, or running away from something, that we know we are alive. We search for reality, for permanence, and because we want it, we say we

know of it. But our search is merely the outcome of desire, is it not? It is conditioned, limited, a product of time. All this is part of consciousness.

So the question is, can the mind, being conditioned, limited, free itself from the past, from its own centre of experience which is based on like and dislike? You cannot answer 'yes' or 'no'. You can only find out for yourself whether the mind can be free. But to find out, you must first know that you are conditioned; you must first be aware of the compulsions, the fears, the beliefs and traditions which now corrupt the mind. This means, does it not?, that one must watch oneself in relationship—not merely with people, but also in one's relationship with things and with ideas. Then you will understand, if you really observe it, the whole process of conditioning, and can perhaps be free of it forever.

Question: Is it possible for the ordinary person to come to this freedom without special training and knowledge?

KRISHNAMURTI: What does special training imply? It implies, does it not?, continually conditioning the mind to a certain practice, to a certain discipline, to various forms of conformity and compulsion. When you say that special training is necessary to achieve this freedom, what is implied is the practice of a method; and can any method bring about freedom? Or is the practice of a method the very denial of freedom? Surely, when you practise a method you become a slave to that method, to a technique, and therefore there is no freedom. The practice produces a result, but the result is not freedom.

We think that by careful training of the mind, by certain practices, by observing certain rules, we will come to freedom; but the only result is to make ourselves prisoners of the method. Freedom is in the beginning, not at

the end. We think that inner freedom is to be achieved only at the end, because from the very beginning we have denied ourselves freedom. We do not see that only from the very beginning can freedom be realized. Anyone with enough intelligence, diligence, and patience, can be free. Freedom comes to all of us if we give our time to it, if we dedicate ourselves to seeking out and understanding our own conditioning. But if one relies on a method, on training, one becomes a follower, one needs a teacher, and therefore one becomes a slave to that teacher. By becoming a follower one has denied the whole experience of freedom.

Question: One finds that one makes the same mistakes repeatedly. Are there those who have been able to break this pattern?

KRISHNAMURTI: I wonder why we ask if there is anybody else who has broken the pattern of habit. Why? Is it because, if others have broken the pattern, it may help and encourage us? Or are we asking a vain question which has no meaning at all? Surely what has importance is not whether X or Y has broken the pattern, but whether *we* can break it, you and I. And that means, first of all, being aware of the pattern, of the prison in which the mind is held, knowing it for oneself—the racial prejudices, the educational ignorance, the religious limitations, the hopes, the fears, and all the rest of it. Then we will find out for ourselves whether we can break the pattern or not; we will not have to look to anybody else. Then we will know what it is to be free, to live, to be creative.

Question: Would you kindly explain what you mean by negative thinking?

KRISHNAMURTI: Before we inquire into the problem of positive and negative

thinking, let us ask ourselves, what is thinking? When I put you a question with which you are familiar, the response is immediate, you do not have to think. For example, if I ask you where you live, you reply without having to think about it. But if a more complicated question is asked, there is hesitation, which indicates that you are looking for an answer; the mind is then seeking an answer in the cupboard of memory. That is what we call thinking. I do not know, but I am trying to find an answer in all the memories, the knowledge that I have accumulated; and finding it, I verbally respond. This response, which is a reaction of memory, is what we call positive thinking, is it not? We are always thinking from our background of knowledge and experience, so our thinking is very limited; and such thinking can never be free. In that process there is no freedom of thought, in the fundamental sense of the word. You may change your opinions, your conclusions; but so long as you draw upon knowledge, which is what we are accustomed to doing, you are not really thinking at all. In that there is no freedom of thought, because memory and knowledge have already conditioned your thinking. Negative thinking may be, and probably is, freedom from knowledge as conclusions. After all, everything we know is of the past. The moment we say "I know", knowledge has already moved away from the present and established itself in memory, in the past.

So, can the mind be in a state of not-knowing? Because only then can the mind inquire, not when it says "I know". Only the mind which is capable of being in a state of not-knowing—not merely as a verbal assertion, but as an actual fact—is free to discover reality. But to be in that state is difficult, for we are ashamed of not knowing. Knowledge gives us strength, importance, a centre around which the ego can be active. The

mind which is not calling upon knowledge, which is not living in memory, which is totally emptying itself of the past, dying to every form of accumulation from moment to moment—it is only such a mind that can be in a state of not-knowing, which is the highest form of thinking; and then thinking has a different meaning altogether. It may not be thinking at all, as we know it, but a state of being which is not merely the opposite of not-being.

Question: Would you please give us some practical way of getting free from our conditioned minds? You say that any particular training such as yoga or other spiritual exercises, only makes us slaves; but I still think we have to use some kind of method. You say that to have this freedom we must devote our lives to it; but how are we to do this without a method or a system?

KRISHNAMURTI: This is rather a complex question, and I hope you will listen with attention to what is being said. By attention I do not mean waiting in your mind for the answer you wish to receive—which is, is it not?, the assurance that some kind of help, some kind of discipline or practice is necessary if we would be free. We are used to the idea of getting results through practice, and moving from results to further results. But there is a limit to what can be known by the mind through practice, through discipline; and we are now trying to find out, are we not?, what is truth, what is reality, what is God. To do that, the mind must first be made limitless, capable of receiving the unknown. The mind cannot go to truth, it cannot invite truth into its enclosure. Truth is immeasurable, it is too immense to be captured by any amount of practising on the part of the limited mind.

And is it not true that your motive in asking this question is to gain something, to attain or capture truth? But truth must come to you, the mind

cannot go to meet it. You think that if you practise overcoming your passions it is going to lead you to reality, and so for you the method is very important; but such a mind, which is always hoping, inviting, expecting, can never under any circumstances reach that which is beyond the mind. There is no path, no yoga, no discipline which will lead you to it. All that the mind can do is to know itself. It must know its own limitations—the motives, the feelings, the passions, the cruelties, the lack of love, and be aware of all its many activities. One must see all that and remain silent, not asking, not begging, not putting out a hand to receive something. If you stretch out your hand, you will remain empty-handed forever. But to know yourself, the unconscious as well as the conscious, is the beginning of wisdom; and knowing yourself in that sense brings freedom—which is not freedom for *you* to experience reality. The man who is free is not free *for* something, or *from* something; he is just free; and then if that state of reality wishes to come, it will come. But for you to go seeking it is like a blind man seeking light; you will never find it. The man who understands himself seeks nothing; his mind is limitless, undesirous, and for such a mind the immeasurable can come into being.

May 22, 1956

V

TALK IN STOCKHOLM

It might be profitable this evening if we could spend the time really discussing. By this I do not mean that you should merely ask questions and wait for my answer, but let us exchange ideas and think things out together. Perhaps it will be worth while, in a

smaller group like this one, to try to go more deeply into what we have been talking about during the last four meetings.

We have been talking about how important it is that individual creativity should somehow come out of the chaos and confusion which exists in us and in the world today. And we have seen how essential it is, in this connection, to understand the background in which the mind is caught—the background which conditions us and limits our thinking. For it seems to me that, however much capacity we may have, the mind is nevertheless caught in the background, in the traditions, the experiences which it has stored up. It is fairly obvious that all experience tends to condition the mind; and I think it would be worth while to find out if it is possible for the mind *not* to be conditioned, not to build up a centre out of experience from which every judgment, every act then takes place; because that centre is inevitably self-enclosing, limited and narrow. If one thinks about it deeply, that is fairly clear.

Several questions have been asked as to why experience is a limitation, and I thought we might try to go into this matter rather thoroughly this evening. So, instead of my just talking about it, or our discussing merely as a verbal exchange, let us see if we can feel out this problem together.

Most of us think that experience is necessary, for our lives are full of experiences, both pleasant and unpleasant. One's memory is crowded with the residue of experience, and according to this accumulated experience we judge or evaluate life. Such evaluation, judgment, is invariably limited. The mind is bound by centuries of slavery to experience; and the question is, can it free itself? Can it be in that state of awareness which is entirely different from the state of accumulation? Can it be free of all accumulations, so that it never deteriorates but is fresh

and, in that sense, innocent? For I think only such a mind can discover—not a mind that is loaded with experience.

So, can we go into this matter? Is it possible for us to find out together whether the mind can break through all this accumulation, which we call knowledge, experience? Can the mind also be free of the urge for further experience, which is really the pursuit of sensation, and thereby make itself new, fresh? Surely it is only the fresh, uncontaminated mind that is free to observe, and discover for itself if there is something beyond its own creations.

In discussing all this, please do not treat me as an authority. You are not asking, and I am not telling you, which would be absurd, because that kind of exchange can only lead to authority and the crippling of the mind. What we are trying to do is to go seriously into this whole matter, without verbally blocking each other, or asking irrelevant questions, but really sticking to the point. Can we do that this evening?

Audience: Yes.

Questioner: To observe is to be free already, and to understand is also to be free—if I have understood you rightly. So it seems to be a real problem to know how to begin.

KRISHNAMURTI: Let us bear in mind that you are not just asking questions for me to reply to. We are putting our minds together to try to find out whether experience helps man to be free from the limitations he has imposed upon himself. And it has been suggested that to understand is to be free, to observe is the beginning of freedom.

Now, what is our problem? What is actually happening with each one of us? Please examine your own mind and see what is happening to you. We have had very many experiences,

both pleasant and unpleasant. To some we cling, while others we reject, but they are all held in our consciousness; we cannot build a wall and shut out any of them. They are there, whether we like it or not. And do these experiences help man, or hinder him? Will they bring freedom, or do they prevent freedom from taking place? This is really an important question; because psychologists say that every experience is retained by the mind. The death of a son leaves a mark; the hurts, the insults to our vanity—it is all held there in the mind. And what we are actually discussing is, can the mind free itself? If it can, then what is it that sets going this movement of freedom? Can you and I discover it for ourselves? Is it possible for the mind to break through its limitations and find true freedom? And is this to be done through observation? Is it to be done through some analytical process, or through confession, introspection, and so on?

Questioner: Experience which is in the deepest conformity with our innermost wishes will, I think, help us to free our minds. I personally have found that fasting and the vegetarian way of living is helping me to free my mind. When the stomach is empty the mind is set free. Should one give up such experience?

KRISHNAMURTI: What do we mean when we say that vegetarianism, or certain other practices, will help us to be free? And what do we mean by 'being free'? We say that some things free us, and some things bind us. When there is suffering, pain, we want to be free of it; but we do not want to be free of pleasure, do we? Our minds are only concerned with directing our activities in accordance with the pattern of satisfaction which the 'I' has established.

We are not talking merely about vegetarianism, or yoga, and whether

those practices bring freedom; we are inquiring to find out whether it is possible to be free from all experience. For example, the mind which is conditioned by Christianity, Hinduism, or what you will, may have visions, and the visions will be according to its particular background. All experience is both conditioned and conditioning, is it not? And we are discussing whether or not experience is helping us to be fundamentally free.

Questioner: Such things are not helpful.

KRISHNAMURTI: Please do not agree with me. I do not mean this sarcastically or ironically, but the problem is much too fundamental for us merely to agree or disagree. We must go into it.

Questioner: I think that, living in this world of time and space, it is impossible to escape from experience. If we fight against our experiences, or cling to them, then they leave a hardened residue in the mind. But I think it is possible to go through experiences and still keep oneself absolutely free. I have done something like this myself. If one does not fix one's position in an experience, but just allows it to pass over one like a wave, then something happens—one will be changed and one will be free.

KRISHNAMURTI: But you see, sir, when we say "If I do this, then something else will happen", all discussion stops. Surely, suppositional thinking is not thinking at all. What we are trying to go into is this: when there is some accident in life, a death or a hurt, it leaves a mark on the mind; and is it possible not to have that mark from an experience? Experience is going on all the time. Our whole life is a series of experiences, conscious or unconscious. The mind is like a sieve; some things we let go through it, and

some are held. If you will observe your own mind you will see this as an obvious fact. So the experiences of yesterday condition the experiences of today—which is again a fact, surely. And can the mind be free of experience, so that experience does not leave a mark upon it which gives a bias to the oncoming experiences?

Questioner: But you can never get away from it!

KRISHNAMURTI: If we say that, then all discussion ceases. Can we remove the 'never' and go into the problem more deeply? After all, a mind which has conclusions and thinks only from those conclusions, is thinking no longer; it has stopped thinking.

Questioner: It seems fairly clear that when we are caught in a certain experience, the mind is not free. But when we live, as it were, in the dance of experience, then experience brings us to a point where we look at things differently and the mind has a chance to be free.

KRISHNAMURTI: We all have conclusions, have we not?

Audience: No.

KRISHNAMURTI: You mean to say you have no conclusions?—that there is life after death, that you are Swedish, that your friends are like this or like that, that experience has led you to a certain point, that there is a God, or no God, and so on? We are a mass of conclusions, are we not? And from this background we judge, we look at and evaluate life. Your conclusions are based on your experiences, and on the conventions of society which the collective has impressed upon you; and you are thinking from these conclusions. Now, someone comes along and points

out that when you are thinking from conclusions, from past experiences, you are not thinking at all. And is it possible for the mind not to think from conclusions, and yet to act, to live, to function, to think? Because only such a mind is capable of looking, observing very keenly.

Questioner: I can follow you to the extent of seeing that it is a hindrance to accumulate knowledge for the sake of knowledge, and I also see the futility of disciplines, methods, and of striving for more and more sensation. But I cannot understand why you say we must not collect any experiences. You yourself must have had many experiences, for you have travelled and given lectures for over thirty years. You say we should free ourselves from religions, dogmas, and conventional biases. To do that we must know the structure of society, and we cannot get to know that structure without a great deal of penetrating personal experience, such as you certainly have had.

KRISHNAMURTI: I do not think we are quite understanding what the problem is. The gentleman says that I have had lots of experience, and implies that it must have left a great deal of knowledge and many impressions; the cupboard must be full of riches. I do not think so. What we are talking about is this: all of us have a centre, either a solid kernel or a fluidic one, but still a centre—a centre of hurts, fears, of wanting something, of pettiness, frustration, lack of love, and so on. This centre is the result of our experiences, and it is always accumulating through further experiences. It is alive with memories, with various hopes and fears, and the mind is acting from this centre. And we are trying to find out whether the mind can ever be free from this centre, which is a vast bundle of experiences.

My son is dead. That leaves a tremendous wound, does it not? War is a terrible experience, and it leaves

a scar, a mark on the mind. These marks direct all our thinking, do they not? They determine our attitude, our way of thinking and living, and they shape our future experiences. If I believe in Christ, in Buddha, or in some other person, that belief is an experience which will govern other experiences.

So, do we know, all of us, that we have such a centre? And is it possible to break it down, or does it have to go on?—which may be the process of life; we are going to find out. Is it inevitable that the process of life should form a centre, which then governs and directs further experience? Or is there something else, something entirely different, which will break down this centre of accumulation?

That is, acting from your centre, you are ambitious—you want to be a great architect, a painter, a poet. There is always something we want to be, either positively or negatively; and this centre invites future experience according to its conditioning. Am I making it clear?

Audience: Yes.

Questioner: But without a centre which accumulates memories, I would be lost; I would not even know where I lived. Surely it is right to remember, and store up memories, otherwise how can I live?

KRISHNAMURTI: That is the whole problem, is it not? If I forget where I live, there is something wrong with me mentally. At one level there must obviously be the retention of certain experiences, but they will be only those experiences which do not condition my thinking and feeling. Whereas, if I have been brought up as a Hindu, or a Catholic, that background is surely going to condition my whole outlook. Living in a particular society and conforming to its sanctions, I am conditioned in that particular way, and I

look at everything from a certain fixed point of view.

So, we are talking about the possibility of removing its conditioning from the mind—the conditioning which causes conflict, which perverts the mind and makes it really insane. When I call myself a Hindu, a Communist, a Catholic, or what you will, it is not sanity; that is insanity, because it divides human beings and sets man against man. Naturally it would be absurd to forget where I live; or if I am, say, a physicist, to forget what I know. We are not talking about that. But a physicist who calls himself an American, a Russian, or a Swede, and uses his knowledge from that centre, perverts life, does he not? That is the kind of thing we are talking about.

So let us proceed to investigate whether you and I have in fact got these accumulated experiences, these conclusions which are perverting thought. We obviously have got them, so the question is how to deal with them. How is the mind, which has certain dominant beliefs, to be free of them? I do not know if you have ever thought about this problem, but it is surely important. The mind has a background of belief, of conclusion, of experience, both pleasurable and painful, and this background is so strong, so corroding. How is the mind to be free of it? Or is this not a problem to you?

Questioner: I do not think we can do anything except let it pass away.

KRISHNAMURTI: No, sir, we cannot do that.

Questioner: But we do not have to dwell on it.

KRISHNAMURTI: But we do! I do not think we are meeting the problem. You have had certain experiences, and you have certain beliefs, conclusions,

have you not? These conclusions, beliefs and experiences direct your life, and according to them you have further experiences. You may have visions of Christ, or visions of a future Utopia, of this or of that. And we are trying to find out whether the mind is not very harmful, very destructive, when its thoughts spring from conclusions, beliefs. If I believe in nationalism—which is one of the causes of war—, if I feel myself to be an Englishman, an Indian, a Russian, and so on, from that crystallized thinking I will inevitably create war. So, can the mind be free from conclusions?—that is my problem. Is it not yours also? I am sure it is. I am not pushing you into a corner, but you will have to face it. As long as you have any conclusions, you are one of the causes of war. If you realize this, then how are you to be free from conclusions?

Questioner: If we can reason freely, we may be able to find a way of freeing our minds from the conclusions which lead us in the wrong direction. The fact that we have flags shows that we are on the wrong path; we think as Swedes instead of as human beings. Perhaps it will free us if we can ask: will this deed, which is the result of my thinking, benefit those among whom I live, or will it not?

KRISHNAMURTI: I am afraid the problem is not quite so simple. If I merely say “I am going to live by what I think is good”, where does it lead? A dictator, a tyrant, thinks he is doing good; so do the exploiter and the imperialist. ‘Doing good’ cannot be the criterion by which the mind can free itself. If it were as simple as that, it would be very easy. I have to know myself first, do I not? I have to know all my hidden motives, my desires, my tendencies, the totality of myself. Whether I am doing good or doing harm depends, surely, on whether I know and understand myself.

VI

TALK IN STOCKHOLM

And how am I to know myself? Can I know myself on the basis of a conclusion—the conclusion that there is in me a divine spark, or that I am only the result of environmental influences, or any other conclusion? To know myself, surely, I must have no preconceptions, no assumptions. I must see those hopes and fears which are dictating my thoughts about myself; I must know the conclusions, the fixed points to which the mind clings—and the very knowing of them may be the action of breaking them down. The moment I know I am talking as a Hindu, and understand the significance of it, the thought that I am a Hindu has lost its influence; but if I profit by it, if I find security in it, then I will cling to it.

We have to know the total content of our being, and we cannot know it if we start from any fixed point. If we have a fixed point built up through fear, through hope, through dogma, then, when we try to look at ourselves, that fixed point is always colouring, distorting what we see.

Questioner: All that I can do with a conclusion is to become aware of it, to question it; and when I do that, I find that I do not know.

KRISHNAMURTI: We are touching now upon a very complex problem, and it has taken one and a half hours to come to this point. The problem is whether we can find out how our thinking is actually conditioned, and whether to go beyond that conditioning will take time.

To know for oneself very clearly in what way one is conditioned, to what beliefs the mind is clinging, and of what one is afraid—to know all this, and then discover how to go much deeper, needs patient inquiry; and perhaps we can go further into it tomorrow. The brain will not take more than a certain amount.

May 24, 1956

I think we should continue with what we were talking about yesterday. I do not know whether it is a problem for each one of us, this question of experience. Life is a continuous series of experiences, it is an endless process of challenge and response; and there is always a conflict when our response is inadequate to the challenge. Invariably this conflict, this inadequacy of response, is the result of the background, of tradition, of the previous experiences we have had. Following tradition inevitably leads to mediocrity, and most of our minds, it seems to me, fall into habits, into reactions based on tradition. We dwell in our past experiences, and we use the present as a means to the future. Few of us live to break out of this circle of unrealities and ghosts; and our future is merely the result of projections from the past.

I feel that if we can approach this inquiry with a mind that is not conditioned, that is not held, bound by the past, then there is a possibility of understanding, of seeing and feeling something which is not merely the outcome of the conditioned centre. But most of us live and work from that centre, which is the residue of all human experience, both individual and collective, and therefore all new experience is bound to condition our thinking further. The mind never goes beyond its own conditioning, and that is why it is never free.

So the question is, can the mind be free from its own self-centred activity? Is it possible for the mind not to be self-centred? And what is such a state of mind?

After all, we can see that we are the result of our education, of our particular society, of the religion in which we have been brought up, and of the many other influences bearing upon us. Whether we are atheists or believers,

we repeat what we have learnt, what we have been taught, what we have accepted. A man who believes does not necessarily know more of the reality of God than a non-believer, because both are conditioned—which is fairly obvious. So the question is: can the mind free itself from all these influences, from all this accumulated experience? That is what we are trying to find out. There are those who maintain that such a thing is impossible, and who think that all we need do is to find a better form of conditioning; so they turn from worshipping the dictates of a church to worshipping the dictates of a state, a party, or a government. But if we would seriously inquire into whether it is possible to free the mind from *all* conditioning, how are we to set about it? Can we discuss and go further into this problem?

Questioner: I think one must begin by discovering a means.

KRISHNAMURTI: Can we not dispose of all the means which the mind invents in order to free itself? One means is the will—using the action of will to break down our conditioning. Another means is analysis. You go to an analyst, or analyse yourself; you try to interpret your dreams, you carefully investigate each layer of memory, you examine every reaction, and so on. That is not the way, surely. And when we try to break down our conditioning through the action of will, what happens? One desire becomes dominant and resists the various other desires—which means that there is always the whole problem of suppression, resistance, and so-called sublimation. Does any of this free the mind from conditioning?

I wonder if we fully understand the implication of using the will to get rid of something, or to become something. What is will? Surely will is, in itself, a way of conditioning the mind, is it not? In the action of will, one dominant desire

is imposing itself upon other desires, one wish is over-riding other motives and urges. This process obviously creates inward opposition, and hence there is ever conflict. So will cannot help us to free the mind.

Probably you have not thought about all this before, and are therefore finding it rather difficult. But let us take a simple example and go into it, and we shall see.

Supposing I am violent, or envious, how is the mind to be free of that—totally free, not just in little bits? Will the exercise of will free the mind from anything? If I am envious and, feeling that envy is wrong, I resist it, push it away, does that get rid of it? It does not, does it? And if the will does not help me, then how is the mind to be totally free from envy, or anything else? It is really a very interesting problem. We are all consumed with something, whether it be envy, fear, ambition, or what you will; and can the mind be totally free of these things, or must we go on chopping at them little by little until we die, and still not be free at the end of it all?

If we see that will does not free the mind from envy, then what is the next thing to try? Will analysing oneself, introspection, get rid of envy? In analysis there is always the possibility of misinterpretation, and the question of whether the analyser himself is free.

We saw yesterday that each one of us is a bundle of experiences, of reactions; and we asked ourselves, how is one to be free from this complex centre? I am now trying to take one thing out of that bundle and look at it. It is an experience which we all have: envy. By what process can this experience be totally rooted out, eradicated? Is this a problem to everyone?

Audience: Yes.

KRISHNAMURTI: Then how would you tackle it?

Questioner: One can learn to accept oneself.

KRISHNAMURTI: But one is still envious!

Questioner: Truth will make us free.

KRISHNAMURTI: That is perfectly true. But to see what is true, and not merely repeat phrases, the mind must be very alert, vivid, sensitive—it must be in a state to see the truth.

Questioner: We must be able to conquer envy by some sort of feeling of brotherhood.

KRISHNAMURTI: The problem is much more complicated than that. Conquering does not solve it. It is like putting a bandage over a wound. The wound is still there.

Questioner: If we understand our envy we see how it inhibits us.

KRISHNAMURTI: But do we? Most of us know the experience of envy, and we have created a society in which envy is very dominant, have we not? Our education, our religious ambitions, our whole lives are based on it: "You know, I do not; I must also know". This process breeds a competitive, ruthless society. Envy is an extraordinarily strong feeling, and having it, we function from that centre. If there were no envy at all, what would be the state of the mind? And would it not then be possible to create quite a different society, quite a different kind of education? As individual human beings, is it not important that we should understand this problem and find out for ourselves if it is possible for the mind to be free of envy in its entirety?

Questioner: If we stop wishing, stop desiring . . .

KRISHNAMURTI: How is one to stop desire? By will? By tearing it to pieces? By discipline? By resisting, suppressing it? If you do any of these things, there is a conflict.

Questioner: By studying it in all its forms.

KRISHNAMURTI: You can intellectually study all the various forms of envy and still suffer from it.

Questioner: We must try to look at envy very calmly when it comes into our minds, and not hope too much to get rid of it.

KRISHNAMURTI: If I am envious, how am I to look at it?

Questioner: Very calmly, I said.

Questioner: Is this not the main difficulty, that we never really meet envy? We are envious, but we do not see our envy, actually.

Questioner: We can help our children to be free of it.

KRISHNAMURTI: To help the children, the educator himself must first be free. That seems fairly clear. But as the other gentleman said, do we really know what envy is? Do we know envy as a living thing, or merely as a word, a verbal statement? Do we know it as an intimate fact?

Questioner: I am afraid most of us know it only as a word and not as a fact.

KRISHNAMURTI: Of what significance is the word unrelated to the feeling?

Questioner: How would it be if one studied one's needs and tried to reduce them?

KRISHNAMURTI: I may become a monk, but I am still envious of another hermit who is holier or cleverer than I am.

Questioner: I think we must accept envy and give it its right place in our lives. If we can see, without condemning it, that envy does not lead anywhere, we shall get rid of it.

Questioner: Perhaps envy is based on fear. If we could believe in ourselves as individuals, then we would not have to be envious.

KRISHNAMURTI: To say one must accept envy, or that envy is based on fear, does not help us. The cause of envy we know, but I am talking of the totality of it, the cause and the effect. After all, I know why I am envious; I am not as beautiful or as clever as you are; I compare myself with you, and I am envious. But is it possible to be free from that whole complex process?

Questioner: If I dwell in the self, it is not possible. But by meditating every day I can find out that the self has no value, and be free from envy.

Questioner: If we could live in the now, we should not be attracted by what happened yesterday or what will happen tomorrow.

Questioner: We must know that we are envious, and live with it, feel it in every cell; and then this envy will absorb itself and something will suddenly happen.

KRISHNAMURTI: Surely we are all merely advising each other what to do, which is rather unfortunate, because we shall never find out that way. If you are telling me how to live, what to do, I shall never discover anything, shall I?

Questioner: Who are we that we should think we can get rid of envy? After all, life has made us envious. We can try to be a

little less envious; but even if we do not achieve that aim, life will still go on for many more years.

KRISHNAMURTI: Those for whom envy is not a real problem can chop away at it slowly; but that will never resolve our struggle and sorrow. I am afraid we are not really meeting each other. The problem needs a lot of penetration, and we are just putting out words and ideas. One knows one is envious, and that one's life is based on envy to a very large extent. From childhood we are brought up in envy, encouraged in it, consciously or unconsciously. On the surface I may be able to brush it aside; but deep inside, envy is still biting and burning. How is that fire to be completely quenched? You are just telling me what to do, you are not following the problem in yourselves. Can we not think it out together?

Questioner: When you speak of the mind being free, what do you mean by 'mind'?

KRISHNAMURTI: I thought we made this whole problem clear yesterday. We have discussed for more than an hour, and unfortunately we have not really touched the subject at all. We can define our terms and so perhaps make verbal communication better, but this problem is not a matter of mere verbal communication or the further definition of terms. Also we have been talking of what to do and what not to do, and that may not be the question at all. It may be that we have to look at the problem in an entirely different manner. To find out, we must think out the problem together.

Questioner: If I know I am envious and I look at it without any condemnation, would that not be a way to be free of it?

Questioner: We tried to find out yesterday how to be free of experience and of

conclusions. Can we leave envy for a moment and go into the question of what it is to be free? If there is a centre, what is it? Is it a spark of God? And is not God free? What does it mean to be free?

KRISHNAMURTI: Has it never happened to you that you have been very angry and wanted to be free from it? Have you never asked yourself whether you can be free from envy, from this everlasting drive after something? When this happens to you, what is your response? You try discipline, suppression, and various other ways to get rid of that feeling, but still it obsesses you wherever you go. So what are you to do? How are you to look at it? What kind of action or non-action must take place? So long as you are fighting it, one part of the mind resisting another part, envy will continue, will it not?

Audience: Yes.

KRISHNAMURTI: It is not a question of agreeing; you have to see it for yourself. So long as there is conflict, one part of the mind dominating another part, there can be no freedom. Do you see that fact?

Audience: Yes.

KRISHNAMURTI: I wonder if you do. You like this, do you not?, because I am doing all the talking and you are just listening.

The problem is this: I am envious, and I see that mere resistance, suppression, bringing the will into action, only creates conflict. So my problem is conflict, not envy. My problem is not envy at all, but the fact that I am always striving in order to arrive somewhere. This striving is the very process of envy. What am I striving after? I am discontented, and I am striving to reach contentment. I think that if I can go to some place, or reach some end, I

shall be content. So I strive. I am unhappy, I am envious, always wanting more, more, more. My whole outlook on life is based on accumulation, because in myself I am discontented, unhappy, lonely, empty. Being empty, I want somehow to enrich myself. I try various activities—painting, writing, worshipping, and many other avenues of self-expression—, hoping to cover up this sense of emptiness. Is this not a fact?

Audience: Yes.

KRISHNAMURTI: But can this emptiness ever be filled? Can I enlarge myself inwardly? Please listen. When I try to be like Jesus, like Buddha, or like anybody else, it is because in myself I am nothing, and I am envious. So my problem is, can I fill this emptiness? Surely, the moment I try to fill my emptiness, there is again the whole problem of struggle, of how to make myself richer. Then I look around to see who is richer, more beautiful, more talented than I am, and immediately I am caught in the field of comparison and struggle.

What then? I know there is an inner insufficiency; and can I look at it without any sense of wanting to enrich myself, without any desire to run away from it? Because the moment I try to escape from it, I enter into all sorts of false pursuits and stupidities through envy and comparison.

So now we are no longer concerned with the question of envy; we are considering the question of emptiness.

How do I know that I am empty? Is it a mere verbal recognition, or is it an actual experience? Is the mind really aware of its emptiness? When I am not escaping from it, when I am no longer trying to enrich myself, when the mind is no longer caught in the mere verbal statement that it is empty, then there is only emptiness, the sense of insufficiency, of being inwardly poor. To recognize that fact, to be fully

I

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aware of it, is what is important—not the question of what to do about it. When I ask what to do about it, I am again in the field of envy. But when one is aware of the simple fact that the totality of one's being is empty, and that one is constantly trying to find various ways of running away, all of which involve envy, then one no longer seeks to escape from this emptiness.

So, can the mind be aware of the fact of its emptiness without trying to alter it? I think that is the real issue. If the mind is only concerned with the fact that it is empty, then it no longer cares who is more beautiful, or more intelligent. But we seem incapable of looking at that fact as it is. We are always translating it, we have opinions about it. We condemn it, we seek to escape from it, we are constantly trying to operate in some way on the fact; and so the fact is prevented from operating of itself. When the fact operates, it is the truth that operates. But we are so afraid of this emptiness that we try to do something about it all the time, and thereby create a hindrance between ourselves and the fact.

If the mind can be completely still in front of the fact of emptiness, loneliness, violence, envy, if it does not translate that fact or wish it were different, then the fact operates. But so long as we operate upon the fact, we cannot be free. The man who is conscious that he is free, is not free, any more than the man who is conscious that he is humble, is humble. But to be silently aware of the fact without condemnation, without wanting a result, reveals the truth, which is freedom.

May 25, 1956

It seems to me that it would be wise if we could put away from our minds the various forms of prejudice that we have built up, especially the idea which many of us have that wisdom lies with those people who come from the Orient. That is really quite an absurd idea, because human beings all the world over have essentially the same problems, whether they happen to live in the Orient or in the Occident. The Orient, from where I happen to come, is no different fundamentally from the Occident. The people over there have problems similar to ours—the same economic and social struggles, and the same problems of the spirit, of the mind, of the heart. We are all alike in our suffering, in our search, in our loneliness, and in the things which give the mind the power to create its own delusions.

It is surely important from the very beginning for you to understand not only what is being said, but your own reaction to it, and to know why you have come here. After all, most of us come to these talks with the hope of finding something, do we not? We are all groping, seeking a better attitude or way of life, a more realistic evaluation of the things that matter. We are seeking something which we feel is very essential. So I think it would be good if we could go into this problem, to the very heart of it, and find out what it is that each one of us is earnestly seeking. We spend our days and our years in struggling to find out what life is all about. And it seems to me that our problem is not to find some satisfactory explanation of what life is about, but rather to understand life directly for ourselves.

Our problems, which are many, cannot be translated either in terms of the Occident or the Orient. Many of

us think that if we can follow a particular system of philosophy, or some method, the more mystical the better, it will lead us to a higher form of happiness, or to a greater depth of understanding. So we read, we search, we go to lectures, we follow teachers, we join religious organizations with their creeds and dogmas—but unfortunately we never find what we are looking for, because we do not know exactly what it is we want. Within ourselves we want so many things, we are confused. Therefore it is obviously very important to spend some time, energy and thought in inquiring into what it is that each one of us is seeking.

First of all, is it possible to find out what it is we are seeking? Our minds are so conditioned by the collective; we are either Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, or we are trying to follow some other system. Our minds are so shaped, so controlled, so conditioned by the particular society in which we live—economically, socially and religiously—that we only seek whatever is promised by that particular tradition or system of thought. So we are always conditioned in our search. And I think it is very important to understand this conditioning. Because so long as our minds are conditioned as Christians, as Buddhists, as Hindus, or what you will, our search is of no avail. So long as the mind is limited, shaped by a particular belief or dogma, our search can only lead to whatever that dogma or belief promises. Only the mind which liberates itself from dogma, from belief, will find out what is true.

Whether one comes from the East or from the West, it is extraordinarily difficult to liberate oneself, culturally as well as religiously, from the various encrustations which society has imposed, so that the mind is free to inquire. Without this freedom, surely, no inquiry is possible, especially in matters appertaining to the spirit, to the mind. And I think it is most essential, not merely to grope vaguely after some kind of happiness,

some kind of comfort or security, which almost any form of authority can give, but rather to inquire, with a free mind, to find out if there is reality, if there is God. Only such a mind can discover, and not the mind that believes, that is held in a dogma, however venerable and apparently worth while. A mind caught in belief is incapable of finding out if there is reality, if there is something beyond its own projections.

But it is not easy for the mind to free itself from the ideas in which it has been brought up, especially with regard to psychological issues, because it is ever eager to be comforted, to feel secure; so it creates or accepts some form of authority which promises the comfort it wants, an illusory reality without substance.

So, if our inquiry is to be at all worth while, I think that, with attention, with purposefulness, we must go deeply into what it is that each one of us is seeking. Most religious people assert they are seeking God, truth, peace, or what you will. But those are just words, without much substance. The believer is as the non-believer, for both are conditioned by the particular society in which they have grown up. And one can put aside all the beliefs, the dogmas, the prejudices one has acquired, only when there is deep discontent. Surely truth, or reality, is not for the man who is seeking comfort, but rather for those who have a deep inward discontent which is not easily canalized or assuaged through any particular satisfaction or gratification, but which is steadily intensified, so that the mind rejects reasonably the comforting illusions which churches, so-called religious organizations, and one's own crippling desires have projected. Only a mind sharpened by thought, by reason, by doubt, is capable of inquiry. Such a mind is aware of its own workings, of its own background, of the values it has created, of the beliefs, the illusions, the hopes to which it clings; and it is only when all these things are set aside that the mind can find out whether or not

there is a reality, something beyond its own projections.

Most of us live very shallow lives; we are lonely people; and we try to enrich our poverty-stricken minds with a great deal of knowledge, information, facts. But the mind is not capable of deep inquiry if it is filled with knowledge, or if it is bound to any form of dogmatic belief. What matters is to ask ourselves whether the mind is capable of self-knowledge. That is, can I know myself, am I able to observe, to inquire into the whole movement of my mind—not with morbidity, not with despair, not with the idea that it is ugly or beautiful, but just to watch it? It seems to me that this capacity to be alertly watchful of one's own mind is of the greatest importance, because it is only through self-knowledge that one can understand those things which are crippling the mind.

To know oneself is an extraordinary process, because the self is never the same from moment to moment; there are so many contradictory desires, so many compulsions, so many urges. And unless we understand the totality of it all, how can the mind be free? Only the mind that is free can really experience something beyond its own limitations, beyond its conditioning beliefs and dogmas.

It seems to me that these talks will be worth while only if we can really listen to what is being said. Most of us never listen to another; and when we do hear what someone says, we are always interpreting it. Such interpretation is not listening. Whereas, if we can listen, not with enforced concentration, but freely giving attention to what is being said, then the deep significance of the words will penetrate the mind; and I think such listening is far more vital than merely struggling to understand through the screen of our prejudices and preconceptions. That is, if you can listen to what is being said, without resisting, without intellectually projecting reasonable arguments, without opposing or accepting, then I think the

very act of listening is a purgation of the mind. It is like a seed that is planted in the earth; if the seed has vitality, it will grow of itself.

But unfortunately most of us are so concerned with our own ideas, with our own beliefs and prejudices, that there is no attention. Attention is the total good; but we do not know how to attend. We never really look at anything either. I do not know if you have ever experimented with really looking at something—by which I mean looking without naming, without giving it a label, without interpreting it. Then you see much more, you see with greater intensity the clarity of the colour, the beauty or ugliness of the shape, and so on. And if you are capable of listening with that kind of attention, then your mind will be the soil in which something totally new can be born. Then you will find, at the end of these talks, that I have really told you nothing at all. Because what is it that we are trying to do in these talks? You are not trying to understand *me*; you are trying to understand yourself. And to understand yourself, you have to look within yourself. But a mind that is authority-ridden never looks within itself; a mind that is desirous of achieving an end, a goal, cannot possibly understand itself.

So it seems to me that what is of prime importance is to understand oneself. Self-knowledge is the beginning of wisdom. But we know so little about ourselves; we do not know the unconscious as well as the conscious parts of ourselves, the totality of our whole being. And is it possible to know ourselves totally? Surely, if one is incapable of knowing oneself, the totality of one's being, then all search is without meaning. Then search becomes a contradiction, one desire against another desire. But if we can understand ourselves, if we can patiently and diligently observe the functioning of our whole being, then we shall find that the mind becomes very clear and free. Only such a mind is capable of inquiring into, searching out

the eternal—and then perhaps there is no search at all, for then the mind itself is the eternal.

It is very difficult for most of us to know ourselves, because we are always measuring our thoughts, our actions, our feelings. We hope that through this measurement we shall come to know ourselves; but surely a mind that is always judging, evaluating, can never know itself as it is, because it has a standard, a pattern, by which it evaluates. I think this is one of our major difficulties—that we cannot observe our feelings, our thoughts, without evaluation, without approving or condemning. For most of us, judgment, comparison, approval, condemnation, is the very essence of our existence. That is why we are unable to go into the greater depths of our own thoughts and feelings, the conscious as well as the unconscious.

If we would understand a child, for instance, it is surely of no value to compare him with his brother. To understand him, we must look at him without comparison; we must observe him at different times, in all his various moods. But we are brought up, we are educated, to compare, to judge, to condemn; and we think that by comparison, by condemnation, by judgment, we shall understand. On the contrary, as long as we compare, judge, condemn, we shall never understand a thing.

In the same manner, if we would understand the totality of our being, however ugly or beautiful, transient or permanent, we must be capable of looking at ourselves in the mirror of relationship, without evaluation, without comparison; and then we shall find that the totality of consciousness begins to unfold.

After all, though we are somewhat aware of the functioning of the conscious mind, most of us know very little about ourselves at the greater depths of consciousness. We never look at that part of ourselves, we have never even inquired into it; or if we inquire into it, it is only when we are troubled by some

kind of neurosis, and then we have to run to somebody to help us. That is not knowing ourselves. Knowing ourselves implies self-observation at every moment of the day, in our relationships, in our speech, in our actions, in our gestures; it implies being fully aware of ourselves, so that we begin to find out what we are. And we will find that we are very little. We are only that which we have been conditioned to be. We believe, or we do not believe; we repeat what we have been told. We accept because we are afraid, and religions grow out of our fear. That is why it is very important to know oneself—not theoretically, or according to the psychologist's point of view, but to know for oneself what one intrinsically is. And I do not think this is very difficult if one gives one's full attention to discovering what one is in every moment of relationship.

Then you will find that religion is something entirely different from anything you already know. Religion has nothing to do with these absurd organizations which control the mind through this belief or that; it has nothing whatever to do with any so-called religious society. On the contrary, a truly religious man does not belong to any such society, to any organized religion; but to be truly religious requires immense understanding of the ways of the self, of one's own integral state. There is no essential difference between the man who believes in God and considers himself to be religious, and the man who disbelieves and who thinks he is not religious. Each is conditioned by the society in which he lives, and to be free from that conditioning requires the intensification of discontent. It is only when the mind is discontented, in revolt, when it is not merely accepting or trying to find some new form of comfort—it is only then that a truly religious man comes into being.

Such a truly religious man is the true revolutionary, because only he can alter, at quite a different level, the whole

attitude of society. But this requires an extraordinary understanding of oneself. Self-knowledge is of prime importance, it is absolutely essential for any seeker after truth; for if I do not know myself, how can I seek truth? The instrument of search, which is my own mind, may be perverted, twisted, and it is only through self-knowledge that the mind can be straightened out. The clear, straight mind alone can inquire into that which is true—not the confused mind. A mind that is confused can only find that which is also confused.

But a confused mind cannot become unconfused by relying on another, by seeking the authority of a book, of a priest, of an analyst, or what you will. Confusion comes to an end only when the mind begins to understand itself. And out of this understanding come clarity and stillness of mind. It is only the mind which is completely still that is capable of receiving the timeless.

I have been given some questions, and I shall try to answer some of them. But before I do so, I think it would be wise to explain that the complex problems of life have no answer. None of the great issues have an answer which will be satisfactory. What we can do is to inquire into the problem itself. The mind that is seeking an answer to the problem will never understand the problem, because it is concentrated on finding the answer; and invariably it is seeking an answer which will be immediately satisfying, comforting. So, if one really wants to understand a problem, one should never ask for an answer, but rather inquire into the problem itself.

This, again, is very difficult for most of us, because to inquire into a problem requires intelligence, patience, diligent observation—never accepting or rejecting, but exploring. When we suffer, most of us want an immediate response, because our only concern is to escape from that suffering. In seeking an escape, we create illusions, and those illusions can be exploited by the cunning.

So, in considering these questions we are not seeking an answer; because, as I said, there is no answer, and that is true. You may ask what love is, and perhaps someone will answer you verbally; but that answer will have very little meaning. If we would find out what it means to love, all forms of attachment must go. Attachment brings fear; and how can there be love if there is fear?

So, through these questions we are going to explore the problem. If you are merely looking for an answer, I am afraid you will be disappointed. But if together we can undertake the journey of exploration, so that each one of us experiences the state of inquiry, then we shall find that the problem is resolved—not because we have actively done something about the problem, but because the problem exists only while we are not giving it complete attention. We can give complete attention to the problem only if there is no sense of condemnation, no reference to the past in order to understand the present.

Question: Is not authority helpful in this world of chaos and confusion?

KRISHNAMURTI: I think this is a good question to go into. Most of us are confused, are we not? The issues of life are many and difficult, and there are innumerable specialists, teachers, oriental *gurus*, innumerable books and churches, all claiming to know the answers. Being confused, you look to those who say they know; but because you are confused, your choice of a guide will also be confused. Being anxious to find out, you invariably create authority—the authority of a book, the authority of a church, of an individual, of the collective, or of an idea. So authority exists because you create it; you create it out of your own confusion and uncertainty. The anatomy of authority is the anatomy of our own uncertainty. We want to

be certain, to be gratified, and so we look to someone for an answer—to a teacher, a *guru*, and God knows who else. So our whole structure of thinking is based on authority.

It is an extraordinarily complex problem; and what is important, surely, is not the worship of authority, or the substitution of one authority for another, but rather to find out if the mind can free itself from its own confusion. When the mind is very clear, it needs no authority; but when it is uncertain, confused, when it is in misery, in turmoil, then it looks to another for help. And can another help? Or is there fundamentally no help at all, because the misery, the turmoil, the confusion, is created by oneself, and therefore must be cleared away by oneself? Surely, whatever another can do to help is but a temporary alleviation.

But to clear up one's own confusion requires great energy, freedom to find out what is true—not rushing about asking for help. I think this is important to understand. There are wars, starvation in the East, economic problems, the hierarchical outlook on life, the divisions of class, religions and nationalities, and we are caught in all this contradiction and turmoil, which is very confusing; and it seems to me of the utmost importance to find out, amidst all this chaos, what is true. To find out, surely, we must stop seeking. Because how can a man seek when he is confused? His seeking and finding will only add to the confusion. I think this is such a simple fact, if only we could realize it. But if one knows how to clarify one's own confusion, then one will not look to another, one will not depend on another.

So, in order to bring about clarity, sanity in this mad world, it is important, first of all, to know for oneself what one is actually doing. Being confused, having so many contradictory desires and compulsions, we are everlastingly trying to bring out of this inward chaos one dominant desire that will control

all the others—which only creates another problem. That is why it is very important, for those of us who are really serious about these matters, to understand ourselves, and not merely pursue in our confusion the various dogmas of the East or of the West. It requires a great deal of attention to perceive for oneself how deeply rooted one's confusion is; but most of us are unwilling even to admit that we are confused.

It seems to me that authority will exist—the authority, whether inward or external, that compels psychologically, spiritually—so long as we are seeking any form of security for ourselves, or for a particular group, or nation. Authority breeds exploitation, it brings darkness, brutality, in the name of God, or peace, or the State. That is why the man of peace has no authority, inward or outward—which does not mean that he goes about breaking the law.

To realize all this requires a great deal of penetration, insight into oneself. Self-knowledge cannot be learned from any book, nor through merely attending one or two talks or discussions. The treasure lives within oneself; and it is revealed in the mirror of our daily relationships, through watchfulness, observation, which is to be aware without any choice.

Question: Will you please tell us what freedom is? Is this not an illusion which we are all pursuing?

KRISHNAMURTI: We want freedom only when we are aware of our bondage; and because we do not know how to free ourselves from bondage, we pursue freedom. But if we have the capacity to free ourselves from bondage, then there is freedom, we do not have to pursue it, or inquire what freedom is—we can leave that to the philosophers and speculators. The important thing is to find out in what manner we are held,

bound, for in the very understanding of that bondage, there is freedom. The moment we struggle against bondage, we create another bondage. But if we can understand the whole psychological process of bondage—not merely what binds us now, but how it has come into being, the motives, the implications, the whole background of it, both conscious and unconscious—then in that very understanding there is freedom; we do not have to ‘become’ free.

Take fear, for example. Most of us are bound by fear in one form or another; and it is a very complex process, is it not? Do we know that we are afraid, and how fear comes into being? Or do we merely theorize about it? Fear exists, surely, only in relationship to something, it does not exist by itself. I am afraid *of* something—of death, of poverty, of what my neighbour might say, and so on. And can I look into this whole problem of fear? I can look only if I am not trying to do something about it.

What is this fear? Is it fear of the unknown? Or are we afraid of losing the known—of being poor, for example. Can the mind be free from this fear of being poor? And is it poverty of the mind, or poverty of physical existence, to which we give importance? Surely, the thoughtful man, the man who is really trying to find out, is concerned with the poverty of the mind. And can this poverty of the mind be overcome by knowledge, by reading books? Can the mind enrich itself through any form of fulfilment? And is there fulfilment at all, or merely the demand of a mind which is afraid of its own poverty and therefore seeks to fulfil itself?

So the problem of fear is not very simple, and it requires a great deal of inquiry on the part of the mind to find out in what manner it is afraid. When there is an understanding of the whole process of fear, there is freedom—not just freedom from fear, but

freedom for the mind to go beyond itself. The man who is free *from* something knows only a limited freedom.

You see, to inquire into all this takes a great deal of energy, attention, not merely for an hour or two, but at every moment of the day, when you are in the bus, at your office, with your family, or walking by yourself. There must be this constant inquiry, a searching, a watching, so that the whole content of one's being is revealed. Then you will find, in the discovery and understanding of what one actually is, there comes the opening of the door to freedom.

June 16, 1956

II

TALK IN BRUSSELS

It seems to me that one of the most difficult things to do is to communicate rightly. If I want to say something, I must use certain words, and words naturally tend to have a somewhat different meaning or significance for each one of us who listens. Merely to sit together in silence has its own benefit; but really to communicate we must verbalize, and it is very difficult to communicate properly what one means to convey so that the other understands the full intent of it, especially when dealing with subjects which are rather complex, as we are doing now. We require a certain ease of communication, so that all of us understand what it is we are talking about.

I want to deal with something which I feel is rather important: whether it is possible, living in this world, to free oneself from all conditioning, so that one becomes truly individual and hence is able to find out what it means to be creative. Surely, that which may be called

reality, God, truth, or what you will, is a state of constant renewal, a state of creativeness; and this creativeness cannot be realized, cannot be experienced or known without true individuality; and to come to that true individuality there must be freedom from conditioning.

Our minds are conditioned by the society in which we live, by the books which we have read, by religion, by moral and social values, by our own fears, ambitions, envy, and so on; all these things go to create a conditioning of the mind. I think this is very obvious. And is it possible to free the mind from this conditioning—not to find a better or more noble conditioning, but to totally free the mind from *all* conditioning? Until we do that, surely, we are not individuals; we are merely the result of the collective—which again is very obvious, though we may not have thought about it. When we examine ourselves a little closely, it is apparent that most of our thinking, most of the values, the experiences, the knowledge, the beliefs that we have, are the result of our education, of innumerable influences; the climate we live in, the food we eat, the literature and newspapers we read, the whole environmental background—all this conditions the mind. We can see that our thinking is always according to a pattern, and that the pattern is well-established. The more highly organized a society, the more efficient and ruthless it is, the more thoroughly the pattern is cultivated and drilled into the mind. And is it possible to be free of that conditioning, so that the mind does not think according to a pattern, but goes beyond all thought?—which does not mean a vague mysticism, a dreamy state; on the contrary, it is a very precise state.

So, can the mind free itself from its conditioning? I know there are those who say it is impossible, because human beings are entirely the result of environmental influences. One man, being

brought up as a Christian, believes in the dogmas of Christianity, while another who is brought up as a Communist believes in none of those things—which again shows how the mind is influenced and set going in a pattern, in a groove, in which it continues to function.

Looking at all this, what is our response? Whether we are Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, or what you will, it must have occurred to us, if we are at all serious, that each one is shaped, conditioned by a particular pattern—not only the pattern imposed by society, by the culture, the economic influences, the religion in which one is brought up, but also by a pattern imposed from within. And we must have asked ourselves whether it is possible for the mind which habitually thinks in a certain groove, to break out of it. Surely, it is only a free mind that can discover anything new. A man who merely believes or disbelieves in God, is still caught in the pattern of a particular environment; through fear, through compulsion, through every form of influence, he is still part of the collective. So, is the mind thus bound capable of freeing itself?

The capacity to be free surely does not depend on another. I see that my mind is the result of innumerable experiences, that its responses are determined by an already conditioned state; and if I am interested to find out whether my mind can free itself, not partially but totally, at the unconscious as well as at the conscious level, then I do not have to ask another; I can watch myself. I may free myself from the idea of 'my country', from stupid nationalism, from the beliefs in which I have been brought up; but in the very process of freeing myself, I may fall into another set of patterns. Instead of being a Hindu I may become a Christian, a Buddhist, a Communist, or what you will—which is still a pattern. So, is it possible to break away from one pattern without falling into another?

If one is very alert and observant of the habit-forming process of the mind, it is possible superficially to free the mind from the formation of habits. But the problem is not so simple, because there is the whole unconscious, which is also conditioned, and its conditioning is much more difficult to see. After all, through talk, through reasoning, through various forms of observation, I can free my mind from the superficial conditioning of being a Hindu or a Catholic—and this is obviously necessary. If I am to seek out what is real, I must first have a mind which is unconditioned. A conditioned mind can project its own ideas, and then experience those ideas. The Christian who is very devout and heavily conditioned can experience a vision of Christ; but he is experiencing his own projection from the background in which he has been brought up, and such experience has no validity at all. But if we can go beyond all the superficial responses of the mind, then perhaps we can penetrate much more deeply into the unconscious, which is ceaselessly projecting its conditioning.

So, is it possible consciously to go into the unconscious and discover its various forms of conditioning? I do not know if you have thought about this at all. You may have opinions about it, you may assert that it is possible or impossible; but I do not think a student who is really inquiring into the whole question will ever make assertions of that kind. He must be in a state of inquiry. And he cannot inquire with regard to someone else, he can only inquire into his own mind.

Inquiry, it seems to me, must be without a motive, without a compulsion in any direction. If I have a motive for my inquiry, that motive dictates what I shall find. So real inquiry does not exist so long as there is a motive. And most of us have a motive of some kind, have we not? We want to be happy, we want to be inwardly rich, we want to find God, we want to achieve

this or that. And can the mind strip itself of all motive and be in a state of inquiry? I think this is really a fundamental question; because it is only when we are free of motive that we shall be able to inquire into the totality of the unconscious.

After all, the unconscious is the repository of many motives of which we are unaware—fears, anxieties, and the racial residue. To inquire into all that, the conscious mind, at least, must be free of motive. And to cleanse even the conscious mind of motive demands a great deal of watchfulness, observation of oneself. It means being aware of the whole process of thinking, finding out how thought springs into the mind, and whether it can ever be free; or whether thought is merely the reaction of a particular background through memory, and therefore is never free. One may be able to reason very intelligently, very cleverly; but that reasoning has the background of a particular conditioning.

So, if the conscious mind is to inquire into the unconscious, where all the motives, the urges, the compulsions of centuries are stored, then the conscious mind must surely begin by being free of motives and patterns. And it is only in that inquiry, it seems to me, that we begin to dissolve the collective influences of which we are now made up. We are not individuals now; though we may have a distinctive name, a personal bank-account, and all the rest of it, that does not constitute individuality. But what does bring about the true individual is this state of mind in which there is freedom from conditioning. Only then is it possible to find out whether there is a reality beyond the limitations of thought, beyond the inventions and theories of the mind.

Until we come to this state, what we believe or do not believe about God, or truth, has very little significance. Our beliefs and disbeliefs will merely be the repetitive, imitative ideas and

thoughts which we have learned from some book, or from another person, or which we have projected out of our own desire for comfort. The truly religious man is not the one who clings to certain beliefs and dogmas, or who strictly practises morality, but rather the man who begins to understand the whole process of his own thinking, the unconscious as well as the conscious. Such a man is an individual, for his mind is no longer repetitive; although there is the memory of the things it has known, they do not interfere. Such a mind becomes extraordinarily quiet, without any movement of desire, without any projection or motive. In that state there is the creativity of reality.

But this is not a thing that you can hear about and repeat, like a boy learning and repeating his lessons. To do that has no meaning at all. One has to go into oneself very deeply, pushing aside all the trivial fears, the envies, the ambitions, the desire to be secure, to be attached, to be dependent, which for most of us is very important—pushing all that stupid nonsense aside, not just temporarily, but actually being free of it. Only then is it possible to find out if there is a reality or not, if there is God, if there is something which is beyond time. Until we find that out for ourselves—not through somebody else, not through saviours or teachers, but directly experience it for ourselves—, life is a very superficial thing. We may have immense riches, great influence, and be able to travel all over the world; we may have vast knowledge and be very clever in our talk; but without that direct experience, life becomes very trivial, and underneath there is always misery, struggle, pain. Then we are everlastingly trying to give life a meaning, we are forever asking what is the purpose of life; so we invent a purpose—a cynical purpose of despair, or a purpose of delight.

But if we are capable of this constant inquiry, which is really a form of

meditation, then we are bound to come to the point when we realize that all our thinking is conditioned, and that our beliefs and dogmas have no value at all. And when we see that they have no value, they drop away without our struggling against them. The totality of our conditioning can be broken—not bit by bit, which takes time, but immediately, by directly perceiving the truth of the matter. It is the truth that liberates, not time, or your intention to be free. That is why the mind must be extraordinarily open, receptive. For truth is not to be pursued and caught; it must come.

So it is important to inquire into this whole question of conditioning, and not merely accept another's assertion as to whether the mind can be free or not. One has to inquire and free oneself. Then I think we shall find something beyond all words, about which there can be no possible communication. The man who has realized, experienced that thing for himself, is a truly religious man, for he is no longer influenced by society—society being this structure of ambition, of acquisition, of envy, the self-centred activity of the collective.

Question: Is there such a thing as real happiness? Can anyone ever find it, or is our pursuit of it an illusion?

KRISHNAMURTI: I think if we pursue happiness, life becomes very shallow. After all, happiness is a thing that comes to you, it is a by-product; when you go after happiness, it eludes you, does it not? If you are conscious that you are happy, you are no longer happy. When you know that you are joyous, surely at that very moment you have ceased to be joyous. I do not know if you have noticed this. It is like the man who is conscious of his humility; surely such a man is not humble.

So happiness, I think, is something that cannot be pursued, any more than

you can pursue peace. If you pursue peace, your mind becomes stagnant. For peace is a living state; and to understand what peace is requires a great deal of intelligence and hard work—not merely sitting down and wishing for peace. Similarly, happiness requires immense understanding, insight and hard work—as much hard work as you give to earning a livelihood, and far more. But if you are merely *seeking* happiness, then you might just as well take a drug.

To pursue happiness, it seems to me, is to pursue an illusion. In that pursuit is involved a very complex process. There is the pursuer, and the thing which he pursues. When there is a pursuer wanting something, there is always conflict; and so long as there is conflict, there is no understanding, but only a series of miseries and an endless struggle to overcome them in order to reach happiness. This is the conflict of duality, of the thinker and his thought. Only when the mind is no longer pursuing its own gratification, its own fulfilment, no longer trying to reach happiness, which is a self-centred activity—only then is there the cessation of all conflict. This state may be called happiness—but that is irrelevant.

So it is important to go into this problem of effort and conflict. I wonder if we understand anything through effort? And if we do not make an effort, what will happen? We have been brought up, educated, to make an effort; and if we do not make an effort, we think something is wrong, we fear that we shall stagnate, degenerate. But if we are at all observant of ourselves, I think we must have found that understanding comes at those moments when the mind is very quiet, and not during the period of struggle. And the mind is in a state of perpetual struggle so long as it wants to be happy, secure, or is seeking some kind of permanency.

Where there is conflict, there must be tension, misery; but to live without

conflict is an immense problem. One cannot just brush it aside, saying "I'm going to live without conflict"—that has no meaning. Nor can one meditate, do all kinds of mystical things, in order to have no conflict—which is very childish. One has to understand the psychological process of this movement which we call conflict; and we cannot possibly understand it so long as there is the motive to achieve something. So long as I want to be something—happy, good, virtuous—, so long as I want to find God, or what you will, there must be conflict, and with it, misery and pain.

One has to understand totally the whole process of achieving, end-gaining, and not merely say "If I do not make an effort I will degenerate, I will lose my job", which is a very superficial response. To understand deeply the psychological problem, the inward nature of effort, requires a great deal of self-perception. That is why it is very important to know oneself. In the very process of self-knowledge, perhaps there will be happiness on the side—which is very unimportant.

Question: You seem to deny yoga. Do you think it has no value at all?

KRISHNAMURTI: Yoga is a particular system invented by the Hindus, by which to find, to be, to become. We think that through some such system we shall be able to achieve peace of mind. We think that by right breathing, by having the right kind of yoga, by practising meditation, controls, discipline, we shall arrive at that state of mind in which it is possible to find out what God is, or if there is God. Many people think these systems will lead to that. But I think the whole idea of any method or system leading to God—though it may produce a particular result which is apparently practical in this world—, is utterly illusory. Because, truth or God has no path, no system by

which you can approach it; and I think this is fairly obvious to anyone who is not already committed to a pattern or a method. After all, merely doing a particular exercise, thinking along a fixed line, struggling to control all one's thoughts—none of this makes the mind really alert, pliable, intelligent, perceptive.

What is required is not to set the mind in a particular pattern, however fascinating, but to free the mind so that it is able to discover. How can the mind discover what is true if it is caught in a system? There are new kinds of drugs which give all the things that yoga promises. You can take these drugs and become very happy, have a mind that is very quiet, intensely aware of things, of people, of nature. But surely those are all tricks. They do not help the mind to discover what is true. By taking a drink, or one of these pills, or by doing yoga, you can have a certain temporary alleviation, satisfaction, peace; but you will have to keep on taking your drug.

Please, those of you who practise yoga, do not merely brush this aside, saying that I am prejudiced. This is a very important question: whether you can, through any trick, by taking a pill or practising some method of making the mind quiet, bring about that state of deep comprehension of what is true. I say it cannot be done. Yoga, drugs, drink, all the various stimulants, produce their own results; but they cannot possibly make the mind into that astonishing instrument of inquiry, of search and discovery.

You see, we all want methods, systems, pills, to make us immediately happy; it is the immediacy we are after. But if we are at all alert to the whole issue, we shall see that merely to go on asserting that yoga is useful, indicates a very shallow mind. The problem is not whether yoga is right or wrong, but whether the mind can be freed from creating a habit and living in that habit. A mind that seeks peace

and establishes itself in the routine of peace, is not a peaceful mind; it has merely disciplined itself, compelled itself to conform to a pattern, and such a mind is not a living mind, it is not innocent, fresh. Only the mind that is innocent, fresh, free to discover, is creative.

Question: How is it possible to live in this world without any kind of security?

KRISHNAMURTI: I do not think it is possible to live in this world without security. If you did not know where you were going to get your next meal, where you were going to sleep tonight, and so on, it would become impossible; you would not be able to think; you could not call it living. Governments and society are gradually bringing about that physical security—the Welfare State, and all the rest of it.

But surely that is not the real problem. The problem is that we want to be secure *inwardly*; psychologically we want to be secure. Therefore we invent such things as nationalism, God, this and that, in which we seek psychological security—and thereby bring about physical insecurity. After all, so long as I insist that I am a Hindu and find delight in being an Indian—making an ideal of it, or what you will, and depending on that for my inward security—, I create a division between man and man, the division of nationalities, frontiers, class differences, which will invariably bring about insecurity, psychologically as well as physically.

So, is it possible for the mind not to seek security at all? Is it possible to be psychologically free of this demand to be secure, this demand for permanency? At present we are all seeking permanency in some form or other—permanency in relationship, permanency after death, permanency in our ideas, a continuity of belief—, all of which indicates an inward

insufficiency which makes us want psychological security. So, is it possible for the mind to be free from this urge to be secure? After all, if you observe, we are always seeking permanency in our relationships, are we not? We want permanency in our relationship with society, with a particular person, or with one or two. And if that is once established, then we want permanency in another direction—we want to become something, we want to be well-known, famous. If it is not that, then we want permanency after death, or permanent peace, a permanent state of happiness; or we want to be permanently good.

I think this is the whole problem—to understand and free the mind of this constant urge to seek a permanent state. For does not this demand for permanency lead to mediocrity? Surely it is only the mind that is uncertain, that has no continuity in the known—it is only such a mind that is capable of discovery, capable of renewing itself; not the mind that is merely moving from the known to the known. After all, that is what we are doing, is it not? What we want is the continuity of the known—the known experience, the known pleasure. And so long as the mind is seeking that state of permanency, we are bound to create division between man and man.

The problem is, then, can the mind live without seeking permanency at all? Is there a mind, if there is no permanency? After all, the mind is the result of time, of the innumerable experiences it has had, and it cannot brush all that aside. The very words it is using are the result of memory, the known. But need those memories, the known, interfere and make the mind incapable of inquiring? The mind is capable of inquiring, of discovering, only when there is uncertainty, when there is freedom from the known.

All this is not a mere matter of acceptance or rejection. You have to experiment with this—that is, if you

are at all seriously interested. You have to go deeply into yourself, inquire most profoundly, so that the mind becomes capable of renewing itself, of remaining innocent in spite of the innumerable experiences and accidents of life. For only the innocent mind, the fresh mind, is open to receive that which is eternal.

June 17, 1956

III

TALK IN BRUSSELS

It seems to me that it would be a waste of time and energy if one merely came to these talks as an intellectual distraction, or to find new ideas with which to play. We are concerned here with something much more fundamental than mere amusement or intellectual stimulation. We are concerned with a radical change in human thought; and this requires considerable inquiry, deep questioning and hard work.

A radical change is obviously necessary, because society is in conflict within itself. Although we profess love and brotherhood, every man is against another; each one belongs to a particular religion or country, and the whole social structure of the world is based on conflict, on envy, on acquisition. Those of us who are really seriously concerned, who are at all alive to the whole human problem of existence, must be aware of the extraordinary suffering there is, both within and without. And we must also be aware of how urgent it is to bring about a fundamental change in human relationship—which is, after all, society.

At present what we call religion is principally a matter of conforming to a particular dogma or belief, and the fact that we are greedy, envious, brutal, is evidently irrelevant. But religion, surely, is something quite different; it

is the process of trying to find out, to establish, the right relationship between man and man, so that we do not merely conform to a particular pattern of society, or to the pattern of any belief or dogma.

If we are at all serious—as we must be in a world that is full of crises—we must be concerned, not merely intellectually or sentimentally, but as individuals, as vital human beings, with how to bring about a radical change. And it seems to me that it will be utterly useless for us to go through all these talks unless you and I are willing to inquire into the whole matter very deeply, actually experiencing as we go along. We shall have to feel out for ourselves how to change deeply and fundamentally, how to approach the whole problem anew, and not merely repeat the old pattern of existence in different ways and under different labels. Surely, to bring about a radical change in the world, we need a tremendous revolution—not a Communist revolution, which is no revolution at all, nor any revolution of a merely social nature, but a fundamental transformation in ourselves.

Is it possible to bring about this radical change? And what is the motive that makes us change? If there is a motive, is there a change? And what is the factor that brings this change? Is it the action of will, or the action of knowledge, or the action of mere social convenience? Or does the change come about, not at any of these levels, but much more radically, and away from all social and environmental influences? I think this must be a very deep problem for most of us, if we have thought about it at all. Because we see an enormous amount of starvation in Asia, while in the West there is over-production and the piling up of armaments. The whole of the West is much better off in the material sense; the people are more healthy, more vigorous, they have more to eat, and the Welfare State is bringing about

security for old age; whereas, in the East, there is not enough food for the majority of the people, there is starvation, and the exploitation of centuries continues. And even in the West there are contradictions, they are in conflict among themselves.

Seeing this whole picture—not as Christians or Communists, nor as representatives of the East or of the West, but as human beings who are struggling, who are suffering, who have love—we must surely be concerned to find out how to bring about a radical change, so that we do not continue in the same old patterns of existence. And can this change, this revolution, come about through conscious effort, or only through understanding the psyche, not merely intellectually, but actually? And who is the entity that is to bring about this change?

As a human being I see this extraordinary world problem; and I also see that the world problem is my problem, because society is what I am. I have been educated in a particular society, as we all have; as human beings we are conditioned. And how am I to bring about this change in myself, and so in society? Am I now different from society? Must I not break away from society totally, completely, if I am to affect society? And who is to break away from it? Is there an 'I', a centre, from which there can be independent action which is not controlled, dominated, shaped by society? If there is a centre which is independent, uninfluenced by society, then that centre, given the opportunity, will act. But is there such a centre? Or is the totality of consciousness—the whole of it, not merely a segment—the result of innumerable social influences, contradictions and urges?

Can I—when I say "I" it also includes you—can I, who am the product of society, of time, of influence—can this 'I', through any action, through any desire, through any compulsion, bring about a change? Is not this 'I',

who wishes to bring about a change, made up of all the various elements which also compose society? And if I merely alter one or two of these elements in myself, discard one or two patterns, surely I have not broken away from society.

So it seems to me that we must first find out whether it is possible to change at all; and what is the force, what is the drive, what is the compulsion that makes me want to change? In what way is this whole structure of the 'me' related to society? Am I—the thinker, the entity who wants, desires, seeks, who is frustrated, envious, brutal, loving, and all the rest of it—am I different from society? And what do we mean by society? Society is obviously the relationship between man and man, it is a structure we have built up in our relationship with others. That relationship, which is society, is based on acquisitiveness, envy, fear, ambition, on the seeking of power, position, prestige. And these things are what each one of us also wants—only perhaps in a more tolerant, more dignified, more respectable way. The very essence of society is the seeking of wealth, and the effort to fulfil one's ambition by identifying oneself with a particular group or country. Those who seek to reform—the missionaries, the internationalists, the believers—are also within the acquisitive pattern of society, as we all are.

So, I am not different from society—which is so obvious, is it not? The whole social structure is based on this drive to be great, to fulfil one's ambition, to distract oneself, to escape from pain or pursue amusement; and it gives rise to brutality, to war, to hatred, with occasional use of the word 'love'. That is the source from which all our thinking comes—and we are aware of it. Now, how are you and I, as two human beings concerned with this enormous problem—how are we to break away from society? How are we to completely free ourselves from all the things which society represents, and of which we are

made up—envy, hate, ambition, greed, vanity, the search for power, for position, and so on? For only then is it possible to break away from society, not by becoming a hermit and wearing a loin-cloth, or going into a monastery—that is not breaking away from society; because even though I may enter a monastery, I am still ambitious to become the abbot, or to be more 'spiritual' than somebody else.

So how is that centre, from which all my thinking and your thinking proceeds, to be changed? Can it be changed through discontent? If there is any form of change through discontent, it will produce a pattern, will it not?, which will again create a structure in which the dominant factor will be the desire for satisfaction. If my change is based on discontent, then the mind is seeking contentment, satisfaction—which is exactly what society is after; so I am back again in the old pattern, only under a different name. A fundamental change cannot possibly be brought about through discontent, and I think this is very important to understand. If I change because I am dissatisfied with things as they are in the world—with the rottenness, the vanity, the snobbishness, the cruelty, the rich and the poor—if, seeing all that, I am merely discontented, and my drive to change is based on that discontent, then surely I will create a new pattern of society which will be similar to the old, only in different terms. I think one must see this very clearly. For unfortunately, most of the so-called change which is brought about in the world comes through discontent, dissatisfaction.

How is one, then, to bring about this change? I do not know if you have thought it out seriously and deeply, with real intention to find out. If one has, one can see that when any form of *motive* brings about change, it is no change at all. So long as I am discontented, or identify myself with a group or a belief, so long as I have a motive of any sort, noble or personal, that

motive is bound to create the old pattern again in a different field. And yet I know there must be change. For unless one changes, not superficially, but radically, one is dead—even though one may have all the latest improvements, the latest gadgets and mechanical conveniences—including the electronic brain, which does some things much better than the human mind.

So, if we are at all serious, our problem is how to bring about this fundamental change. A change which is conscious is surely no change at all. The mind of each one of us is formed, shaped through motive, through drive, through urge, through desire, through time; it is educated in the pattern of society. And for such a mind, can there be a conscious, deliberate action of will which will bring about this change? Is it not rather that a change, this fundamental, radical revolution, comes only when the mind has dissociated itself from the centre which is the 'me', which is society? After all, the 'me', this centre from which all our thinking takes place, is the result of social influences, of reaction between man and man; it is the result of time; and any change which is brought about from this centre is still part of the centre. It seems to me very important to understand this; for surely, any action based on will is no action at all, because it creates contradiction, struggle, and therefore repression, defence, resistance. Similarly, action brought about by desiring to do 'good' leads to innumerable contradictions and misery. How can one know what is good for the whole of man?

Furthermore, any action based on the intellectual gathering of information, which is called knowledge, again conditions the mind. Action born of knowledge is bound to be limited. And yet knowledge is the whole content of one's mind, is it not? Although one may think there is a God who is going to influence one's action, that concept is still within the field of thought.

So, being very desirous to bring about a change, what are you and I to do? Can the mind totally free itself from ambition? I am taking that as an example. Can it be completely free from envy, which is part of ambition?—the envy that is always comparing, desiring to have more knowledge, more success, more power, more money or prestige. Can the mind—which is the result of this society based on acquisitiveness and comparative thinking—totally free itself from envy and ambition, from wanting more, more, more? If we could understand this one thing—how to free the mind from envy—, then perhaps we should be able to break away from the whole structure of society.

But to understand that one thing, to really go into it, requires a great deal of attention. After all, most of us are ambitious—if not in regard to this world, because here we have been frustrated, then our ambitions turn to the other world, where we want to sit next to God, we want to be spiritual entities. Here or hereafter, we want to be somebody—which does not mean we must not be anybody. But the urge, the compulsion, the thing that makes me desire to be something—can that be completely cut off? If my mind does not shake itself totally free from all that, then, however much I may desire to change, I shall merely be caught in a new pattern in which the seed of ambition still exists, only in a different garb.

So, how is the mind to free itself from this problem of ambition, envy, the desire for more? How is it to free itself, not merely from wanting a better job, a bigger house, a finer car, and all that kind of thing, but from the totality of envy, right through? I see that if I resist envy, my very resistance is another form of ambition, because I want to get rid of envy in order to be something else; therefore resistance has no value. By suppressing envy I am not free of it, it is still there, rotting and distorting one's vision; and then there is bitterness,

cynicism. So I see the futility of suppression, of resistance, and also the futility of trying to escape from envy, or to find a substitute for it, or to sublimate it. That whole process implies the desire not to be this, but to be something else, all of which is still within the field of envy.

We all know what envy is; and can the mind totally dissociate itself from envy? To dissociate itself from envy, the mind must first be aware that it is envious. And are we aware of it? Do we *know* that we are envious? Or do we only agree that we are envious because we know the word 'envy'? If you care to, I think you should experiment with what I am saying, not tomorrow, or later on, but now. Let us take that word 'envy' and actually go through the whole experience of it, fundamentally, deeply, and see if one cannot totally wipe away envy from one's whole process of thinking. When we use that word we mean not only the envy of wanting more than one has, but the envy of comparison, the envy of wishing to be something different from what one is, the envy that creates the ideal and the pursuit of that ideal. The man who is free of envy has no ideal—not because he is satisfied with what he is, but because he no longer thinks in terms of the 'more' and therefore knows no discontent. It is only the demand for the 'more' that creates discontent, envy, and time in which to become something. Can the mind free itself from that whole process?

I think the mind can be totally free—not merely verbally, but it can really experience freedom. And this experiencing of freedom is not a fancy, an illusion. Envy can actually be rooted out. Then life becomes an entirely different thing. Then perhaps we shall know what love is, what peace is; we shall know what it is to be truly content without decaying.

So, do we know that we are envious? I hope you will be good enough to follow this rather closely, for then perhaps we shall be able not only to think

it out together, but actually to eradicate this thing—not for the moment, but finally.

We know all the various reasons why we are discontented; and we also know what envy implies, both socially and inwardly. But do we actually experience envy? Surely, there is a great difference between actually experiencing something, and merely having a theory or an opinion about it—or allowing the word 'envy' to influence us, and therefore condemning it. Do I know envy directly? Do we know anything directly, or merely through the word? The moment I use the word 'envy', all the sociological implications come up, and I condemn that feeling. When I use the word 'love', again I am conditioned by sociological influences, and I accept the feeling which that word represents. The one I reject, the other I accept.

So, am I aware that the word itself has an extraordinary influence on me, on the mind? And can the mind be free of the word? I think that is the first thing—to recognize the influence of and to be free, if one can, of the word itself. If you will experiment with this, you will see how extraordinarily difficult it is for the mind to free itself from words. And that may be one of the fundamental reasons why the mind is never free from envy—because it is caught in words.

Now, can the mind be free from the effect of that word 'envy'—not only nervously, neurologically, but inwardly? If the mind can be free from that word, does not the mind then look directly at the feeling which it has called 'envy'? And in giving full attention to that feeling without naming it, is there not a cessation of the feeling?

Perhaps all this sounds a bit too complex. But surely, if one would understand the whole process of envy, one must go into it very deeply, and not merely accept or reject envy, or try to resist it and cultivate a virtue in its place. When virtue is cultivated, it is no longer virtue. A man who tries to cultivate goodness, has ceased to be

good. Goodness is something entirely different. If I try to free myself from envy by cultivating a state of mind in which there is no envy, I am still envious, because the drive to cultivate a state of non-envy is based on envy.

If I would eradicate the feeling called 'envy', I must understand this whole problem, so that the mind can dissociate itself from all words, including that particular word 'envy'. And if it does, *is* there envy? But merely getting rid of the word as a clever trick in order not to be envious, does not bring about a mind that is completely still, without a word. Only the mind that is completely still, without a word, without a movement, without an image, that is no longer functioning from the centre which is society—only such a mind is free from envy, and can therefore function in a totally different dimension. To me, such a mind is a religious mind. And it is only the religious man who is really revolutionary—not the man who believes, who belongs to a certain church or organization. The truly religious man has nothing to do with all that, for he is outside of society, and it is only he who can bring about a fundamental change in mankind, through right education.

Question: Although what you say seems to be of the highest religious quality, you do not lay down any mode of conduct. Why don't you do this? Most of us definitely need one.

KRISHNAMURTI: Why do we want a mode of conduct? If we can be a light unto ourselves, why do we want someone else to lay down the rules of behaviour? The question is not, "Why don't you lay down a mode of conduct?", which is too silly, but rather, "Can we be a light unto ourselves under all circumstances?" Though we may fail, though we may make mistakes, isn't it possible to be a light unto ourselves, and not look to another, not seek authority of any kind to tell us

what to do? I think this can come about only when we are not seeking comfort, when we are not stretching out a hand and begging someone to give us something by which we shall be satisfied, by which we shall know. We can be a light unto ourselves only when we understand ourselves totally and completely, right through. It is an arduous task to know oneself; it requires persistent inquiry, alertness, watchfulness. But unfortunately most of us are lazy, and we turn to somebody else to tell us what to do, to take the responsibility off our shoulders; we push it off on the priest, or on God, or on some specialist. That is why we ask this question. We want to be told how to act in order to arrive safely at the other shore. But there *is* no other shore; there is only a process of travelling, of learning, of experiencing—not something to be arrived at or achieved. One has to be both the teacher and the pupil oneself. That requires energy, attention, watchfulness; but we are lazy, and it is much easier to be told what to do. The man who tells you what to do you set up as your authority, and you become his slave; therefore you are never free, you are never a light unto yourself. So you invent the exploiter, and you become the exploited.

To find out how to be a light unto ourselves, how to think truly and rightly from moment to moment, requires a great deal of energy; it is really hard work. But unfortunately we want an easy way, a short-cut, so we become increasingly lazy; and old age and death await us.

We can find a mode of conduct in any religious book; they all tell us what to do—to be kind, to be loving, to be good, and all the rest of it. But surely that is not enough, because we are human beings, with extraordinary capacity to do good and to do evil; and without understanding for oneself the whole mechanism of the mind, the whole structure of one's own being, without knowing love, merely to have a mode of

conduct seems to me utterly useless. We can always circumvent the mode of conduct, and we do. But if we begin to understand the whole content of ourselves, from the very heart, then we shall not look to another. Then we shall be our own saviours, we shall be our own teachers and our own pupils.

Question: What is the fundamental difference between the materialistic and the religious concept of life?

KRISHNAMURTI: Do you think there is any fundamental difference between the materialistic and the so-called religious concept of life? Material things, made by hand or by machinery, are invented by the mind; and what we call the religious life may also be an invention of the mind—because it is the mind that invents ideas, gods, rituals, saviours. So why separate the two? The materialistic existence, and the so-called spiritual existence, are both a product of the mind—of the mind that is seeking position, power, wealth, comfort, whether physically or psychologically. You may not worship the things made by the hand; but to worship the things made by the mind, is still materialistic, unspiritual. You may worship ideas, ideals—the idea of heaven, the ideal of goodness, of beauty—, as others worship refrigerators, cars; but it is all within the field of the mind.

So the question is not, “What is the difference between the materialistic and the religious concept of life?”, but whether the mind can free itself from all idealization and the worship of ideas. Can the mind cease creating images and becoming a slave to those images, both materially and in thought? It is much more difficult to be free from thought-images than it is to be free from material things. After all, you can fairly easily be detached from your coat, or your car, but it is much more difficult to be free from ideas, beliefs, dogmas, nationalities, because these are your gods.

I think it is only when one is free from ideas, from images, from concepts, from conclusions, that one will find out what it is to be really spiritual. Otherwise we shall live in a phoney world of spirituality, a world without any meaning beyond mere sentimentality and emotionalism.

So the man who would seek out what is true must not only be free of the idol made by the hand; he must also be free of the idea which lies behind the idol, and which is produced by the mind. Only the man who is free of the idea and the symbol, as well as of material things, can know what it is to be truly religious.

June 18, 1956

IV

TALK IN BRUSSELS

This evening I think it would be worth while to go into the whole question of tradition and memory, and try to discover what is the significance of this background, and how it functions. Tradition, it seems to me, invariably leads to mediocrity. And most of us are merely following tradition—the tradition of security, the tradition which has been handed down through the churches and other so-called religious organizations, or the tradition which we ourselves have built up as experience or knowledge. I think it would be wise and significant if we could go into this whole problem of experiences which condition the mind, and find out whether there is an experiencing which never limits the mind, never creates tradition, conformity. Can the mind ever be free from habit? Or must the mind always move in what is essentially a groove of habit, however apparently significant and worth while? Most of our minds do function in the groove of habit, and we

seem to be at a loss when for a moment habit is gone. Habit may be necessary for the mind up to a certain point, and then it may become detrimental, a blockage, a hindrance.

So it seems to me important to find out what is the function of memory, and how far the mind can free itself from the mere pattern of memory. Is the mind capable of experiencing anything new, or must it always continue in the pattern of the old, however modified? Memory—which is, after all, tradition—has value up to a certain point; but however much information the mind may have stored up, it is incapable, through memory, of discovering something totally new. It seems to me that truth, or God, or whatever name one may like to give to that immeasurable thing, must be wholly unimaginable, not something projected from memory, something which has already been experienced; it must be totally new, something which the mind has never before experienced. A mind that is caught in tradition, that is merely the instrument of memory, living in the pattern of many yesterdays, is surely incapable of finding out what is true. And without the perfume of that reality, life becomes merely mechanical.

So it is important, I think, to go into this whole question of what is the function of memory—which means, really, what is the process of the mind? What is thinking? Can thinking ever be free of memory? *All* thinking—not merely specific thinking, but the totality of it—is the reaction of a background of tradition, of memory, is it not? And can the mind free itself from that background of the past, or is it incapable of being free? A mind that is merely inquiring through thought, through reason, through logic, moving from conclusion to conclusion—surely such a mind can never find out what is true, and whether there is a reality. And is our whole process of inquiry into reality merely a conditioned response, an escape from our tortures, from our pain and suffering?

So, what is thinking? How do we think? Let us try to go into this, not theoretically, not philosophically or speculatively, but directly experience what we are talking about, so that each one of us finds out how thought actually operates. This will perhaps help us to be aware of the total process of thinking, and then to see if the mind can go beyond thinking.

How do we think? If a question is asked which is familiar, the response is immediate, for there is no need to think. But a more complex question demands thinking—the thinking which is an inquiry, a looking into memory, the storehouse of knowledge. If a question is asked on a subject about which we know nothing, even then there is hesitation, a gap between the question and the response, which means that the mind is again looking into memory to find out if at any time it has learned something about that subject. So our thinking is always the response of memory, of association; our minds move from a fixed point in the past, from a belief or an experience which colours all our thinking. It is fairly obvious that this is the process which most of us go through, consciously or unconsciously, when we think.

Now, is it possible for the mind to go beyond that point, so that when it is inquiring into a very complex, unanswerable question—such as whether there is truth, or God, what lies beyond death, and so on—the mind is in a state of not knowing? Can it look at the problem and say “I do not know”, because the thought-process is entirely dissociated from the past? I think it is very important to come to that point, when all thinking ceases—thinking in the sense of responding according to the past, which is memory.

I do not know if I am making myself clear on this issue. If the totality of my thinking process is the response of my conditioning—which it is—, then the mind can never discover what is true, and whether there is anything which

has not already been experienced. If the mind is to discover something totally new, it must come to this point, surely, when it is in a state of not knowing. That is why it is very important to go into this whole problem of consciousness—consciousness being the totality of all experience, of all memory, the residue of the past. One must know oneself; for self-knowledge is essential if one is to find out whether the mind can ever be free of all knowledge and discover something new.

If we look into ourselves, we shall see that experience conditions the mind. Every new experience is translated in terms of the old; it is absorbed by the established pattern of mediocrity, tradition. And obviously, a mind that is caught in tradition, in mediocrity, can never find out what is true, it can never discover that which is unimaginable, which cannot be conceived of, described, or believed in.

So, can the mind free itself from tradition and conformity—not only from those imposed by environment, but from the tradition and conformity which are built up by the mind itself through experience? One can see very well that all one's thinking is the response of one's conditioning. Our reaction to a challenge is always according to the background in which we have been brought up; and so long as we do not know our own conditioning, our thinking is never free. We may be able to adjust ourselves to a new pattern, to a new way of life, to new beliefs, to new dogmas, but in that process thought never frees itself.

So one has to inquire very deeply within oneself as to the significance and purpose of memory. And is memory the totality of our consciousness? Consciousness is within the field of time, is it not? My thinking, which is the result of the past, colours the present and projects the future—and this is the process of time. So all my experience is within the field of time. Can the mind free itself from that whole process? And if it

does free itself, can it discover something new?

I do not think this is so very complicated if one is at all aware of oneself. You can see it for yourself quite simply if you observe the process of your own thinking. We know how extraordinarily easy it is to fall into a groove of habit, how quickly the mind reduces everything to habit—which is sometimes called 'adjustment'. The mind always functions from the known to the known; and if the mind is to discover the unknowable, surely it must be free from the known. Can the mind free itself from the known? It is really a very interesting problem—not only interesting, but extraordinarily profound, if we can go into it.

All accumulated experience makes the mind conform, does it not? And can the mind free itself from the accumulation of experience? When it is free, is there such a thing as an experiencer? What is it that experiences? Surely, it is the accumulation of previous experiences and memories. The mind responds to any challenge through its previously accumulated knowledge. Either its response is adequate, or inadequate. When it responds adequately, there is no conflict, no suffering; but when there is inadequacy of response, then there is suffering, there is conflict. This is obvious and superficial. To know ourselves we must inquire much more profoundly; we must understand the whole process of our consciousness, the totality of it—not merely the superficial consciousness of daily activities, but the deep unconscious, which contains the whole residue of racial conditioning, the racial memories, the hidden motives, urges, compulsions, fixations. This does not mean that we must go to a psychologist. On the contrary, we must understand ourselves through direct experience.

To have this self-knowledge, the mind must be aware of itself from moment to moment; it must see all its own movements, its urges, its motives, the

operations of memory, and how, through tradition, it is caught in mediocrity. If the mind can be aware of all that within itself, then you will find there is a possibility of being free from all conditioning and discovering something totally new. Then the mind itself is made new—and perhaps that is the real, the immeasurable.

Question: How is it possible to free oneself from psychological dependence on others?

KRISHNAMURTI: I wonder if we are conscious that we *do* depend psychologically on others? Not that it is necessary, or justifiable, or wrong, psychologically to depend on others; but are we, first of all, aware that we are dependent? Most of us are psychologically dependent, not only on people, but on property, on beliefs, on dogmas. Are we at all conscious of that fact? If we know that we do depend on something for our psychological happiness, for our inward stability, security, then we can ask ourselves why.

Why do we psychologically depend on something? Obviously, because in ourselves we are insufficient, poor, empty, in ourselves we are extraordinarily lonely; and it is this loneliness, this emptiness, this extreme inward poverty and self-enclosure that makes us depend on a person, on knowledge, on property, on opinion, and on so many other things which seem necessary to us.

Now, can the mind be fully aware of the fact that it is lonely, insufficient, empty? It is very difficult to be aware, to be fully cognizant of that fact, because we are always trying to escape from it; and we do temporarily escape from it through listening to the radio, and other forms of amusement, through going to church, performing rituals, acquiring knowledge, and through dependence on people and on ideas. To know your own emptiness, you must look at it; but you cannot look at it if

your mind is all the time seeking a distraction from the fact that it is empty. And that distraction takes the form of attachment to a person, to the idea of God, to a particular dogma or belief, and so on.

So, can the mind stop running away, escaping, and not merely ask *how* to stop running away? Because the very inquiry into how the mind is to stop escaping, becomes another escape. If I know that a certain path does not lead anywhere, I do not walk on that path; there is no question of how not to walk on it. Similarly, if I know that no escape, no amount of running away will ever resolve this loneliness, this inward emptiness, then I stop running, I stop being distracted. Then the mind can look at the fact that it is lonely, and there is no fear. It is in the very process of running away from what *is* that fear arises.

So, when the mind understands the futility, the utter uselessness of trying to fill its own emptiness through dependence, through knowledge, through belief, then it is capable of looking at it without fear. And can the mind continue to look at that emptiness without any evaluation? I hope you are following this. It may sound rather complex, and probably it is; but can we not go into it very deeply? Because a superficial answer is completely meaningless.

When the mind is fully aware that it escapes, runs away from itself; when it realizes the futility of running away, and sees that the very process of running away creates fear—when it realizes the truth of that, then it can face what *is*. Now, what do we mean when we say that we are facing what *is*? Are we facing it, looking at it, if we are always giving a value to it, interpreting it, if we have opinions about it? Surely, opinions, values, interpretations, merely prevent the mind from looking at the fact. If you want to understand the fact, it is no good having an opinion about it.

So, can we look, without any evaluation, at the fact of our psychological

emptiness, our loneliness, which breeds so many other problems? I think that is where the difficulty lies—in our incapacity to look at ourselves without judgment, without condemnation, without comparison; because we have all been trained to compare, to judge, to evaluate, to give an opinion. Only when the mind sees the futility of all that, the absurdity of it, is it capable of looking at itself. Then that which we have feared as being lonely, empty, is no longer empty. Then there is no psychological dependence on anything; then love is no longer attachment, but something entirely different, and relationship has quite another meaning.

But to find that out for oneself, and not merely repeat it verbally, one must understand the process of escape. In the very understanding of escape there is the stopping of that escape, and the mind is able to look at itself. In looking at itself, there must be no evaluation, no judgment. Then the fact is important in itself, and there is complete attention, without any desire for distraction; therefore the mind is no longer empty. Complete attention is the good.

Question: Does awareness mean a state of freedom, or merely a process of observation?

KRISHNAMURTI: This is really quite a complex problem. Can we understand the whole significance of what it is to be aware? Do not let us jump to any conclusions. What do we mean by ordinary awareness? I see you; and in watching you, looking at you, I form opinions. You have hurt me, you have deceived me, you have been cruel to me, or you have said nice things and flattered me; and consciously or unconsciously all this remains in my mind. When I watch this process, when I observe it, that is just the beginning of awareness, is it not? I can also be aware of my motives, of my habits of thought. The mind can be aware of its limitations, of its own conditioning; and there is the

inquiry as to whether the mind can ever be free from its own conditioning. Surely this is all part of awareness. To say that the mind can or cannot be free from its conditioning, is still part of its conditioning; but to observe that conditioning without saying either, is a furthering of awareness—awareness of the whole process of thinking.

So through awareness I begin to see myself as I actually am, the totality of myself. Being watchful from moment to moment of all its thoughts, its feelings, its reactions, unconscious as well as conscious, the mind is constantly discovering the significance of its own activities—which is self-knowledge. Whereas, if my understanding is merely accumulative, then that accumulation becomes a conditioning which prevents further understanding. So, can the mind observe itself without accumulation?

All this is still only part of awareness, is it not? A tree is not merely the leaf, or the flower, or the fruit; it is also the branch, the trunk—it is everything that goes to make up the whole tree. Likewise, awareness is of the total process of the mind, not just of one particular segment of that process. But the mind cannot understand the total process of itself if it condemns or justifies any part, or identifies itself with the pleasurable and rejects the painful. So long as the mind is merely accumulating experience, knowledge—which is what it is doing all the time—, it is incapable of going further. That is why, to discover something new, there must be a dying to every experience; and for this there must be awareness from moment to moment.

All relationship is a mirror in which the mind can discover its own operations. Relationship is between oneself and other human beings, between oneself and things or property, between oneself and ideas, and between oneself and nature; and in that mirror of relationship one can see oneself as one actually is—but only if one is capable

of looking without judging, without evaluating, condemning, justifying. When one has a fixed point from which one observes, there is no understanding in one's observation.

So, being fully conscious of one's whole process of thinking, and being able to go beyond that process, is awareness. You may say it is very difficult to be so constantly aware. Of course it is very difficult—it is almost impossible. You cannot keep a mechanism working at full speed all the time, it would break up; it must slow down, have rest. Similarly, we cannot maintain total awareness all the time. How can we? To be aware from moment to moment is enough. If one is totally aware for a minute or two, and then relaxes, and in that relaxation spontaneously observes the operations of one's own mind, one will discover much more in that spontaneity than in the effort to watch continuously. You can observe yourself effortlessly, easily, when you are walking, talking, reading—at every moment. Only then will you find out that the mind is capable of freeing itself from all the things it has known and experienced; and it is in freedom alone that it can discover what is true.

Question: When we dream, do we enter the collective unconscious? Are the dreams symbolic of our psychological state, and therefore a useful guide?

KRISHNAMURTI: I wonder why we are so bothered about dreams? Why is it that we have so many problems, so many questions, and so many experts telling us what to do and how to think? Why has life become such an extraordinarily complex thing? Life is essentially simple; and why has the mind made it complicated? We have made even love complex. We are forever trying to find ways to love, to be compassionate, to be gentle, to be kind—and yet in that very effort we miss it all.

And dreams have become still another problem.

To solve a problem is not to search for an answer, a solution. If my mind is concerned with the solution of the problem, then I have created another problem, have I not? Do you understand what I mean? Here is a problem—the problem of dreams. I do not know why we have made it into a problem, but we have. Now, if I am concerned with the solution of the whole problem of dreams, then the search for the solution becomes another problem, does it not? So instead of having just one problem, I now have two. And that is the way of our life—problem after problem. We never seem to understand the one central problem from which arise all our problems, and that is our self-centred activity and concern from morning till night. So let us inquire into this.

Is each one of us a collective entity, or a separate, distinct individual? Are you and I separate individuals, totally different from one another? That is what we mean by individuality, is it not?—a mind which is not contaminated by the collective, which is not shaped by circumstances, by environment, by the past. Are you and I such individuals? Obviously not. We may think we are individuals, but actually our beliefs, our traditions, our values, our ways of life, are those of the collective. You are Christians, or Hindus, or Buddhists, or Communists, which means that you have been contaminated, conditioned to be what you are; and each one is trying to brainwash the others.

Obviously, the superficial consciousness, the every-day working mind, is educated to adjust itself to the present environment, to the present society. It may have acquired a new skill, or a different kind of technology, and may therefore consider itself an individual; but actually it is still conditioned by the past. To me, the totality of consciousness is the result of the past—the past being the experiences of the race, and

also the impressions made on the mind during its own past and present activities.

So the mind that is trying to be an individual, the mind that has learned new techniques, new ways of speech, new adjustments, is still the totality of the collective; it still has the same hidden motives, the same pursuits, ambitions, envies, suffering. Are we aware of the collective in ourselves? Or, being indifferent to all that, do we merely cultivate the superficial?

Now, when our minds are merely being cultivated superficially, when they are occupied all day long with the things we have to do—with various jobs, with earning a livelihood, and so on—, there is no opportunity to inquire into the unconscious. So when we go to sleep, the unconscious projects its movement, its activity, into the relatively quiet conscious mind in the form of symbolic dreams. Surely this is all very obvious. So our dreams may be symbols, hints, intimations from the unconscious, from the totality of the collective consciousness. Then the problem arises of what these symbols mean, what their significance is, how to get them interpreted; and all the complications begin.

So the question is, can the mind be free from all symbols in the form of dreams? That is, can the mind be free not to dream? As we said, dreams—not the superficial ones, but the significant dreams—are obviously intimations or hints from the unconscious, of which we are not aware when the mind is absorbed, as it generally is, in earning a livelihood, and so on. And can the mind be free from all dreams, so that during sleep it is able to penetrate more deeply into itself? I think this is the important question—not what dreams are, but whether the mind can be free from all unconscious urges and symbolic hints, intimations, so that it is really silent; for in that silence it can discover great depths.

Perhaps this possibility has not occurred to you; but do not make it

into another problem. In considering this question, we are not trying to find out what is the significance of dreams. You can discover that for yourself if you begin to be aware, during the day, of your unconscious motives, urges, fixations, beliefs, frustrations. If you are really aware of all that during the waking consciousness; if you are watchful, alertly observant, so that your mind no longer gets caught in ambitions, in frustrations, in the fear of failure, and all the rest of it; then, surely, there is no need to dream. Having been alert during the day, watchful of its reactions, the mind, when it goes to sleep, is quiet, peaceful; and then there is a possibility of touching something unknowable which, on waking, brings great clarity.

This is not superstition or mystical nonsense; we are talking of very simple, straightforward facts. So long as my mind is crowded with problems, so long as it is occupied with itself and its ambitions, its fears, its anxieties, its frustrations, obviously it is incapable of going beyond itself. And most of our days are spent in self-occupation; we are concerned with ourselves all the time. Inevitably, therefore, when we go to sleep, our dreams are the intimations of something deeper which we have not understood, and which we again translate in terms of our own self-concern. But if, during the day, we can be fully aware of and so remove all the ambitions, the frustrations, the conflicting desires, the psychological dependencies, then surely the mind is capable—not only during the day, but also during the hours when the body is at rest—of discovering something beyond the measurement of thought.

That is why it is so important to know oneself. To know yourself you need not go to any book, to any priest, to any psychologist. The whole treasure is within yourself. It demands only that you observe it—observe yourself in the mirror of relationship. But you cannot observe if you are merely concerned with absorbing and accumulating.

Only when the mind is not self-concerned is there a possibility of bliss.

June 23, 1956

V

TALK IN BRUSSELS

One of our great difficulties is to know how to free ourselves from the complex problem of sorrow. Intellectually we try to grapple with it, but unfortunately the intellect has no solution to the problem. The best it can do is to find some verbal rationalization, or invent a theory; or else it becomes cynical and bitter. But if we can very seriously examine the problem of suffering—not just verbally, but actually experience the whole process of it—, then perhaps we shall discover its cause, and find out whether that discovery brings about the solution of it.

Obviously, the problem of sorrow is one of the fundamental issues in our life. Most of us have some kind of sorrow, secret or open, and we are always trying to find a way to go beyond it, to be free of it. But it seems to me that unless we begin to understand for ourselves the really deep workings of the mind, sorrow will inevitably continue.

Is sorrow a thing to be got rid of through rationalization, that is, by explaining the cause of sorrow? Superficially, we all know why we suffer. I am talking particularly of psychological suffering, not merely of physical pain. If I know why I suffer, in the sense that I recognize the cause of my sorrow, will that sorrow disappear? Must I not look for a deeper issue, rather than be satisfied with one of the innumerable explanations of what it is that brings about the state which we call sorrow? And how am I to seek out the deeper issue? Most of us are very

easily satisfied by superficial responses, are we not? We quickly accept the satisfactory escapes from the deep issue of suffering.

Consciously or unconsciously, verbally or actually, we all know that we suffer, because we have in us the contradiction of desires, one desire trying to dominate another. These contradictory desires make for conflict, and conflict invariably leads to the state of mind which we call suffering. The whole complex of desire which creates conflict—this, it seems to me, is the source of all sorrow.

Most of us are caught up in this mass of contradictory desires, wishes, longings, hopes, fears, memories. That is, we are concerned with our achievements, our successes, our well-being, the fulfilment of our ambitions; we are concerned about ourselves. And I think this self-concern is the real source of our conflict and misery. Realizing this, we try to escape from our self-concern by throwing ourselves into various philanthropic activities, or by identifying ourselves with a particular reform; or we stupidly cling to some kind of religious belief, which is not religious at all. What we are essentially concerned with is how to escape from our suffering, how to resolve it.

So it seems to me very important, if we would free ourselves from sorrow, to go into this whole complex which we call desire, this bundle of memories which we call the 'me'. Is it possible to live in the world without this complex of desire, without this entity called the 'me', from which all suffering arises? I do not know if you have thought of this problem at all. When we suffer for various reasons, most of us try to find an answer, we try to escape by identifying ourselves with one thing or another, hoping it will alleviate our suffering. Yet the suffering goes on, either consciously or underground.

Now, can the mind free itself from suffering? This must be a problem to all of us who think about these things, because all of us suffer, acutely or

superficially. Can there be an ending to sorrow, or is sorrow inevitable? If it is our human lot to suffer endlessly, then we must accept it and live with it. But I think merely to accept the state of sorrow would be foolish, because no man wants to be in that state.

So, is it possible to end sorrow? Surely, sorrow is the result, not only of ignorance—which is lack of self-knowledge—but also of this enormous effort that everyone is continually making to be something, to acquire something, or to reject something. Can we live in this world without any effort to be or become something, without trying to achieve, to reject, to acquire? That is what we are doing all the time, is it not? We are making effort. I am not saying that there must be no effort, but I am inquiring into the whole problem of effort. I can see in myself—and it must be obvious to most of us—that so long as I desire to be successful, for example, either in this world or psychologically, spiritually, I must make effort, I must exert myself to achieve; and it seems to me that suffering is inherent in the very nature of that effort.

Please do not brush this aside. It is easy to say "One cannot live in this world without effort. Everything in nature struggles, and if we do not make effort there will be no life at all". That is not what I am talking about. I am inquiring into the whole process of effort; I am not saying that we should reject or sustain effort, augment or decrease it. I am asking whether effort is necessary psychologically, and whether it does not produce the seed of sorrow.

When we make an effort, it is obviously with a motive; to achieve, to be, or to become something. Where there is effort there is the action of will, which is essentially desire—one desire opposing another; so there is a contradiction. To overcome this contradiction, we try in various ways to bring about an integration—which again involves effort. So

our way of thinking, our whole way of living, is a process of ceaseless effort.

Now, this effort, surely, is centred in the 'me', the self, which is concerned with itself and its own activities. And can the mind free itself from this complex, from this bundle of desires, urges, compulsions, without effort, without a motive?

I hope I am making myself clear; because this is a very complex problem. I know that my life is a series of desires, it is made up of many wants and frustrations, many hopes, longings and aspirations; there is the cultivation of virtue, the search for moral standing, trying to conform to an ideal, and so on; and through it all there is the urge to be free. All that is the 'me', the self, which is the source of sorrow.

Surely, any move I make in order to be free of sorrow, furthers sorrow, because that again involves effort. I think one must understand this fundamentally: that any effort to be or become something, to achieve success, and so on, produces sorrow. By making an effort to get rid of sorrow, I build a resistance against it, and that very resistance is a form of suppression which breeds further sorrow. If I see this, then what am I to do? How is the mind which is caught in sorrow to free itself from sorrow? Can it do anything? Because any action on its part has a motive behind it; and a motive invariably breeds conflict, which again begets sorrow.

This is the whole issue. I think I shall be happy if I make a success of my life, have plenty of things, position, power, money. So I struggle. And in the very process of struggling to achieve that which I want, there is conflict, there is pain, there is frustration; so sorrow is set going. Or, if I am not worldly-minded, I turn to so-called spiritual things. There also I try to achieve something, to realize God, truth, and all the rest of it; I cultivate virtue, obey the sanctions of the church, follow yoga or some other system to the end that my mind may be at peace.

So again there is a struggle, there is conflict, suppression, resistance—which seems to me utterly futile, without meaning.

So what is the mind to do? I know the whole pattern of suffering, and the causes of suffering; I also know the ways of escape, and I see that escaping from suffering is no answer. One may escape momentarily, but suffering is still there, like a lingering poison. So what is the mind to do?

How does the mind know anything? When I say "I know the pattern of suffering", what do I mean by that? Is it merely intellectual knowledge, a verbal, rationalized understanding of this whole network of suffering? Or am I aware of it totally, inwardly? Do I know it merely as something which I have learned, which I have been taught, which I have read about and captured through a description? Or am I actually aware of suffering as a process taking place in myself, at every moment of my existence? Which is it? I think this is an important question.

How do I know that I suffer? Do I know it merely because I feel frustrated, or because I have lost someone—my son is dead? Or do I know with my whole being that suffering is the nature of all desire, of all becoming? And must I go through the process of every desire in order to find that out?

Surely, there must be suffering so long as one does not totally comprehend desire, which includes the action of will and involves contradiction, suppression, resistance, conflict. Whether we desire superficial things, or the deep, fundamental things, conflict is always involved. So, can we find out whether the mind is capable of being free from desire—from the whole psychological process of the desire to be something, to succeed, to become, to find God, to achieve? Can the mind understand all that and be free from it? Otherwise life is a process of continuous conflict, misery. You may find a panacea, a semi-permanent escape; but misery awaits you. You

may throw yourself into some activity, take refuge in a belief, find various ways of forgetting yourself; but conflict is still there.

So, can the mind understand the process of desire? And is this understanding a matter of effort? Or does understanding come only when the mind sees the whole process of desire—sees it, experiences it, is totally aware of it, and knowing that it cannot do anything about it, becomes silent with regard to that problem?

I think this is the fundamental issue—not how to transcend, transform, or control desire, but to know the full significance of desire, and knowing it, to be completely motionless, silent, without any action with regard to it. Because, when the mind is confronted with an enormous problem like desire, any action on its part distorts that problem; any effort to grapple with it makes the problem petty, shallow. Whereas, if the mind can look at this enormous problem of desire without any movement, without any denial, without accepting or rejecting it, then I think we shall find that desire has quite a different significance, and that one can live in this world without contradiction, without struggle, without this everlasting effort to arrive, to achieve.

When the mind is thus able to look at the whole process of desire, you will find that it becomes astonishingly capable of experiencing without adding anything to itself. When the mind is no longer contaminated by desire and all the problems connected with it, then the mind itself is reality—not the mind as we know it, but a mind that is completely without the self, without desire.

Question: You talked yesterday of mediocrity. I realize my own mediocrity, but how am I to break through it?

K R I S H N A M U R T I: It is the mediocre mind that demands a way to break through or achieve. Therefore when

you say "I am mediocre, how am I to break through it?", you do not realize the full significance of mediocrity. The mind that wants to change or improve itself will always remain mediocre, however great its effort. And that is what we all want, is it not? We all want to change from *this* to *that*. Being stupid, I want to become clever. The stupid man who is attempting to become clever will always remain stupid. But the man who is aware that he is stupid, and realizes the full significance of stupidity, without wishing to change it—that very realization puts an end to stupidity.

So, can the mind look at the fact of what it is without trying to alter it? Can I see that I am arrogant, or stupid, or vain—just realize the fact, and not wish to change it? The desire to change it breeds mediocrity, because then I look to someone to tell me what to do about it; I go to lectures, read books, in order to find out how to change what I am. So I am led away from facing the fact of what I am; and being led away from the fact is the cultivation of mediocrity.

Now, can I look at the fact of mediocrity without wishing to break through it? After all, the mind *is* mediocre—it does not matter whose mind it is. The mind is mediocre, bound by tradition, by the past; and when the mind tries to improve itself, to break through its own limitations, it remains the same mediocre mind, only it is seeking a new sensation, that is, to experience the state of not being mediocre.

So the problem is not how to break through mediocrity; for mediocrity is invariably the result of pursuing tradition, whether that tradition has been established by society, or cultivated by oneself. Any effort on the part of the mind to break through mediocrity will be an activity of mediocrity, therefore the result will still be mediocre.

This is the real issue. We do not see that the mind, however cultivated, however clever, however erudite, is

essentially mediocre, and that however much it may try to break through mediocrity, it is still mediocre. When the mind sees the fact of its own mediocrity, not just the superficial part, but the totality of it, with all that it involves, and does not try to do something about it, then you will find you are no longer concerned with mediocrity, or with attempting to change *this* into *that*. Then the very fact itself begins to operate.

That is, when the mind is aware of the fact of its own stupidity, mediocrity, and does not operate on that fact, then the fact begins to operate on the mind; and then you will see that the mind has undergone a fundamental change. But so long as the mind *wants* to change, whatever change it may bring about will be a continuation of that which it has been, only under a different cloak.

That is why it is very important to understand the whole process of thinking, and why self-knowledge is essential. But you cannot know yourself if you are merely accumulating knowledge about yourself, for then you know only that which you have accumulated—which is not to know the ways of your own self and its activities from moment to moment.

Question: How are we to put an end to man's cruelty towards animals in the form of vivisection, slaughter-houses, and so on?

KRISHNAMURTI: I do not think we will put an end to it, because I do not think we know what it means to love. Why are we so concerned about animals? Not that we should *not* be—we must be. But why this concern about animals only? Are we not cruel to each other? Our whole social structure is based on violence, which erupts every so often into war. If you really loved your children, you would put a stop to war. But you do not love your children, so you sacrifice them to protect your property, to defend the State, or the church, or some other organization which demands of you certain things. As our

society, of which we are a part, is based on acquisitive violence, we are invariably cruel to each other. The whole structure of competition, comparison, position, property, inheritance—violence is inherent in all that, and we accept it as inevitable; so we are cruel to each other, as we are cruel to animals.

The problem is not how to do away with slaughter-houses and be more kind to animals, but the fact that we have lost the art of love—not sensation, not emotionalism, but the feeling of being really kind, of being really gentle, compassionate. Do we know what it is to be really compassionate—not in order to get to heaven, but compassionate in the sense of not wanting anything for oneself?

Surely, that demands quite a different psychological education. We are trained from childhood to compete, to be cruel, to fit into society. So long as we are educated to fit into society, we will invariably be cruel; because society is based on violence. If we loved our children, we would educate them entirely differently, so that there would be no more war, no nationalism, no rich and no poor, and the whole structure of this ugly society would be transformed.

But we are not interested in all that, which is a very complex and profound problem. We are only concerned with how to stop some aspect of cruelty. Not that we should *not* be concerned with stopping cruelty. The point is, we can found or join an organization for stopping cruelty, we can subscribe, write, work for it ceaselessly, we can become the secretary, the president, and all the rest of it; but that which is love will be missing. Whereas, if we can concern ourselves with finding out what it is to love without any attachment, without any demand, without the search for sensation—which is an immense problem—, then perhaps we shall bring about a different relationship between human beings, and with the animals.

Question: What is death, and why is there such fear of it?

KRISHNAMURTI: I think it would be worth while to go into this problem, not merely verbally, but actually. Why do we divide life and death? Is living separate from death? Or is death part of living? It may be that we do not know what living is, and that is why death seems such a terrible thing, something to be shunned, to be avoided, to be explained away.

Is not living part of dying? Am I living if I am constantly accumulating property, money, position, as well as knowledge and virtue, all of which I cherish and hold on to? I may call that living, but is it living? Is not that whole process merely a series of struggles, contradictions, miseries, frustrations? But we call it living, and so we want to know what death is.

We know that death is the end for all of us; the body, the physical organism, wears out and dies. Seeing this, the mind says "I have lived, I have gathered, I have suffered, and what is to happen to me? What lies for me beyond death?" Not knowing what lies beyond, the mind is afraid of death, so it begins to invent ideas, theories—reincarnation, resurrection—, or it goes back and lives in the past. If it believes in reincarnation, it tries to prove that belief through hypnosis, and so on.

That is essentially what we are all doing. Our life is overshadowed by this thing called death, and we want to know if there is any form of continuity. Or else we are so sick of life that we want to die, and we are horrified at the thought that there might be a beyond.

Now, what is the answer to all this? Why have we separated death from living, and why does the mind cling to continuity? Cannot the mind be aware of that which it calls death in the same way that it knows living? Can it not be aware of the whole significance of dying? We know what our life is: a process of

gathering, enjoying, suffering, renouncing, searching, and constant anxiety. That is our existence, and in that there is a continuity. I know that I am alive because I am aware of suffering, of enjoyment; memory goes on, and my past experiences colour my future experiences. There is a sense of continuity, the momentum of a series of events linked by memory. I know this process, and I call it living. But do I know what death is? Can I ever know it? We are not asking what lies beyond, which is really not very important. But can one know or experience the meaning of that which is called death, while actually living? While I am conscious, physically vigorous, while my mind is clear and capable of thinking without any sentimentality or emotionalism, can I directly experience that thing which I call death? I know what living is; and can I, in the same way, with the same vigour, the same potency, know the meaning of death? If I merely die at the last moment, through disease, or through some accident, I shall not know.

So the problem is not what lies beyond death, or how to avoid the fear of death. You cannot avoid the fear of death so long as the mind accumulates for itself a series of events and experiences linked by memory, because the ending of all that is what we actually fear.

Surely, that which has continuity is never creative. Only the mind which dies to everything from moment to moment really knows what it is to die. This is not emotionalism; it requires a great deal of insight, thought, inquiry. We can know death, as well as life, while living; while living we can enter the house of death, the unknown. But for the mind, which is the result of the known, to enter the unknown, there must be a cessation of all that it has known, of all the things it has gathered—not only consciously, but much more profoundly, in the unconscious. To wipe all that away is to die; and then we shall find there is no fear.

I am not offering this as a panacea for fear; but can we know and understand the full meaning of death? That is, can the mind be completely nothing, with no residue of the past? Whether that is possible or not is something we can inquire into, search out diligently, vigorously, work hard to find out. But if the mind merely clings to what it calls living—which is suffering, this whole process of accumulation—and tries to avoid the other, then it knows neither life nor death.

So the problem is to free the mind from the known, from all the things it has gathered, acquired, experienced, so that it is made innocent and can therefore understand that which is death, the unknowable.

June, 24, 1956

VI

TALK IN BRUSSELS

I think it would be a waste of time and energy if we regarded these talks merely as an intellectual stimulation, or as an entertainment of new ideas. It would be like ploughing a field everlastingly, without ever sowing.

For those who are eager to find something much more significant than the weary routine of daily existence, who want to understand the greater significance of life, it seems very difficult not to get side-tracked in their search; because there are so many things in which the mind can lose itself—in work, in politics, in social activity, in the acquisition of knowledge, or in various associations and organizations. These things apparently give a great deal of satisfaction; and when we are satisfied, our lives invariably become very superficial.

But there are some, I think, who are really serious, and who do not wish to be distracted from the central issue.

They want to go to the very end of their search and discover for themselves if there is something more vital than mere reason and the logical explanation of things. Such people are not easily side-tracked. They have a certain spontaneous virtue, which is not the emptiness of cultivated virtue; they have a certain quietness, gentleness, and a sense of proportion; they lead a sane, balanced life, and do not accept the extremes. But unfortunately even they seem to find it very difficult to go beyond the everyday struggles, and the understanding of them, and discover for themselves if there is something really deeply significant.

Those of us who have thought about these things at all, and who are alert both to the recurrent problems in our personal lives, and to the crises that periodically come upon society, must be aware that the merely virtuous or good life is not enough, and that unless we can go beyond and discover something of greater significance—a wider vision, more fullness of life—then, however noble our efforts and endeavour, we shall always remain in this state of turmoil and ceaseless strife. The good life is obviously necessary; but surely that by itself is not religion. And is it possible to go beyond all that?

Some of us, I think, have seen the stupidity of dogmas, of beliefs, of organized religions, and have set them aside. We fully realize the importance of the good life, the balanced, sane, unexaggerated life—being content with little, being kindly, generous; yet somehow we do not seem to discover that vital something which brings about the truly religious life. One may be virtuous, very active in doing good, satisfied with little, unconcerned about oneself; but surely the truly religious life must mean something much more. Any respectable person, any good citizen, is all those things in one degree or another; but that is not religion. Belonging to a church, going to Sunday gatherings, reading an occasional book

on religious matters, worshipping a symbol, dedicating one's life to a particular idea or ideal—surely, none of that is religion. Those are all man-made things; they are within the limits of time, of culture and civilization. And yet even those of us who have dropped all such things seem unable to go beyond.

What is the difficulty? Is it the gift of the few to go beyond? Can only a few understand, or realize, or experience reality—which means that the many must depend on the few for help, for guidance? I think such an idea is utterly false. In this whole idea that only a few can realize, and the rest must follow, lie many forms of thoughtlessness, exploitation and cruelty. If once we accept it, our lives become very shallow, meaningless, trivial.

And most of us accept that idea very easily, do we not? We think that only the few can understand, or that there is only one son of God, and the rest of us are just—whatever we are. We accept such an idea because in ourselves we are very lazy; or perhaps we do not have the capacity to penetrate. It may be mostly our lack of this capacity to penetrate, to go to the root of things, that is preventing deep understanding, this extraordinary sense of unity—which is not identification with the *idea* of unity. Most of us identify ourselves with something—with the family, with the country, with an idea, with a belief—hoping thereby to forget our petty little selves. But I am afraid that is no solution. The greater does contain the lesser; but when the lesser tries to identify itself with the greater, it is merely a pose and has no value.

So, is it possible for each one of us to have this capacity to go beyond routine virtue, goodness, sensitivity, compassion? These are essential in daily life; but can we not awaken the capacity to penetrate beyond them, beyond all the conscious movements of the mind, beyond all inclinations, hopes, aspirations, desires, so that the

mind is no longer an instrument which creates and destroys, which is caught in its own projections, in its own ideas?

If we can sanely and diligently find out for ourselves how this capacity comes into being, without trying to cultivate it or wishing for it to happen, then I think we shall know what it is to lead a religious life. But this demands an extraordinary revolution in our thinking—which is the only real revolution. Any merely economic or social revolution only breeds the need of further reform, and that is an endless process. Real revolution is inward, and it comes into being without the mind seeking it. What the mind seeks and finds, however reasonable, however rational and intelligent, is never the final answer. For the mind is put together, and what it creates is also put together; therefore it can be undone. But the revolution of which I am speaking is the truly religious life, stripped of all the absurdities of organized religions throughout the world. It has nothing to do with priests, with symbols, with churches.

How is this revolution to take place? As we do not know, we say that we must have faith, or that grace must descend upon us. This may be so: grace may come. But the faith that is cultivated is only another creation of the mind, and therefore it can be destroyed. Whether there is grace or not, is not our concern; a mind that *seeks* grace will never find it.

So, if you have thought at all about these matters, if you have meditated upon life, then you must have asked yourself whether this inward revolution can take place, and whether it is dependent upon a capacity that can be cultivated, as one cultivates the capacity for accountancy, or engineering, or chemistry. Those are cultivable capacities; they can be built up, and will produce certain results. But I am talking of a capacity which is not cultivable, something that you cannot go after, that you cannot pursue or

search out in the dark places of the mind. And without that something, virtue becomes mere respectability—which is a terrible thing; without that something, all activity is contradictory, leading to further conflict and misery.

Now, being aware of our own ceaseless struggling within the field of self-conscious activity, our self-concern—taking all this multifarious action and contradiction into account, how are we to come to that other state? How is one to live in that moment which is eternity? All this is not mere sentiment or romanticism. Religion has nothing whatever to do with romanticism or sentimentality. It is a very hard thing—hard in the sense that one must work furiously to find out what is truly religious.

Perceiving all the contradiction and confusion that exists in the outward structure of society, and the psychological conflict that is perpetually going on within oneself, one realizes that all our endeavour to be loving or brotherly is actually a pose, a mask. However beautiful the mask may be, behind it there is nothing; so we develop a philosophy of cynicism or despair, or we cling to a belief in something mysterious beyond this ceaseless turmoil. Again, this is obviously not religion; and without the perfume of true religion, life has very little meaning. That is why we are everlastingly struggling to find something. We pursue the many *gurus* and teachers, haunt the various churches, practise this or that system of meditation, rejecting one and accepting another. And yet we never seem to cross the threshold; the mind seems incapable of going beyond itself.

So, what is it, I wonder, that brings the other into being? Or is it that we cannot do anything but go up to the threshold and remain there, not knowing what lies beyond? It may be that we have to come to the very edge of the precipice of everything we have known, so that there is the cessation of all endeavour, of all cultivation of virtue,

and the mind is no longer seeking anything. I think that is all the conscious mind can do. Whatever else it does only creates another pattern, another habit. Must not the mind strip itself of all the things it has gathered, all its accumulations of experience and knowledge, so that it is in a state of innocence which is not cultivated?

Perhaps that is our difficulty. We hear that we must be innocent in order to find out; so we cultivate innocence. But can innocence ever be cultivated? Is it not like the cultivation of humility? Surely, a man who cultivates humility is never humble, any more than the man who practises non-violence ceases to be violent. So it may be that one must see the truth of this: that the mind which is put together, which is made up of many things, cannot do anything. To see this truth may be all that it can do. Probably there must be the capacity to see the truth in a flash—and I think that very perception will cleanse the mind of all the past in an instant.

The more serious, the more earnest we are, the greater danger there is of our trying to become or achieve something. Surely, only the man who is spontaneously humble, who has immense unconscious humility—only such a man is capable of understanding from moment to moment and never accumulating what he has learned. So this great humility of not-knowing is essential, is it not?

But you see, we are all seeking success, we want a result. We say "I have done all these things, and I have got nowhere, I have received nothing; I am still the same". This despairing sense of desiring success, of wanting to arrive, to attain, to understand, emphasizes, does it not?, the separativity of the mind; there is always the conscious or unconscious endeavour to achieve a result, and therefore the mind is never empty, never free for a second from the movement of the past, of time.

So I think what is important is not to read more, discuss more, or to attend more talks, but rather to be conscious of the motives, the intentions, the deceptions of one's own mind—to be simply aware of all that, and leave it alone, not try to change it, not try to become something else; because the effort to become something else is like putting on another mask. That is why the danger is much greater for those of us who are earnest and deeply serious than it is for the flippant and the casual. Our very seriousness may prevent the understanding of things as they are.

It seems to me that what each one of us has to do is to capture the significance of the totality of our thinking. But much concern over detail, over the many conflicting thoughts and feelings, will not bring about an understanding of the whole. What is required is the sudden perception of the totality of the mind—which is not the outcome of asking *how* to see it, but of constantly looking, inquiring, searching. Then, I think, we shall find out for ourselves what is the truly religious life.

Question: What are your ideas about education?

KRISHNAMURTI: I think mere ideas are no good at all, because one idea is as good as another, depending on whether the mind accepts or rejects it. But perhaps it would be worth while to find out what we mean by education. Let us see if we can think out together the whole significance of education, and not merely think in terms of my idea, or your idea, or the idea of some specialist.

Why do we educate our children at all? Is it to help the child to understand the whole significance of life, or merely to prepare him to earn a livelihood in a particular culture or society? Which is it that we want? Not what we *should* want, or what is desirable, but what is

it that we as parents actually insist on? We want the child to conform, to be a respectable citizen in a corrupt society, in a society that is at war both within itself and with other societies, that is brutal, acquisitive, violent, greedy, with occasional spots of affection, tolerance and kindness. That is what we actually want, is it not? If the child does not fit into society—whether it be communist, socialist, or capitalist—we are afraid of what will happen to him; so we begin to educate him to conform to the pattern of our own making. That is all we want where the child is concerned, and that is essentially what is taking place. And any revolt of the child against society, against the pattern of conformity, we call delinquency.

We want the children to conform; we want to control their minds, to shape their conduct, their way of living, so that they will fit into the pattern of society. That is what every parent wants, is it not? And that is exactly what is happening, whether it be in America or in Europe, in Russia or in India. The pattern may vary slightly, but they all want the child to conform.

Now, is that education? Or does education mean that the parents and the teachers themselves see the significance of the whole pattern, and are helping the child from the very beginning to be alert to all its influences? Seeing the full significance of the pattern, with its religious, social and economic influences, its influences of class, of family, of tradition—seeing the significance of all this for oneself and helping the child to understand and not be caught in it—that may be education. To educate the child may be to help him to be outside of society, so that he creates his own society. Since our society is not at all what it should be, why encourage the child to stay within its pattern?

At present we force the child to conform to a social pattern which we have established individually, as a

family, and as the collective; and he unfortunately inherits, not only our property, but some of our psychological characteristics as well. So from the very beginning he is a slave to the environment.

Seeing all this, if we really love our children and are therefore deeply concerned about education, we will contrive from the very beginning to bring about an atmosphere which will encourage them to be free. A few real educators have thought about all this, but unfortunately very few parents ever think about it at all. We leave it to the experts—religion to the priest, psychology to the psychologist, and our children to the so-called teachers. Surely, the parent is also the educator; he is the teacher, and also the one who learns—not only the child.

So this is a very complex problem, and if we really wish to resolve it we must go into it most profoundly; and then, I think, we shall find out how to bring about the right kind of education.

Question: What is the meaning of existence? What is it all about?

KRISHNAMURTI: This is a question that is constantly arising all over the world: what is the purpose of life? We are now asking it of ourselves; and I wonder why we ask it? Is it because life has very little significance for us, and we ask this question in the hope of being assured that it has a greater significance? Is it that we are so confused in ourselves that we do not know how to find the answer, which way to turn? I think that is most likely. Being confused in ourselves, we look, we ask; and in asking, in looking, we invent theories, we give a purpose or a meaning of life.

So what is important is not to define the purpose, the significance, the meaning of existence, but rather to find out why the mind asks this question. If we see something very clearly, we do

not have to ask about it; so probably we are confused. We have been in the habit of accepting the things imposed upon us by authority; we have always followed authority without much thought, except the thoughts which authority encourages. Now, however, we have begun to reject authority, because we want to find things out for ourselves; and in trying to find things out for ourselves, we become very confused. That is why we again ask "What is the purpose of life?" If someone tells you what is the purpose of life, and their answer is satisfactory, you may accept it as your authority and guide your life accordingly; but fundamentally you will still be confused. The question, then, is not what the purpose of life is, but whether the mind can clear itself of its own confusion. If it can and does, then you will never ask that other question.

But the difficulty for most of us is to realize that we are thoroughly confused. We think we are only superficially confused, and that there is a higher part of the mind which is not contaminated by confusion. To realize that the totality of the mind is confused, is very difficult, because most of us have been educated to believe that there is a higher part of the mind which can direct, shape, and guide us; but surely this again is an invention of the mind.

To free oneself from confusion, one must first know that one is confused. To see that one is really confused is the beginning of clarification, is it not? But it requires deep perception and great honesty to see and to acknowledge to oneself that one is totally confused. When one knows that one is totally confused, one will not seek clarification, because any action on the part of a confused mind to find clarification will only add to the confusion. That is fairly obvious, is it not? If I am confused, I may read, or look, or ask; but my search, my asking is the outcome of my confusion, and therefore it can

only lead to further confusion. Whereas, the mind that is confused and really knows it is confused, will have no movement of search, of asking; and in that very moment of being silently aware of its confusion, there is a beginning of clarification.

If you are really following this, you are bound to see the truth of it psychologically. But the difficulty is that we do not really know, we are not actually aware of how extraordinarily confused we are. The moment one fully realizes one's own confusion, one's thought becomes very tentative, hesitant, it is never assertive or dogmatic. Therefore the mind begins to inquire from a totally different point of view; and it is this new kind of inquiry alone that will clear up the confusion.

Question: Do you believe in God?

KRISHNAMURTI: It is easy to ask questions, and it is very important to know how to ask a right question. In this particular question, the words 'believe' and 'God' seem to me so contradictory. A man who merely believes in God will never know what God is, because his belief is a form of conditioning—which again is very obvious. In Christianity you are taught from childhood to believe in God, so from the very beginning your mind is conditioned. In the Communist countries, belief in God is called sheer nonsense—at which you are horrified. You want to convert them, and they want to convert you. They have conditioned their minds not to believe, and you call them godless, while you consider yourself God-fearing, or whatever it is. I do not see much difference between the two. You may go to church, pray, listen to sermons, or perform certain rituals and get some kind of stimulation out of it—but none of that, surely, is the experiencing of the unknown. And can the mind experience the unknown, whatever name one may give it?

The name does not matter. *That* is the question—not whether one believes or does not believe in God.

One can see that any form of conditioning will never set the mind free; and that only the free mind can discover, experience. Experiencing is a very strange thing. The moment you know you are experiencing, there is the cessation of that experience. The moment I know I am happy, I am no longer happy. To experience this immeasurable reality, the experiencer must come to an end. The experiencer is the result of the known, of many centuries of cultivated memory; he is an accumulation of the things he has experienced. So when he says "I must experience reality", and is cognizant of that experience, then what he experiences is not reality, but a projection of his own past, his own conditioning.

That is why it is very important to understand that the thinker and the thought, or the experiencer and the experience, are the same; they are not different. When there is an experiencer separate from the experience, then the experiencer is constantly pursuing further experience; but that experience is always a projection of himself.

So reality, the timeless state, is not to be found through mere verbalization, or acceptance, or through the repetition of what one has heard—which is all folly. To really find out, one must go into this whole question of the experiencer. So long as there is the 'me' who wants to experience, there can be no experiencing of reality. That is why the experiencer—the entity who is seeking God, who believes in God, who prays to God—must totally cease. Only then can that immeasurable reality come into being.

June 25, 1956

I

TALK IN HAMBURG

I think it is important to establish a right relationship between yourself and myself; because you may be under the erroneous impression that I am going to talk about a complicated philosophy, or that I am bringing a particular system of philosophical thought from India, or that I have peculiar ideas which I want you to accept. So I think we should begin by establishing a relationship between us in which there is mutual understanding of each other.

I am not speaking as an Indian, nor do I believe that any particular philosophy or religion is going to solve our human problems. No human problem can be understood or resolved through a special way of thinking, or through any dogma or belief. Though I happen to come from India, we have essentially the same problems there as you have here. We are human beings, not Germans or Hindus, English or Russians; we are human beings, living in a very complex society, with innumerable problems—economic, social, and above all, I think, religious. If we can understand the religious problem, then perhaps we shall be able to solve the contradictory national, economic and social problems.

To understand the complex problem of religion, I think it is essential not to hold on to any particular idea or belief, but to listen with a mind that is not prejudiced, so that we are capable of thinking out the problem together. Surely we must approach all our human problems with a very simple, direct clarity and understanding.

Our minds have been conditioned from childhood to think in a certain way; we are educated, brought up in a fixed pattern of thought. We are tradition-bound. We have special values, certain opinions and unquestioned

beliefs, and according to this pattern we live—or at least we try to live. And I think *there* lies the calamity. Because, life is in constant movement, is it not? It is a living thing, with extraordinary changes; it is never the same. And our problems also are never the same, they are ever changing. But we approach life with a mind that is fixed, opinionated; we have definite ideas and predetermined evaluations. So, for most of us, life becomes a series of complex and apparently insoluble problems, and invariably we turn to someone else to guide us, to help us, to show us the right path.

Here, I think, it would be right for me to point out that I am not doing anything of that kind. What we are going to do, if you are willing, is to think out the problem together. After all, it is *your* life, and to understand it, surely, you must understand yourself. The understanding of yourself does not depend on the sanctions of another.

So it seems to me that if we are at all serious, and if we would understand the many problems that exist in the world at the present time, the nationalism, the wars, the hatred, the racial divisions, and the divisions which the organized religions bring about—if we would understand all this and eliminate the conflict between man and man, it is imperative that we should first understand ourselves. Because, what we are, we project—which is a very simple fact. If I am nationalistic, I help to create a separative society—which is one of the seeds, the causes of war. So it is obviously essential that we understand ourselves; and this, it seems to me, is the major issue in our life.

Religion is not to be found in a set of dogmas, beliefs, rituals; I think it is something much greater and far beyond all that. Therefore it is imperative to understand why the mind clings to any particular religion or belief, to any particular dogma. It is only when we understand and free

the mind from these beliefs, dogmas, and fears, that there is a possibility of finding out if there is a reality, if there is God. But merely to believe, to follow, seems to me an utter folly.

So, if we are to understand each other, I think it is necessary for you to realize that I am not speaking to you as a group, as a number of Germans, but to each one as an individual human being. Because, the individual problem is the world problem. It is what we are as individuals that creates society—society being the relationship between ourselves and others. I am speaking—and please believe it—as one individual to another, so that together we may understand the many problems that confront us. I am not establishing myself as an authority to tell you what to do; because I do not believe in authority in spiritual matters. All authority is evil; and all sense of authority must cease, especially if we would find out what is God, what is truth, whether there is something beyond the mere measure of the mind. That is why it is very important for the individual to understand himself.

I know the inevitable question will arise: if we have no authority of any kind, will there not be anarchy? Of course there may be. But does authority create order? Or does it merely create a blind following which has no meaning at all except that it leads to destruction, to misery? But if we begin to understand ourselves—which is a very complex process—, then we shall also begin to understand the anatomy of authority. Then I think we shall be able to find out, as individuals, what is true. Without the compulsion of society, without the authority of a religion or of any person, however great, without the influence of another, we shall be able to discover and experience for ourselves something beyond mere intellection, beyond the clever assertions of the mind.

So, I hope this much is very clear between us: that I am not speaking

as an Indian, with a particular philosophy, nor am I here to convince you of anything. I am asking, as one individual to another, whether it is possible to find out what is true, what is God—if there is God. It seems to me that one must begin by understanding oneself. And to understand yourself, surely, you must first know what you actually are, not what you think you *should* be—which is an ideological fallacy. After all, if I want to know myself, I must see myself exactly as I am, not as I think I ought to be. The ‘ought to be’ is a form of illusion, an escape from what I am.

So, what we are concerned with—as individuals, not as a group—is to find out what is beyond the beliefs and theories, beyond the sentimental hopes and intellectual assertions of the various organized religions. We are trying to experience directly for ourselves if there is such a thing as reality, something more than the mere projections of the mind—which is what most religions are, however pleasant, however comforting. Can the mind find out, experience directly? Because direct experience alone has validity. Can you and I as individuals, by going into this question now, discover or experience something which is immeasurable? Because such an experience—if it is valid, if it is not just an illusion, a vision, a passing fantasy—has an extraordinary significance in life. Such an experience transforms one’s life and brings about a morality which is not mere social respectability.

So, is it possible for you who are listening to me to experience that which is immeasurable? Just to say “Yes” or “no” would be an absurdity. All that we can do is to find out if the mind is capable of experiencing something which is not a projection of its own demands. Which means, really, can you, the individual, free yourself from all your conditioning? Can you

cease completely to be the Christian who believes, who has certain formulas, certain ideals? After all, each one is brought up in a particular tradition, and his God is the God of that tradition. Surely, that is not reality; it is merely a repetition of what he has been told. To find out if there is a reality, one must free oneself from the tradition in which one has been brought up—and that is an extraordinarily difficult thing to do. But only then is it possible to go beyond the mere measure of the mind and experience something which is immeasurable. If we do not experience that, life is very empty, trivial, lonely, without much meaning.

So, how is one, being serious and earnest, to set about it? Because without the fragrance, without the perfume of that reality, life is very shallow, materialistic, miserable; there is constant tension, striving, ceaseless pain and suffering. So a serious person must surely ask himself this question: is it possible to experience something which is not a mere wish or intellectual concept from which one derives a certain satisfaction, but something entirely new, beyond the fabrications of the mind? And if it is possible, then what is one to do? How is one to set about it?

I think there is only one approach to this problem, which is to see that until I know myself, until I know the whole content of the mind, the unconscious as well as the conscious, with all its intricate workings—until I am cognizant of all that, fully aware of it, I cannot possibly go beyond. Can I know myself in this way? Can I know myself as a whole—all the motives, the urges, the compulsions, the fears—and not just a few reactions and responses of the conscious mind? And can anyone help me, or must this be done entirely by myself? Because if I look to another for help, I become dependent, which means that the other becomes my authority; and when I only know myself through the authority of another, I do not know myself at all. And merely

reading psychological books is of very little importance; because I can only know myself as I am by observing my living from day to day, watching myself in the mirror of my relationship with another. To watch myself in that mirror is not to be merely introspective, or objective, but to be constantly alert, watchful of what is taking place in the mind, in myself.

You will find that it is extraordinarily difficult to watch yourself in the mirror of relationship without any sense of condemning what you see; and if you condemn what you see, you do not understand it. To understand a thing as it is, condemnation, judgment, evaluation, must go—which is extremely difficult, because at present we are trained, educated to condemn, to reject, to approve, to deny.

And that is only the beginning of it, a very shallow beginning. But one must go through that, one must understand the whole process of the mind, not merely intellectually, verbally, but as one lives from day to day, watching oneself in this mirror of relationship. One must actually experience what is taking place in the mind—examine it, be aware of the whole content of it, without denying, suppressing, or putting it away. Then, if you go so far, and if you are at all serious, you will find that the mind is no longer projecting any image, no longer creating any myth, any illusion; it is beginning to understand the totality of itself, and therefore it becomes very clear, simple, quiet.

This is not a momentary process, but a continual living, a continual sharpening of the mind. And in the very process of sharpening, the mind spontaneously ceases to be as it is. Then the mind is no longer creating images, visions, fallacies, illusions; and only then, when the mind is completely still, silent, is there a possibility of experiencing something which is not of the mind itself. But this requires, not just one day of effort, or a casual

observation, or attending one talk, but a slow maturity, a deepening search, a greater, wider, totally integrated outlook, so that the mind—which is now driven by many influences and demands, inhibited by so many fears—is free to inquire, to experience.

Only such a mind is truly religious—not the mind that believes or disbelieves in God, that has innumerable beliefs, that joins, agrees, follows, or denies; such a mind can never find out what is truth. That is why it is very important for those who are serious, for those who are concerned with the welfare of mankind, to put aside all their vain beliefs and theories, all their associations with particular religious organizations, and inquire very deeply within themselves.

For after all, religion is not dogma, it has nothing to do with belief; religion does not mean going to church, or performing certain rituals. None of that is religion; it is merely the invention of man to control man. And if one would find out whether there is a reality, something beyond the inventions of the mind, one must put aside all these absurdities, this childish thinking. It is very difficult for most people to put it all aside, because in clinging to beliefs they feel secure, it gives them some hope. But to discover reality, to experience something beyond the mind, the mind must cease to have any form of security. It must be totally denuded of all refuges. It is only such a mind that is purified, and then it is possible for the mind to experience something which is beyond itself.

I have been given some questions, and I shall try to answer some of them—or rather, together we shall try to unravel the problem. There is no one answer to a problem, there is no isolated solution. If we merely look for a solution to a problem, we shall find that our search for the solution creates other problems. Whereas, if we are capable of examining the problem itself, without trying to find

an answer, we shall discover that the answer is in the problem. So it is very important to know how to approach the problem. The mind which has a problem, and seeks an answer, cannot possibly inquire into the problem itself, because it is concerned only with the solution. To understand any problem, you must give your whole attention to it; and you cannot give your whole attention to it if you are seeking a solution, an answer.

Question: We are full of memories of the last war, with all its terror. Can we ever free our minds of the past and start anew?

KRISHNAMURTI: The problem of memory is very complex, is it not? We have pleasant memories, and unpleasant memories. We want to reject the unpleasant, the terrible, the painful memories, and keep the pleasant ones. That is what we are always trying to do, is it not? The pleasant memories of our youth, the interesting things we have read, the stimulating experiences we have had—all this has significance for us, and we want to hold on to it; but the things which are painful, sorrowful, unpleasant, irritating, we reject. So we divide our memories into the pleasant and the unpleasant, and what we are mostly concerned with is how to put away the unpleasant memories, and keep alive those that are pleasant. But so long as we divide memory into the pleasant and the unpleasant, and try to get rid of the unpleasant, there will always be conflict, both within and without.

I do not know if I am making myself clear. The mind is full of memories, it is made up of memories. You have no mind without memory—the memories of your past, of all the things you have learnt, experienced, lived, suffered. Mind is memory, conscious or unconscious. In memory there is the pleasant and the unpleasant, and we want to

reject the unpleasant; we want to keep the desirable, and get rid of the undesirable, so there is always a conflict going on. What we have to understand is not how to retain the pleasant and be free of the terrible memories, but rather how to eliminate the desire to keep some memories and reject others, which creates conflict. What is important is to be aware of this conflict, and to understand why it is that the mind gathers memories and holds on to them.

Obviously one needs certain memories in order to live in this world. I must remember how to get back to the place where I live, and so on. But such memories are no problem to us. For most of us the problem is how to get rid of the memories which are painful, destructive, while retaining those which are significant, purposeful, enjoyable. But why does the mind cling to the one and seek to reject the other? Please follow this. If you do not hold fast to the pleasant memories, what are you? If you had no memories of the pleasant, of the hopeful, of the enjoyable, of the things that you have lived for, you would feel non-human, you would feel lost, a nobody. The mind clings to its pleasant memories, because without them it would be lonely, in despair.

So I do not think the problem is how to get rid of the unpleasant memories, the terrors of the past. That is fairly easy. If you deliberately set about to wipe out the past, it can be done comparatively simply. But what is much more complex, what demands much deeper thought and inquiry, is to go into the whole problem of memory—not only the conscious memories, but the deep, underlying memories which guide our lives.

After all, a memory much deeper than the memory of the war, and all the bestiality of it, is that which makes you call yourself a German, or a Christian, or a Hindu; *that* also is part of memory, is it not? And that gives you

solidarity, it gives you companionship, it makes you feel equal or superior to others, it gives you a sense of courage, and so many other things. But must you not also be free of *that* memory? Must one not be free to inquire, to go much further than the mere reaction to memories, which is a process of living on the past?

You see, memory does not yield the newness of life. Memory is only the past, and anything born of memory is always old, never new. To discover something totally new, the mind must be astonishingly quiet, still, not active, not desiring and reacting to memories.

Question: We have had enough of war. We want peace. How can we prevent a new war?

KRISHNAMURTI: I do not think there is a simple answer, because the causes of war are many. So long as there is nationalism, so long as you are a German, or a Russian, or an American, clinging to sovereignty, to an exclusive nationality, you are sure to have war. So long as you are a Christian and I am a Hindu, or you are a Moslem and I am a Buddhist, there is bound to be war. So long as you are ambitious, wanting to reach the top of your society, seeking achievement and worshipping success, you will be a cause of war.

But we are brought up on all this. We are trained to compete, to succeed, to be ambitious, to serve a particular government, to belong to a particular country or religion. Our whole education cultivates the competitive spirit and guides the mind towards war. And can we, as individual human beings, change all this? Can you and I individually cease to be ambitious, cease to regard ourselves as Germans or Indians, cease to belong to any particular religion, to any particular group or ideology—Communist, socialist, or any other—, and be concerned only with human welfare?

So long as we remain attached to a group or to an ideology, so long as we are ambitious, seeking success, we are bound to create war. It may not be a war of outward destruction; but we will have conflict between each other and within ourselves, which is actually a form of war. I do not think we see this; and even if we do, we are not serious about it. We want some miraculous event to take place to stop war, while we continue to live as we are in the present social structure, making money, seeking position, power, prestige, trying to become famous, and all the rest of it. That is our pattern; and so long as that pattern exists in our minds and hearts, we are bound to produce war.

After all, war is merely the catastrophic effect of our daily living; and so long as we do not change our daily living, no amount of legislation, controls and sanctions will prevent war. Is peace in the mind and heart, in the way of our life, or is it merely a governmental regulation, something to be decided in the United Nations? I am afraid that for most of us peace is only a matter of legislation, and we are not concerned with peace in our own minds and hearts; therefore there can be no peace in the world. You cannot have peace, inward or outward, so long as you are ambitious, competitive, so long as you regard yourself as a German, a Hindu, a Russian, or an Englishman, so long as you are striving to become somebody in this mad world. Peace comes only when you understand all this, and are no longer pursuing success in a society which is already corrupt. Only the peaceful mind, the mind that understands itself, can bring peace in the world.

September 5, 1956

II

TALK IN HAMBURG

I think, it is important, in listening to each other, to find out for oneself if what is being said is true; that is, to experience it directly, and not merely argue about whether what is said is true or false, which would be completely useless. And perhaps this evening we can find out if it is possible to set about the very complex process of forgetting oneself.

Many of us must have experienced, at one time or another, that state when the 'me', the self, with its aggressive demands, has completely ceased, and the mind is extraordinarily quiet, without any direct volition—that state wherein, perhaps, one may experience something that is without measure, something that it is impossible to put into words. There must have been these rare moments when the self, the 'me', with all its memories and travails, with all its anxieties and fears, has completely ceased. One is then a being without any motive, without any compulsion; and in that state one feels or is aware of an astonishing sense of immeasurable distance, of limitless space and being.

This must have happened to many of us. And I think it would be worth while if we could go into this question together and see whether it is possible to resolve the enclosing, limiting self, this restricting 'me' that worries, that has anxieties, fears, that is dominating and dominated, that has innumerable memories, that is cultivating virtue and trying in every way to become something, to be important. I do not know if you have noticed the constant effort that one is consciously or unconsciously making to express oneself, to be something, either socially, morally, or economically. This entails, does it not?, a great deal of

striving; our whole life is based on the everlasting struggle to arrive, to achieve, to become. The more we struggle, the more significant and exaggerated the self becomes, with all its limitations, fears, ambitions, frustrations; and there must have been times when each one has asked himself whether it is not possible to be totally without the self.

After all, we do have rare moments when the sense of the self is not. I am not talking of the transmutation of the self to a higher level, but of the simple cessation of the 'me' with its anxieties, worries, fears—the absence of the self. One realizes that such a thing is possible, and then one sets about deliberately, consciously, to eliminate the self. After all, that is what organized religions try to do—to help each worshipper, each believer, to lose himself in something greater, and thereby perhaps to experience some higher state. If you are not a so-called religious person, then you identify yourself with the State, with the country, and try to lose yourself in that identification, which gives you the feeling of greatness, of being something much larger than the petty little self, and all the rest of it. Or, if we do not do that, we try to lose ourselves in social work of some kind, again with the same intention. We think that if we can forget ourselves, deny ourselves, put ourselves out of the way by dedicating our lives to something much greater and more vital than ourselves, we shall perhaps experience a bliss, a happiness, which is not merely a physical sensation. And if we do none of these things, we hope to stop thinking about ourselves through the cultivation of virtue, through discipline, through control, through constant practice.

Now, I do not know if you have thought about it, but all this implies, surely, a ceaseless effort to be or become something. And perhaps, in listening to what is being said, we can together go into this whole process and discover

for ourselves whether it is possible to wipe away the sense of the 'me' without this fearful, restricting discipline, without this enormous effort to deny ourselves, this constant struggle to renounce our wants, our ambitions, in order to be something or to achieve some reality. I think in this lies the real issue. Because all effort implies motive, does it not? I make an effort to forget myself in something, in some ritual or ideology, because in thinking about myself I am unhappy. When I think about something else, I am more relaxed, my mind is quieter, I seem to feel better, I look at things differently. So I make an effort to forget myself. But behind my effort there is a motive, which is to escape from myself because I suffer; and that motive is essentially a part of the self. When I renounce this world and become a monk, or a very devout religious person, the motive is that I want to achieve something better; but that is still the process of the self, is it not? I may give up my name and just be a number in a religious order; but the motive is still there.

Now, is it possible to forget oneself without any motive? Because, we can see very well that any motive has within it the seed of the self, with its anxiety, ambition, frustration, its fear of not being, and the immense urge to be secure. And can all that fall away easily, without any effort? Which means, really, can you and I, as individuals, live in this world without being identified with anything? After all, I identify myself with my country, with my religion, with my family, with my name, because without identification I am nothing. Without a position, without power, without prestige of one kind or another, I feel lost; and so I identify myself with my name, with my family, with my religion, I join some organization or become a monk—we all know the various types of identification that the mind clings to. But can we live in this world without any identification at all?

If we can think about this, if we can listen to what is being said, and at the same time be aware of our own intimations regarding the implications of identification, then I think we shall discover, if we are at all serious, that it is possible to live in this world without the nightmare of identification and the ceaseless struggle to achieve a result. Then, I think, knowledge has quite a different significance. At present we identify ourselves with our knowledge and use it as a means of self-expansion, just as we do with the nation, with a religion, or with some activity. Identification with the knowledge we have gained is another way of furthering the self, is it not? Through knowledge the 'me' continues its struggle to be something, and thereby perpetuates misery, pain.

If we can very humbly and simply see the implications of all this, be aware, without assuming anything, of how our minds operate and what our thinking is based on, then I think we shall realize the extraordinary contradiction that exists in this whole process of identification. After all, it is because I feel empty, lonely, miserable, that I identify myself with my country, and this identification gives me a sense of well-being, a feeling of power. Or, for the same reason, I identify myself with a hero, with a saint. But if I can go into this process of identification very deeply, then I will see that the whole movement of my thinking and all my activity, however noble, is essentially based on the continuance of myself in one form or another.

Now, if I once see that, if I realize it, feel it with my whole being, then religion has quite a different meaning. Then religion is no longer a process of identifying myself with God, but rather the coming into being of a state in which there is only that reality, and not the 'me'. But this cannot be a mere verbal assertion, it is not just a phrase to be repeated.

That is why it is very important, it seems to me, to have self-knowledge, which means going very deeply into oneself without assuming anything, so that the mind has no deceptions, no illusions, so that it does not trick itself into visions and false states. Then, perhaps, it is possible for the enclosing process of the self to come to an end—but not through any form of compulsion or discipline; because the more you discipline the self, the stronger the self becomes. What is important is to go into all this very deeply and patiently, without taking anything for granted, so that one begins to understand the ways, the purposes, the motives and directions of the mind. Then, I think, the mind comes to a state in which there is no identification at all, and therefore no effort to be something; then there is the cessation of the self, and I think that is the real.

Although we may swiftly, fleetingly experience this state, the difficulty for most of us is that the mind clings to the experience and wants more of it; and the very wanting of more is again the beginning of the self. That is why it is very important, for those of us who are really serious in these matters, to be inwardly aware of the process of our own thinking, to silently observe our motives, our emotional reactions, and not merely say "I know myself very well"—for actually one does not. You may know your reactions and motives superficially, at the conscious level. But the self, the 'me', is a very complex affair, and to go into the totality of the self needs persistent and continuous inquiry without a motive, without an end in view; and such inquiry is surely a form of meditation.

That immense reality cannot be found through any organization, through any church, through any book, through any person or teacher. One has to find it for oneself—which means that one has to be completely alone, uninfluenced. But we are all of us the result of so many influences,

so many pressures, known and unknown; and that is why it is very important to understand these many pressures, influences, and be dissociated from them all, so that the mind becomes extraordinarily simple, clear. Then, perhaps, it will be possible to experience that which cannot be put into words.

Question: You said yesterday that authority is evil. Why is it evil?

KRISHNAMURTI: Is not all following evil? Why do we follow authority of any kind? Why do we establish authority? Why do human beings accept authority—governmental, religious, every form of authority?

Authority does not come into being by itself; we create it. We create the tyrannical ruler, as well as the tyrannical priest with his gods, rituals and beliefs. Why? Why do we create authority and become followers? Obviously, because we all want to be secure, we want to be powerful in different ways and in varying degrees. All of us are seeking position, prestige, which the leader, the country, the government, the minister, is offering; so we follow. Or we create the image of authority in our own minds, and follow that image. The church is as tyrannical as the political leaders; and while we object to the tyranny of governments, most of us submit to the tyranny of the church, or of some religious teacher.

If we begin to examine the whole process of following, we will see, I think, that we follow, first of all, because we are confused, and we want somebody to tell us what to do. And being confused, we are bound to follow those who are also confused, however much they may assert that they are the messengers of God or the saviours of the State. We follow because we are confused; and as we choose leaders, both religious and political, out of our confusion, we

inevitably create more confusion, more conflict, more misery.

That is why it is very important for us to understand the confusion in ourselves, and not look to another to help us to clear it up. For how can a man who is confused know what is wrong and choose what is right, what is true? First he must clear up his own confusion. And once he has cleared up his own confusion, there is no choice; he will not follow anybody.

So we follow because we want to be secure, whether economically, socially, or religiously. After all, the mind is always seeking security, it wants to be safe in this world, and also in the next world. All we are concerned with is to be secure, both with mammon and with God. That is why we create the authority of the government, the dictator, and the authority of the church, the idol, the image. So long as we follow, we must create authority, and that authority becomes ultimately evil, because we have thoughtlessly given ourselves over to domination by another.

I think it is important to go deeply into this whole question and begin to understand why the mind insists on following. You follow, not only political and religious leaders, but also what you read in the newspapers, in magazines, in books; you seek the authority of the specialists, the authority of the written word. All this indicates, does it not?, that the mind is uncertain of itself. One is afraid to think apart from what has been said by the leaders, because one might lose one's job, be ostracized, excommunicated, or put into a concentration camp. We submit to authority because all of us have this inward demand to be safe, this urge to be secure. So long as we want to be secure—in our possessions, in our power, in our thoughts—we must have authority, we must be followers; and in that lies the seed of evil, for it invariably leads to the exploitation of man by man. He who

would really find out what truth is, what God is, can have no authority, whether of the book, of the government, of the image, or of the priest; he must be totally free of all that.

This is very difficult for most of us, because it means being insecure, standing completely alone, searching, groping, never being satisfied, never seeking success. But if we seriously experiment with it, then I think we shall find that there is no longer any question of creating or following authority, because something else begins to operate—which is not a mere verbal statement, but an actual fact. The man who is ceaselessly questioning, who has no authority, who does not follow any tradition, any book or teacher, becomes a light unto himself.

Question: Why do you put so much emphasis on self-knowledge? We know very well what we are.

KRISHNAMURTI: I wonder if we do know what we are? We are, surely, everything that we have been taught; we are the totality of our past; we are a bundle of memories, are we not? When you say "I belong to God", or "The self is eternal", and all the rest of it—that is all part of your background, your conditioning. Similarly, when the Communist says "There is no God", he also is reflecting his conditioning.

Merely to say "Yes, I know myself very well", is just a superficial remark. But to realize, to actually experience that your whole being is nothing but a bundle of memories, that all your thinking, your reactions, are mechanical, is not at all easy. It means being aware, not only of the workings of the conscious mind, but also of the unconscious residue, the racial impressions, memories, the things that we have learned; it means discovering the whole field of the mind, the hidden as well as the visible, and that is extremely arduous.

And if my mind is merely the residue of the past, if it is only a bundle of memories, impressions, shaped by so-called education and various other influences, then is there any part of me which is *not* all that? Because, if I am merely a repeating machine, as most of us are—repeating what we have learned, what we have gathered, passing on what has been told to us—, then any thought arising within this conditioned field obviously can only lead to further conditioning, further misery and limitation.

So, can the mind, knowing its limitation, being aware of its conditioning, go beyond itself? That is the problem. Merely to assert that it can, or it cannot, would be silly. Surely it is fairly obvious that the whole mind is conditioned. We are all conditioned—by tradition, by family, by experience, through the process of time. If you believe in God, that belief is the outcome of a particular conditioning, just as is the disbelief of the man who says he does not believe in God. So belief and disbelief have very little importance. But what is important is to understand the whole field of thought, and to see if the mind can go beyond it all.

To go beyond, you must know yourself. The motives, the urges, the responses, the immense pressure of what people have taught you; the dreams, the inhibitions, the conscious and hidden compulsions—you must know them all. Only then I think, is it possible to find out if the mind, which is now so mechanical, can discover something totally new, something which has never been corrupted by time.

Question: You say that true religion is neither belief, nor dogma, nor ceremonies. What then is true religion?

KRISHNAMURTI: How are you going to find out? It is not for me just to answer, surely. How is the individual

to find out what is true religion? We know what is generally called religion—dogma, belief, ceremonies, meditation, the practice of yoga, fasting, disciplining oneself, and so on. We all know the whole gamut of the so-called religious approach. But is that religion? And if I want to find out what is true religion, how am I to set about it?

First of all, I must obviously be free from all dogmas, must I not? And that is extraordinarily difficult. I may be free from the dogmas imposed upon me in childhood, but I may have created a dogma or belief of my own—which is equally pernicious. So I must also be free from that. And I can be free only when I have no motive, when there is no desire at all to be secure, either with God or in this world. Again, this is extremely difficult, because surreptitiously, deep down, the mind is always wanting a position of certainty. And there are all the images that have been imposed upon the mind, the saviours, the teachers, the doctrines, the superstitions—I must be free of all that. Then, perhaps, I shall find out what it is to be truly religious—which may be the greatest revolution, and I think it is. The only true revolution is not the economic revolution, or the revolution of the Communists, but the deep religious revolution which comes about when the mind is no longer seeking shelter in any dogma or belief, in any church or saviour, in any teacher or sacred book. And I think such a revolution has immense significance in the world, for then the mind has no ideology, it is neither of the West nor of the East. Surely, this religious revolution is the only salvation.

To find out what is true religion requires, not a mere one-day effort or one-day search and forgetfulness the next day, but constant questioning, a disturbing inquiry, so that you begin to discard everything. After all, this process of discarding is the highest form of

thinking. The pursuit of positive thinking is not thinking at all, it is merely copying. But when there is inquiry without a motive, without the desire for a result, which is the negative approach—in that inquiry the mind goes beyond all traditional religions; and then, perhaps, one may find out for oneself what God is, what truth is.

September 6, 1956

III

TALK IN HAMBURG

I do not think that we realize the significance or the importance of the individual. Because, as I was saying the other day, to bring about a fundamental, religious revolution, one must surely cease to think in terms of the universal, in terms of the collective. Anything that is made universal, collective, belonging to everyday, can never be true—true in the sense of being directly experienced by each individual, uninfluenced, without the impetus of self-centred interest. I think we do not sufficiently realize the seriousness of this. Anything really true must be totally individual—not in the sense of self-centredness, which is very limiting and which in itself is evil, but individual in the sense that each one of us must experience for himself, uninfluenced, something which is not the outcome of any self-centred interest or drive.

One can see in the modern world how everything is tending towards collective thought—everybody thinking alike. The various governments, though they do not compel it, are quietly and sedulously working at it. Organized religions are obviously controlling and shaping the minds of people according to their respective patterns, hoping thereby to bring about a universal morality, a universal experience. But I think that

whatever is made universal, in that sense, is always suspect, because it can never be true; it has lost its vitality, its directness, its truth. Yet throughout the world we see this tendency to shape and to control the mind of man. And it is extraordinarily difficult to free the mind from this false universality and to change oneself without any self-interest.

It seems to me that we must have a change—a fundamental, radical change in our thinking, in our feeling. To bring about change we use various methods, we have ideals, disciplines, sanctions, or we look to social, economic and scientific influences. These things do bring about a superficial change, but I am not talking of that. I am talking of a change which is uninfluenced, without any self-interest, without self-centredness. It seems to me that such a change is possible, and that it must come about if we are to have this religious revolution of which I was speaking the other day.

We think that ideals are necessary. But do ideals help to bring about this radical change in us? Or do they merely enable us to postpone, to push change into the future, and thereby avoid the immediate, radical change? Surely, so long as we have ideals, we never really change, but hold on to our ideals as a means of postponement, of avoiding the immediate change which is so essential. I know it is taken for granted by the majority of us that ideals are indispensable, for without them we think there would be no impetus to change, and we would rot, stagnate. But I am questioning whether ideals of any kind ever do transform our thinking.

Why do we have ideals? If I am violent, need I have the ideal of non-violence? I do not know if you have thought about this at all. If I am violent—as most of us are in different degrees—is it necessary for me to have the ideal of non-violence? Will the pursuit of non-violence free the mind from violence? Or is the very pursuit of non-violence actually an impediment to

the understanding of violence? After all, I can understand violence only when with my whole mind I give complete attention to the problem. And the moment I am wholly concerned with violence and the understanding of violence, what significance has the ideal of non-violence? It seems to me that the pursuit of the ideal is an evasion, a postponement. If I am to understand violence, I must give my whole mind to it, and not allow myself to be distracted by the ideal of non-violence.

This is really a very important issue. Most of us look upon the ideal as essential in order to make us change. But I think it is possible to bring about a change only when the mind understands the whole problem of violence; and to understand violence, you must give your complete attention to it, and not be distracted by an ideal.

We all see the importance of the cessation of violence. And how am I, as an individual, to be free of violence—not just superficially, but totally, completely, inwardly? If the ideal of non-violence will not free the mind from violence, then will the analysis of the cause of violence help to dissolve violence?

After all, this is one of our major problems, is it not? The whole world is caught up in violence, in wars; the very structure of our acquisitive society is essentially violent. And if you and I as individuals are to be free from violence—totally, inwardly free, not merely superficially or verbally—, then how is one to set about it without becoming self-centred?

You understand the problem, do you not? If my concern is to free the mind from violence and I practise discipline in order to control violence and change it into non-violence, surely that brings about self-centred thought and activity, because my mind is focussed all the time on getting rid of one thing and acquiring something else. And yet I see the importance of the mind being totally free from violence. So what am I to

do? Surely, it is not a question of how one is not to be violent. The fact is that we *are* violent, and to ask "How am I not to be violent?" merely creates the ideal, which seems to me to be utterly futile. But if one is capable of looking at violence and understanding it, then perhaps there is a possibility of resolving it totally.

So, how are we to resolve violence without becoming self-centred, without the 'me' being completely occupied with itself and its problems? I do not know if you have thought about this matter. Most of us, I think, have accepted the easy path of pursuing the ideal of non-violence. But if one is really concerned, deeply, inwardly, with how to resolve violence, then it seems to me that one must find out whether ideals are essential, and whether discipline, practice, the constant reminding of oneself not to be violent, can ever resolve violence, or will merely exaggerate self-centredness under the new name of non-violence. Surely, to discipline the mind towards the ideal of non-violence is still a self-centred activity, and therefore only another form of violence.

If the problem is clear, then perhaps we can proceed to inquire into whether it is possible to free the mind from violence without being self-centred. This is very important, and I think it would be worth while if we could go into it hesitantly and tentatively, and really find out. I see that any form of discipline, suppression, any effort to substitute an ideal for the fact—even though it be the ideal of love, or peace—, is essentially a self-centred process, and that inherent in that process is the seed of violence. The man who practises non-violence is essentially self-centred, and therefore essentially violent, because he is concerned about himself. To practise humility is never to be humble, because the self-conscious process of acquiring humility, or cultivating any other virtue, is only another form of self-centredness, which is inherently evil and violent. If I see this very clearly,

then what am I to do? How am I to set about to free the mind from violence?

I do not know if you have thought about the problem at all in this manner. Perhaps this is the first time you have considered it, and so you may be inclined to say "What nonsense!" But I do not think it is nonsense. After all, most idealists are very self-centred people, because they are concerned with achievement. So the question is, is it possible to free the mind from violence without this self-centred influence and activity? I think it is possible. But to really find out, one must inquire into it, not as part of a group, of the collective, but as an individual. As part of the collective you have already accepted the ideal, and you practise virtue. But surely one must dissociate oneself totally from that whole process, and inquire directly for oneself.

To inquire directly, one must ask oneself if the entity, the person who wants to get rid of violence, is different from the violence itself. When one acknowledges "I am violent", is the 'I' who then wishes to get rid of violence different from the quality which he calls violence? This may all sound a bit complicated, but if one will go into it patiently I think one will understand without too much difficulty.

When I say "I am violent", and wish to free myself from violence, is the entity who is violent different from the quality which he calls violence? That is, is the experiencer who feels he is violent different from the experience itself? Surely the experiencer is the same as the experience; he is not different or apart from the experience. I think this is very important to understand; because if one really understood it, then in freeing the mind from violence there would be no self-centred activity at all.

We have separated the thinker from the thought, have we not? We say "I am violent, and I must make an effort to get rid of violence". In order to get rid of violence we discipline

ourselves, we practise non-violence, we think about it every day and try to do something about it—which means we take it for granted that the 'I', the maker of effort, is different from the experience, from the quality. But is this so? Are the two states different, or are they really a unit, one and the same?

Obviously, there is no thinker if there is no thought. But the thinker, the 'I', who is the maker of effort, is always exercising his volition in getting rid of violence; so he has separated himself from the quality which he calls violence. But they are not separate, are they? They are a unity. And actually to experience that unitary state—which means not differentiating between the thinker and his thought, between the 'I' who is violent and the violence itself—is essential if the mind is to be free from violence without self-centred action.

If you will think about it a little I am sure you will see the truth of what I am trying to say. After all, just as the quality of the diamond cannot be separated from the diamond, so the quality of the thinker cannot be separated from thought itself. But we *have* separated them. In us there is ever the observer, the watcher, the censor, who is condemning, justifying, accepting, denying, and so on; the censor is always exercising influence on his thought. But the thought *is* the censor, the two are not separate; and it is essential to experience this in order to bring about a revolutionary change in which there is no self-centred activity.

After all, it is urgent that we change. We have had so many wars, such destruction, violence, terror, misery, and if we do not change radically we shall go on pursuing the same old path. To change radically and not merely accept a new set of slogans, or give ourselves over to the State or to the church; to really understand the fundamental revolution that must take place in order to put an end to all this misery, it seems to me essential to discover whether there can

be an action which is not self-centred. Surely, action will ever be self-centred as long as we do not experience directly for ourselves the fact that there is only thought and not the thinker. But if once we do experience this, I think we will find that effort then has quite a different significance.

At present we make an effort, do we not?, in order to achieve a result, in order to arrive, to become something. If I am angry, ambitious, brutal, I make an effort *not* to be. But such effort is self-centred, because I am still wanting to be something, perhaps negatively; there is still ambition, which is violence.

So if I am to change radically, without this self-centred motive, I must go very deeply into the problem of change. This means that I must think entirely differently, away from the collective, away from the ideal, away from the usual habit of discipline, practice, and all the rest of it. I must inquire who is the thinker, and what is thought, and find out whether thought is different from the thinker. Although thought has separated itself and set the thinker apart, he is still part of thought. And so long as thought is violent, mere control of thought by the thinker is of no value. So the question is, can the mind be aware that it is violent, without dividing itself as the thinker who wants to get rid of violence?

This is really not a very complex problem. If you and I who are discussing it could go into it very carefully as individuals, we would see the extraordinary simplicity of it. Perhaps we are missing the significance of it because we think it is very complex. It is not. The simple fact is that there is no experimenter without the experience; the experimenter *is* the experience, the two are not separate. But so long as the experimenter sets himself apart and demands more experience, so long as he wishes to change *this* into *that*, there can be no fundamental transformation.

So the radical change we need is possible only when there are no ideals.

Ideals are reform; and a mind that is merely reforming itself can never radically change. There can be no fundamental change if the mind is concerned with discipline, with fitting itself into a pattern, whether the pattern be that of society, of a teacher, or a pattern established by one's own thinking. There can be no radical change so long as the mind is thinking in terms of action according to its self-centred interest, however noble. The mere cultivation of virtue is not virtue.

So we have to inquire into the problem of change from a wholly different point of view. The totality of comprehension comes only when there is no division between the thinker and the thought—and that is an extraordinary experience. But you must come to it tentatively, with care, with inquiry, for mere acceptance or denial of the fact that the thought and the thinker are one, will have no value. That is why a man who desires to bring about a fundamental change within himself must go into this problem very seriously and very deeply.

Question: Crime among young people is spreading everywhere. What can we do about it?

KRISHNAMURTI: You see, there is either a revolt within the pattern of society, or a complete revolution outside of society. The complete revolution outside of society is what I call religious revolution. Any revolution which is not religious is within society, and is therefore no revolution at all, but only a modified continuation of the old pattern. What is happening throughout the world, I believe, is revolt within society, and this revolt often takes the form of what is called crime. There is bound to be this kind of revolt so long as our education is concerned only with training youth to fit into society—that is, to get a job, to earn money, to be acquisitive, to have more, to conform.

That is what our so-called education everywhere is doing—teaching the young to conform, religiously, morally, economically; so naturally their revolt has no meaning, except that it must be suppressed, reformed, or controlled. Such revolt is still within the framework of society, and therefore it is not creative at all. But through right education we could perhaps bring about a different understanding by helping to free the mind from all conditioning, that is, by encouraging the young to be aware of the many influences which condition the mind and make it conform.

So, is it possible to educate the mind to be aware of all the influences that now surround us, religious, economic and social, and not be caught in any of them? I think it is; and when once we realize it, we shall approach this problem entirely differently.

Question: If we transform ourselves and become peaceful, while others do not transform themselves but remain aggressive and brutal, are we not inviting them to attack and violate us as helpless victims?

KRISHNAMURTI: I wonder if this question is put seriously? Have you tried to transform yourself, to be really peaceful, and see what happens? Without actually being peaceful, we say to ourselves "If I am peaceful, another may attack me"; and so we set up the whole mechanism of attack and defence.

But surely, sirs, we are concerned, are we not?, with the transformation of the individual, irrespective of what is done to him. We are not thinking in terms of nations, of groups, of races. So long as society exists as it is now, there must be attack and defence, because the whole structure of our thinking is based on that. You are a German or a Moslem, and I am a Russian or a Hindu; being afraid of each other, we must be prepared to defend ourselves, therefore we dare not be peaceful.

So we keep that game going, and we live in its pattern. But now we are not talking as members of any particular society, of any particular group, nationality, or religion. We are talking as individual human beings. Any great thing, surely, is done by the individual, not by the mass, the collective.

The mass is composed of many individuals who are caught in words, slogans, in nationalism, in fear. But if you and I as individuals begin to think about the problem of peace, then we are not concerned with whether another is peaceful or not. Surely love is not a matter of your loving me, and therefore I love you. Love is something entirely different, is it not? Where there is love, there is no problem of the other. Similarly, when I know for myself what peace is, I am not concerned with whether others are going to attack me or not. They may. But my interest is in peace and the understanding of it, which means totally eliminating from myself the whole fabric of violence. And that requires tremendously clear thinking, deep meditation.

Question: You say the mind must be quiet; but it is always busy, night and day. How can I change it?

KRISHNAMURTI: I wonder if we are actually aware that our minds are busy night and day? Or is this merely a verbal statement? Are you fully conscious that your mind is ceaselessly active, or are you merely repeating a statement you have heard? And even if you know it directly for yourself, why do you wish to change it? Is it because someone has said you must have a quiet mind? If you want a quiet mind in order to achieve something more, or to get somewhere else, then the acquisition of a quiet mind is just another form of self-centred action. So, does one see, without any motivation, that it is essential to have a quiet mind?

If so, then the problem is, can thought come to an end?

We know that when we are awake during the day, the mind is active with superficial things—with the job, the family, catching a train, and all the rest of it. And at night, in sleep, it is also active in dreams. So the process of thinking is going on ceaselessly. Now, can thought come to an end voluntarily, naturally, without being compelled through discipline? For only then can the mind be completely still. A mind that is *made* still, that is forced, disciplined to be still, is not a still mind; it is a dead mind.

So, can thought, which is incessantly active, come to an end? And if thought does come to an end, will this not be a complete death to the mind? Are we not therefore afraid of thought coming to an end? If thought should come to an end, what would happen? The whole structure which we have built up of 'myself' being important, my family, my country, my position, power, prestige—the whole of that would cease, obviously. So, do we really want to have a quiet mind?

If we do, then we must inquire, must we not?, into the whole process of thinking; we must find out what thinking is. Is thinking merely the response of memory, or is thinking something else? If it is merely the response of memory, then can the mind put away all memory? Is it possible to put away all memory? That is, can thought cease to make an effort to retain the pleasant and discard the unpleasant memories?

Perhaps this all seems a bit too complex and difficult; but it is not, if you go into it. The state of a mind that is really silent is something extraordinary. It is not the silence of negation. On the contrary, a silent mind is a very intense mind. But for such a mind to come into being, we must inquire into the whole process of thinking. And thinking, for most of us, is the response of memory. All

our education, all our upbringing, encourages the continuance of memory identified as the 'me', and on that basis we set the ball of thought rolling.

So it is impossible to have a really still mind, a mind that is completely quiet, as long as you do not understand what thinking is, and the whole structure of the thinker. Is there a thinker when there is no thought based on memory? To find out, you have to trace your thought, inquire into every thought that you have, not just verbally or casually, but very persistently, slowly, hesitantly, without condemning or justifying any thought. At present there is a division between the thinker and the thought, and it is this division that creates conflict. Most of us are caught in conflict—perhaps not outwardly, but inwardly we are seething. We are in a continuous turmoil of wanting and not-wanting, of ambition, jealousy, anger, violence; and to have a really still, quiet mind, we must understand all that.

September 9, 1956

IV

TALK IN HAMBURG

To understand what it is another is trying to convey, one must give a certain attention—not enforced attention or tremendous concentration, but that attention which comes with natural interest. After all, we have many problems in life—problems arising out of our relationship with society, the problems of war, of sex, of death, of whether or not there is God, and the problem of what this everlasting struggle is all about. We all have these problems. And I think we might begin to understand them deeply if we did not cling to one particular problem of our own, which is perhaps

so close to us that it absorbs all our attention, all our effort, all our thinking, but tried instead to approach the problem of living as a whole. In understanding the problem of living as a whole, I think we shall be able to understand our personal problems.

That is what I want to deal with, if I can, this evening. Each one of us has a problem, and unfortunately that problem generally consumes most of our thought and energy. We are constantly groping, searching, trying to find an answer to our problem, and we want somebody else to supply that answer. It is probably for this very reason that you are here. But I do not think we will understand the totality of our existence if we merely look for an answer to a single problem. Because all problems are related; there is no isolated problem. So we have to look at life, not as something to be broken up into parts, made fractional, but as something to be understood as a whole. If we can realize this, get the feeling of it, then I think we shall have a totally different approach to our individual problems, which are also the world problems.

What is happening now is that we are all so concerned with our own problems, with earning a livelihood, with getting ahead, with our personal virtue, and all the rest of it, that we do not have a general comprehension of the complete picture. And it seems to me that unless we get the feeling of the totality of our life, with all its experiences, miseries and struggles, unless we comprehend it as a whole, merely dealing with a particular problem, however apparently vital, will only create further problems, further misery.

I hope this is clear between us—that we are not considering one isolated problem, but we are trying to understand together the totality of the problem of our existence. So, whatever may be our immediate problem, can we, through that problem, look at

our life as a whole? If we can, then I think the immediate problem which we have will undergo quite a change; and perhaps we shall be able to understand it and be free of it entirely.

Now, how does one set about to have this integrated outlook, this comprehensive view of life which reveals the significance of every relationship, every thought, every action? Surely, before we can see the whole picture, we must first be aware that we are always trying to solve our immediate problem in a very limited field. We want a particular answer, a satisfactory answer, an answer which will give us certainty. That is what we are seeking, is it not? And I think we must begin by being conscious of that, otherwise we shall not be able to grasp the significance of this whole problem.

All this may at first seem very difficult; it may even sound rather absurd to those of you who are hearing it for the first time; and what we hear for the first time we naturally tend to reject. But if one wants to understand, one must neither reject nor accept what is being said. One must examine it, not with sentimentality or intellectual preconceptions, but with that intelligence and common-sense which will reveal the picture clearly.

So, why is it that most of us are incapable of looking at the whole picture of life which, if understood, would resolve all our problems? We look at the picture as Germans, or Russians, or Hindus, or what you will. We look at the picture with our knowledge, with our ideas, with a particular training or technique, with a mind which is conditioned. We are always translating the picture according to our background, according to our education, our tradition. We never look at the picture without this influence of the past, without thinking *about* the picture. Do you see what I mean? After all, if I want to understand something, I must come to it with a

fresh mind, with a mind that is not burdened with accumulated experience, knowledge, with all the conditioning to which it has been subjected.

Life demands this, does it not? Life demands that I look at it afresh. Because life is movement, it is not a dead, static thing, and I must therefore approach it with a mind that is capable of looking at it without translating it in certain terms—as a Hindu, a Christian, or whatever it is I happen to be. So, before I can look at the whole picture, I must be aware of how my mind is burdened with knowledge, tradition, which prevents it from looking afresh at that which is moving, living. Knowledge, however wide, however necessary at one level, does not bring comprehension of life, which is a constant movement. If my mind is burdened with technique, training, so that it can understand only that which is static, dead, then I can have no comprehension of life as a whole. To comprehend the totality of life, I must understand the process of knowledge, and how knowledge interferes with that comprehension. This is fairly obvious, is it not?—that knowledge interferes with the understanding of life.

And yet, what is happening in the world? All our education is a process of accumulating knowledge. We are concerned with developing techniques, with how to meditate, how to be good; the 'how', the technique, becomes knowledge, and with that we hope to understand the immeasurable. So when one says "I understand what you are talking about", is it merely a verbal understanding, or has one really grasped the truth of the matter? If we really grasp the truth of what is being said, that very comprehension will free the mind from the accumulated knowledge which interferes with perception.

So, is it possible for one who has had many experiences, who has read the various philosophies, the learned books,

who has accumulated information, knowledge, to put all that aside? I do not think one can put it aside, suppress or deny it; but one can be aware of it, and not allow it to interfere with perception. After all, we are trying to find out what is truth, if there is reality, if there is God; and to discover this for oneself is true religion—not the acceptance of some silly ritual or dogma, and all the rest of that nonsense.

To find something original and true, something timeless, you cannot come to it with the burden of memory, knowledge. The known, the past, can never help you to discover the moving, the creative. No amount of technique or learning, no amount of attending talks and discussions, can ever reveal to you the unknown. If you really see the truth of this, actually experience it for yourself, then you are free of all Masters and *gurus*, of all teachers, saints and saviours. Because, they can only teach you what is known; and the mind which is burdened with the known can never find what is unknowable.

To be free from the known requires a great deal of understanding of the whole process of the accumulative mind. It would be silly to say "I must forget the past"—that has no meaning. But if one begins to understand why the mind accumulates and treasures the past, why the whole momentum of the mind is based on time—if one begins to understand all that, then one will find that the mind can free itself from the past, from the burden of accumulated knowledge. There is then the discovery of something totally new, unexperienced, unimagined, which is a state of creativity and which may be called reality, God, or what you will.

So, being surrounded by problems, by innumerable conflicts, our difficulty is to know how to look at them, how to understand them, so that they are no longer a burden, and through those very problems we begin to discover the process by which the mind is

everlastingly caught in time, in the known. Unless we can do that, our life remains very shallow. You may know a great deal, you may be a great scientist, you may be a great historian, or just an ordinary person; but life will always be shallow, empty, dull, until you understand for yourself this whole process, which is really the beginning of self-knowledge.

So it seems to me that our many problems can never be solved until we approach them as an integral part of the totality of existence. We cannot understand the totality of existence as long as we break it up into compartments, as we are doing now. The difficulty is that our problems are so intense, so immediate, that we get caught in them; and not to be caught in them, the mind must begin to be aware of its own process of accumulation, by which it gains a sense of security for itself. After all, why do we accumulate property, money, position, knowledge, and so on? Obviously, because it gives us a sense of security. You may not have much property or money, but if you have knowledge, it gives you a feeling of security. It is only to the man who has no sense of security of any kind, that the new is revealed, because he is not concerned about himself and his achievements.

So, how is the mind to free itself from time? Time, after all, is knowledge. Time comes into being when there is the sense of achievement, something to be arrived at, something to be gained. "I am not important, but I shall be"—in that idea, time has come into being, and with it the whole struggle of becoming. In the very idea "I shall be", there is effort to become; and I think it is this effort to become which creates time, and which prevents a comprehension of the totality of things. You see, so long as I am thinking about myself in terms of gain and loss, I must have time. I must have time to cover the distance between now and tomorrow, when I hope I

shall be something, either in terms of virtue, or position, or knowledge. This creation of time breaks life up into segments; and that becomes the problem.

To understand the totality of this extraordinary thing called life, one must obviously not be too definite about these things. One cannot be definite with something which is so immense, which is not measurable by words. We cannot understand the immeasurable so long as we approach it through time.

To grasp the significance of all this is not an intellectual feat, nor a sentimental, emotional realization, but it means that you must really listen to what is being said; and in that very process of listening you will find out for yourself that the mind, though it is the product of time, can go beyond time. But this demands very clear thinking, a great alertness of mind, in which no emotionalism is involved. To understand the immeasurable, the mind must be extraordinarily quiet, still; but if I think I am going to achieve stillness at some future date, I have destroyed the possibility of stillness. It is now or never. That is a very difficult thing to understand, because we are all thinking of heaven in terms of time.

Question: Are yogic exercises helpful in any way to human beings?

KRISHNAMURTI: I think one must go into this question fairly deeply. Apparently in Europe, as well as in India, there is this idea that by doing yogic exercises, practising virtue, being good, participating in social work, reading sacred books, following a teacher—that by doing something of this kind, you are going to achieve salvation or enlightenment. I am afraid you are not. On the contrary, you are going to be caught in the things you are practising, and therefore

you will always be held a prisoner and your vision will be everlastingly limited.

Yogic exercises are all right, probably, for the body. Any kind of exercise—walking, jumping, climbing mountains, swimming, or whatever you do—is on the same level. But to suppose that certain exercises will lead you to salvation, to understanding, to God, truth, wisdom—this I think is sheer nonsense, even though all the yogis in India say otherwise. If once you see that anything that you practise, that you accept, that you develop, always has behind it the element of greed—wanting to get something, wanting to reach something, wanting to break a record—, then you will leave it alone. A mind that is merely concerned with the ‘how’, with doing yogic exercises, this or that, will only develop a sense of achievement through time, and such a mind can never comprehend that which is timeless.

After all, you practise yogic exercises in the hope of reaching something, gaining something; you hope to achieve happiness, bliss, or whatever is offered. Do you think bliss is so easily realized? Do you think it is something to be gained by doing certain exercises, or developing concentration? Must not the mind be altogether free of this self-centred activity? Surely a man who practises yoga in order to reach enlightenment, is concerned about himself, about his own growth; he is full of his own importance. So it is a tremendous art—an art which can be approached only through self-knowledge, not through any practice—to understand this whole process of self-centred activity in the name of God, in the name of truth, in the name of peace, or whatever it be—to understand and be free of it.

Now, to be free does not demand time, and I think this is our difficulty. We say “I am envious, and to get rid of envy I must control, I must suppress, I must sacrifice, I must do penance,

I must practise yoga”, and all the rest of it—all of which indicates the continuance of self-centred activity, only transferred to a different level. If one sees this, if one really understands it, then one no longer thinks in terms of getting rid of envy in a certain period of time. Then the problem is, can one get rid of envy immediately? It is like a hungry man—he does not want a promise of food tomorrow, he wants to be fed now, and in that sense he is free of time. But we are indolent, and what we want is a method to lead us to something which will ultimately give us pleasure.

Question: A well-known author has written a great deal about the use of certain drugs which enable man to arrive at some visionary experience of union with the divine ground. Are those experiences helpful in finding that state of which you speak?

KRISHNAMURTI: You can learn tricks, or take drugs, or get drunk, and you will have intense experiences of one kind or another, depressing or exciting. Obviously the physiological condition does affect the psychological state of the mind; but drugs and practices of various kinds do not in any way bring about that state of which we are talking. All such things lead only to a variety, intensity and diversity of experience—which we all want and hunger after, because we are fed up with this world. We have had two world wars, with appalling misery and everlasting strife on every side; and our own minds are so petty, personal, limited. We want to escape from all this, either through psychology, philosophy, so-called religion, or through some exercise or drug—they are all on the same level.

The mind is seeking a sensation; you want to experience what you call reality, or God, something immense, great, vital. You want to have visions; and if you take some kind of drug, or are sufficiently conditioned in a

certain religion, you *will* have visions. The man who is everlastingly thinking about Christ, or Buddha, or what not, will sooner or later have experiences, visions; but that is not truth, it has nothing whatever to do with reality. Those are all self-projections; they are the result of your demand for experience. Your own conditioning is projecting what you want to see.

To find out what is real, the mind must cease to demand any experience. So long as you are craving experience, you will have it, but it will not be real—real in the sense of the timeless, the immeasurable; it will not have the perfume of reality. It will all be an illusion, the product of a mind that is frustrated, that is seeking a thrill, an emotion, a feeling of vitality. That is why you follow leaders. They are always promising something new, a Utopia, always sacrificing the present for the future; and you foolishly follow them, because it is exciting. You have had that experience in this country, and you ought to know better than anyone else the miseries, the brutality of it all. Most of us demand the same kind of experience, the same kind of sensation, only at another level. That is why we take various drugs, or perform ceremonies, or practise some exercise that acts as a stimulant. These things all have significance in the sense that their use indicates that one is still craving experience; therefore the mind is everlastingly agitated. And the mind that is agitated, that is craving experience, can never find out what is true.

Truth is always new, totally unknown and unknowable. The mind must come to it without any demand, without any knowledge, without any wish; it must be empty, completely naked. Then only truth may happen. But you cannot invite it.

Question: Is our life predetermined, or is the way of life to be freely chosen?

KRISHNAMURTI: So long as we have choice, surely there is no freedom. Please follow this; do not merely reject or accept it, but let us think it out together. The mind that is capable of choosing, is not free; because in choice there is always conflict, conscious or unconscious, and a mind that is in conflict is never free. Our life is full of conflict, we are always choosing between good and bad, between this and that; you know this very well. We are always comparing, judging, evaluating, accepting, rejecting—that is the process of our life, which is a constant struggle; and a mind that is struggling is never free.

And are we individuals—individuals in the sense of being unique? Are we? Or are we merely the result of our conditioning, of innumerable influences, of centuries of tradition? You may like to separate yourself as being of the West, and set yourself still further apart as being German. But are you an individual in the sense of being completely uncorrupted, uninfluenced? Only in *that* state are you free, not otherwise. Which does not mean anarchy, or selfishly individual existence—on the contrary.

But now you are not individuals; you are anything but that. You are Germans, English, French; you are Catholics, Protestants, Communists—something or other. You are stamped, shaped, held within the framework in which you have been brought up, or which you have subsequently chosen. So your life is predetermined. You saw ten years ago how your life was predetermined. And every Catholic, every churchgoer, every person who belongs to any religious organization—his life is predetermined, fixed; therefore he is never free. He may talk about freedom, he may talk about love and peace; but he cannot have love and peace, nor can he be free, because for him those are mere words.

Your life is shaped, controlled by the society which you have created. You have

created the wars, the leaders; you have created the organized religions of which you are now slaves. So your life is predetermined. And to be free, you must first be aware that your life is predetermined, that it is conditioned, that all your responses are more or less the same as those of everybody else throughout the world. Superficially your responses may be different; you may respond one way here, another way in India or in China, and so on; but fundamentally you are held in the framework of your particular conditioning, and you are never an individual. Therefore it is absurd to talk about freedom and self-determination. You can choose between blue cloth and red cloth, and that is about all; your freedom is on that level. If you go into it very deeply, you will find that you are not an individual at all.

But in going into it very deeply, you will also find that you can be free from all this conditioning—as a German, as a Catholic, as a Hindu, as a believer or a non-believer. You can be free from it all. Then you will know what it is to have an innocent mind; and it is only such a mind that can find out what is truth.

Question: Will awareness free us, as you suggest, from our undesirable qualities?

KRISHNAMURTI: I think it is important to understand what we mean by awareness. I am going to explain what I mean, and please do not add something mysterious, complicated, or mystical. It is very clear and simple if one cares to go right to the end of it.

We are aware, are we not?, of many things. You are aware that I am standing here, that I am talking, and that you are listening. And if you are alert, you are also aware of how you are listening. To know *how* you are listening is also part of awareness, and it is very important; because if you are aware of how you are listening,

you will know in what way you are conditioned. You are probably interpreting what is being said according to your conditioning, according to your prejudices, according to your knowledge; and when you are interpreting, you are not listening. To be conscious of all this is part of awareness, is it not?

Now if you go still further, you will find that the moment you are really listening, and not interpreting according to your prejudices, you begin to see for yourself what is true and what is false. Because true and false are not a matter of prejudice or opinion; either it is so, or it is not. But if you are concerned with interpretation all the time, then your vision is blurred and there is no clear perception. That is why most of us are not really listening to what is being said—because we are interpreting it in terms of our upbringing or preconceptions. If you are a Christian, you listen and compare what is being said with the teaching of the *Bible*, or the Christ; or if you do not do that, you refer to some other information which you have gathered. So you are always listening with a barrier. To see this whole process going on in one's mind is part of awareness, is it not?

The questioner wants to know if through awareness he can be free of any unpleasant qualities. That is, can one be free, let us say, of envy? If you will follow what I am saying, you will see the full implication of what lies in this question.

Most of us, if we are at all aware, cognizant, conscious of ourselves, know when we are envious. Furthermore, we can see that our whole society is based on envy, and that religions are also based on it—wanting something more, not only in this world but also in the next. We know the feeling of being envious, the superficial as well as the very complex process of envy.

Now, being aware of envy, what happens? We either condemn or

rationalize it. We generally condemn it, because to condemn is part of our upbringing; we are educated to condemn envy, it is the thing to do, even though we are envious all the time. By condemning envy, we hope to be free of it; but we are not free, it keeps on returning. Envy exists so long as there is a comparative mind. When I am comparing myself with somebody who is greater, more popular, more virtuous, and so on, I am envious. So a comparative mind breeds envy.

And you will see, if you go into this problem still deeper, that so long as you verbalize that feeling by calling it 'envy', the feeling goes on. I hope you are following this. You name the feeling, do you not? You say "I am envious". But cannot one know that one is envious without naming it? Is it only by naming the feeling that one becomes conscious of it?

How do you know you are envious? Please take it very simply, and you will see. Do you know it only after you have given a name to it, calling it 'envy'? Or do you know it as a feeling, independent of all terms? Is not all this also part of awareness?

Let us go slowly. I am envious, and I condemn it, because to condemn envy is part of my social upbringing; but it goes on. So if I really want to be free of envy, what am I to do? That is the problem. I do not want the feeling to continue, because that would be too silly; I see the absurdity of it, and I want to be free of it. So, how is the mind to be free of envy? First I have to see that all comparison must cease; and to really see that requires very arduous inquiry, because one's whole upbringing is based on comparison—you must be as good as your brother, or your uncle, or your grandfather, or Jesus, or whoever it is. So, can the mind cease to compare?

Then the problem is, when one has a certain feeling, can the mind stop naming it, stop calling it 'envy'? If you will experiment with this, you

will see how extraordinarily alert the mind must be to differentiate the word from the feeling. All this is part of awareness, in which no effort is involved; because the moment you make an effort, you have a motive of gain, and therefore you are still envious.

So the mind is envious as long as it is comparing itself with somebody else; and it is envious as long as it gives a name to the feeling, calling it 'envy', because by giving it a name it strengthens that feeling. And when the mind does not compare, when the mind does not give a name to the feeling and thereby strengthen it, you will find, if you proceed very hesitantly, carefully, diligently, that awareness does free the mind from envy.

September 14, 1956

V

TALK IN HAMBURG

I think these meetings will be useless if what we are discussing is regarded merely as a verbal communication without much significance. Most of us, it seems to me, listen rather casually to something very serious, and we have little time or inclination to give our thought to the profound things of life and go deeply into them for ourselves. We are inclined to accept or to deny very easily. But if, during these meetings, instead of just listening superficially, we can actually experience what we are talking about as we go along, then I think it will be worth while to discuss a problem which must be confronting most of us. I am referring to the problem of dependence. It is really a very complex problem; but if we can go into it deeply and not merely listen to the verbal description, if each one of us can be aware of it,

see the whole implication of dependence and where it leads, then perhaps we shall discover for ourselves whether man, you and I, can be totally free from dependence.

I think dependence, in its deeper psychological aspects, corrupts our thinking and our lives; it breeds exploitation; it cultivates authority, obedience, a sense of acceptance without understanding. And if we are to bring about a totally new kind of religion, entirely different from what religion is now, if there is to be the total revolution of a truly religious person, then I think we must understand the tremendous significance of dependence and be free of it.

Most of us are dependent, not only on society, but on our neighbour, on our immediate relationship with wife, husband, children, or on some authority. We rely on another for our conduct, for our behaviour, and in the process of dependence we identify ourselves with a class, with a race, with a country; and this psychological dependence does bring about a sense of frustration. Surely it must have occurred to some of us to ask ourselves whether one can ever be psychologically, inwardly free—free in one's heart and mind of all dependence on another.

Obviously we are all interdependent in our everyday physical existence; our whole social structure is based on physical interdependence; and it is natural, is it not?, to depend on others in that sense. But I think it is totally unnatural to depend on another for our psychological comfort, for our inward security and well-being.

If we are at all aware of this process of dependence, we can see what it involves. There is in it a great sense of fear, which ultimately leads to frustration. Psychological dependence on another gives a false sense of security. And if it is not a person on whom we depend, it is a belief, or an ideal, or a country, or an ideology, or the accumulation of knowledge.

We see, then, that psychologically we do depend. I think this is fairly obvious to any person who is at all aware of himself in his relationship with another and with society.

Now, why do we depend? And is it possible not to depend psychologically, to be free of this inward dependence of one mind on another? I think it is fairly important to find out why we depend. And if we did not depend, what would happen? Is it a feeling of loneliness, a sense of emptiness, insufficiency, that drives us to depend on something? Are we dependent because we lack self-confidence? And if we *do* have confidence in ourselves, does that bring about freedom, or merely an aggressive, self-assertive activity?

I do not know if you think, as I do, that this is a significant problem in life. Perhaps we are not aware of our psychological dependence; but if we are, we are bound to see that behind this dependence there is immense fear, and it is to escape from that fear that we depend. Psychologically we do not want to be disturbed, or to have taken away from us that on which we depend, whether it be a country, an idea, or a person; therefore that on which we depend becomes very important in our life, and we are always defending it.

It is in order to escape from the fear which we unconsciously know exists in us, that we turn to another to give us comfort, to give us love, to encourage us—and that is the very process of dependence. So, can the mind be free of this dependence, and thus be able to look at the whole problem of fear? Without deeply understanding fear and being free of it, the mere search for reality, for God, for happiness, is utterly useless; because what you are seeking then becomes that on which you again depend. Only the mind that is inwardly free of fear can know the blessing of reality; and the mind can be free of fear only when there is no dependence.

Now, can we look at fear? What is fear? Fear exists, surely, only in relation to something. Fear does not exist by itself. And what is it that we are afraid of? We may not be consciously aware of our fear, but unconsciously we *are* afraid; and that unconscious fear has far greater power over our daily thoughts and activities than the effort we make to suppress or deny fear.

So what is it that most of us are afraid of? There are superficial fears, such as the fear of losing a job, and so on; but to those fears we can generally adjust ourselves. If you lose your job, you will find some other way of making a living. The great fear is not for one's social security; it lies much deeper than that. And I do not know if the mind is willing to look at itself so profoundly as to be able to find out for itself what it is intrinsically frightened of. Unless you discover for yourself the deep source of your fear, all efforts to escape from fear, all cultivation of virtue, and so on, is of no avail; because fear is at the root of most of our anxious urges. So can we find out what it is we are afraid of, each one of us? Is the cause of fear common to us all, like death? Or is it something that each one of us has to discover, look at, go into for himself?

Most of us are frightened of being lonely. We are unconsciously aware that we are empty, that we are nothing. Though we may have titles, jobs, position, power, money, and all the rest of it, underlying all that there is a state of emptiness, an unfulfilled longing, a vacuum which we translate as loneliness—that state in which the self, the 'me', has completely enclosed the mind. Perhaps that is the very root of our fear. And can we look at it in order to understand it? For I think we must understand it if we would go beyond it.

Most of our activity is based on fear, is it not? That is, we never want to face ourselves exactly as we are, to

know ourselves completely. And the more deeply and drastically you go into yourself, the greater the sense of emptiness you will find. All that we have learned, the knowledge we have acquired, the virtues we have cultivated—all this is on the surface, and it has very little meaning if one penetrates more and more deeply into oneself; for as one penetrates, one comes upon this enormous sense of emptiness. You may sometimes have caught a fleeting glimpse of it as a feeling of loneliness, of insufficiency; but then you turn on the radio, or talk, or do something else to escape from that feeling. And that feeling, that sense of 'not being', may be the cause of all fear.

I think most of us have at rare moments experienced that state. And when we do fleetingly experience it, we generally run away from it through some form of amusement, through knowledge, through the vast mechanism of escape offered by the so-called civilized world. But what happens if we do *not* escape? Can the mind go into that? I think it must. Because in going deeply into that state of emptiness we may discover something totally new and be completely free of fear.

To understand something, we must approach it without any sense of condemnation, must we not? If I want to understand you, I must not be full of memories, my mind must not be burdened with knowledge about Germans, Hindus, Russians, or whatever the label may be. To understand, I must be free of all sense of condemnation and evaluation. Similarly, if I am to understand this state which I have called emptiness, loneliness, a feeling of insufficiency, I must look at it without any sense of condemnation. If I want to understand a child I must not condemn him, or compare him with another child. I must observe him in all his moods—when he is playing, crying, eating, talking. In such a manner the mind must watch the feeling of emptiness, without any

sense of condemnation or rejection. Because, the moment I condemn or reject that feeling, I have already created the barrier of fear.

So, can one look at oneself, and at this sense of insufficiency, without any condemnation? After all, condemnation is a process of verbalization, is it not? And when one condemns, there is no true communication.

I hope you are following this, because I think it is very important to understand it now, to really experiment with it as you are listening, and not merely go away and think about it later. This does not mean experimenting with what *I* say, but experimenting with the discovery of your own loneliness, your own emptiness—the feeling of insufficiency which causes fear. And you cannot be free to discover if you approach that state with any sense of condemnation.

So, can we now look at that thing which we have called emptiness, loneliness, insufficiency, realizing that we have always tried to escape from it rather than comprehend it? I see that what is important is to understand it, and that I cannot understand it if there is any sense of condemnation. So condemnation goes; therefore I approach it with a totally different mind, a whole, free mind. Then I see that the mind cannot separate itself from emptiness, because the mind itself is that emptiness. If you really go into it very deeply for yourself, free of all condemnation, you will find that out of the thing which we have called emptiness, insufficiency, fear, there comes an extraordinary state, a state in which the mind is completely quiet, undemanding, unafraid; and in that silence there is the coming into being of creativity, reality, God, or whatever you may like to call it. This inward sense of having no fear can take place only when you understand the whole process of your own thinking; and then I think it is possible to discover for oneself that which is eternal.

Question: Most of us are caught up in and are bored with the routine of our work, but our livelihood depends on it. Why can we not be happy in our work?

KRISHNAMURTI: Surely, modern civilization is making many of us do work which we as individuals do not like at all. Society as it is now constituted, being based on competition, ruthlessness, war, demands, let us say, engineers and scientists; they are wanted everywhere throughout the world because they can further develop the instruments of war and make the nation more efficient in its ruthlessness. So education is largely dedicated to building the individual into an engineer or a scientist, whether he is fit for it or not. The man who is being educated as an engineer may not really want to be one. He may want to be a painter, a musician, or who knows what else. But circumstances—education, family tradition, the demands of society, and so on—force him to specialize as an engineer. So we have created a routine in which most of us get caught, and then we are frustrated, miserable, unhappy for the rest of our lives. We all know this.

It is fundamentally a matter of education, is it not? And can we bring about a different kind of education in which each person, the teacher as well as the student, loves what he is doing? 'Loves'—I mean exactly that word. But you cannot love what you are doing if you are all the time using it as a means to success, power, position, prestige.

Surely, as it is now constituted, society does produce individuals who are utterly bored, who are caught in the routine of what they are doing. So it will take a tremendous revolution, will it not?, in education and in everything else, to bring about a totally different environment—an environment which will help the students, the children, to grow in that which they really love to do.

As things are now, we have to put up with routine, with boredom, and so we try to escape in various ways. We try to escape through amusements, through television or the radio, through books, through so-called religion, and so our lives become very shallow, empty, dull. This shallowness in turn breeds the acceptance of authority, which gives us a sense of universality, of power, position. We know all this in our hearts; but it is very difficult to break away from it all, because to break away demands, not the usual sentimentality, but thought, energy, hard work.

So if you want to create a new world—and surely you must, after these terrible wars, after the misery, the terrors that human beings have gone through—, then there will have to be a religious revolution in each one of us, a revolution that will bring about a new culture, and a totally new religion, which is not the religion of authority, of priestcraft, of dogma and ritual. To create a wholly different kind of society, there must be this religious revolution—that is, a revolution within the individual, and not the terrible outward bloodshed which only brings more tyranny, more misery and fear. If we are to create a new world—new in a totally different sense—, then it must be *our* world, and not a German world, or a Russian world, or a Hindu world; for we are all human beings, and the earth is ours.

But unfortunately very few of us feel deeply about all this, because it demands love, not sentimentality or emotionalism. Love is hard to find; and the man who is sentimentally emotional is generally cruel. To bring about a totally different culture, it seems to me that there must take place in each one of us this religious revolution, which means that there must be freedom, not only from all creeds and dogmas, but freedom from personal ambition and self-centred activity. Only then, surely, can there be a new world.

Question: You reject discipline and outward order, and suggest that we should act only by inner impulse. Will this not add to the great instability of people and encourage the following of irresponsible urges, especially among the youth of our time, who only want to enjoy themselves and are already drifting?

KRISHNAMURTI: I am afraid the questioner has not understood what we are talking about at all. I am not suggesting that you should abandon discipline. Even if you did try to abandon it, your society, your neighbour, your wife or husband, the people around you, would force you to discipline yourself again. We are discussing, not the abandonment of discipline, but the whole problem of discipline. If we could understand the very deep implications of discipline, then there might be order which is not based on coercion, compulsion, fear.

Surely, discipline implies suppression, does it not? Please think it out with me and do not just reject it. I know you are all very fond of discipline, of obeying, following; but do not merely reject what I am suggesting. In disciplining myself, I suppress what I want in order to conform to some greater value, to the edicts of society, or whatever it is. That suppression may be a necessity, or it may be voluntary, even pleasurable; but it is still a form of putting away desire of one kind or another, suppressing it, denying it, and training myself to conform to a pattern laid down by society, by a teacher, or by the sanctions of a particular regime. If we reject that outward form of discipline, then we establish a discipline of our own. We say "I must not do this, it is wrong; I must do only what is right, what is good, what is noble. When I have an ugly thought, I must suppress it; I must discipline myself, I must practise constant watchfulness".

Now, where there is conformity, discipline, suppression, conscious or unconscious, there is a constant struggle

going on, is there not? We are all familiar with this fact. I am not saying anything new, but we are directly examining what is constantly taking place. And a mind that is suppressed, compelled to conform, must ultimately break out into all kinds of chaotic activities—which is what actually happens.

When we discipline ourselves, it is in order to get something we want. After all, the so-called religious people discipline themselves because they are pursuing an idea in the distance which they hope someday to achieve. The idealist, the utopian, is thinking in terms of tomorrow; he has established the ideal for the future and is always trying to conform to what he thinks he should be. He never understands the whole process of what is actually taking place in himself, but is only concerned with the ideal. The 'what should be' is the pattern, and he is trying to fit himself into it because he hopes in that pattern there will be greater happiness, greater bliss, the discovery of truth, God, and all the rest of it.

So, is it not important to find out why the mind disciplines itself, and not merely say that it should not? I think there would be, not conformity, not enforcement, but a totally different kind of adjustment if we could really understand what it is the mind is seeking through discipline. After all, you discipline yourself in order to be safe. Is that not essentially true? You want to be secure, not only in this world, but also in the next world—if there is a next world. The mind that is seeking security must conform; and conformity means discipline. You want to find a Master, a teacher, and so you discipline yourself, you meditate, you suppress certain desires, you force your mind to fit into a frame. And so your whole life, your whole consciousness is twisted.

If we understand, not superficially, but really deeply, the inward significance

of discipline, we will see that it makes the mind conform, as a soldier is made to conform; and the mind that merely conforms to a pattern, however noble, can obviously never be free, and therefore can never perceive what is true. This does not mean that the mind can do whatever it likes. When it does whatever it likes, it soon finds out there is always pain, sorrow, at the end of it. But if the mind sees the full significance of all this, then you will find that there is immediate understanding without compulsion, without suppression.

One of our difficulties is that we have been so trained, educated to suppress, to conform, that we are really frightened of being free; we are afraid that in freedom we may do something ugly. But if we begin to understand the whole pattern of discipline, which is to see that we conform in order to arrive, to gain, to be secure, then we shall find that there comes into being a totally different process of awareness in which there is no necessity for suppression or conformity.

Question: What happens after death? And do you believe in reincarnation?

KRISHNAMURTI: This is a very complex problem that touches every human being, whether he is young or old, and whether he lives in Russia, where there is officially no belief in the hereafter, or in India, or here in the West, where there is every shade of belief. It really requires very careful inquiry and not merely the acceptance or rejection of a particular belief. So let us please think it out together very carefully.

Death is the inevitable end for all of us and we know it. We may rationalize it, or escape from the uncertainty of that vast unknown through belief in reincarnation, resurrection, or what you will; but fear is still there. The body, the physical organism

inevitably wears itself out, just as every machine wears itself out. You and I know that disease, accident, or old age will come and carry us away. We say "Yes, that is so", and we accept it; so that is really not our problem. Our problem is much deeper. We are frightened of losing everything that we have gained, understood, gathered; we are frightened of not being; we are frightened of the unknown. We have lived, we have accumulated, learned, experienced, suffered; we have educated the mind and disciplined ourselves; and is death the end of it all? We do not like to think that it is. So we say there must be a hereafter; life must continue, if not by returning to earth, then it must continue elsewhere. And many of us have a comforting belief in the theory of reincarnation.

To me belief is not important; because belief in an idea, in a theory, however comforting, however satisfactory, does not give understanding of the full significance of death. Surely, death is something totally unknown, completely new. However anxiously I may inquire into death, it ever remains something which I do not know. All that you and I know is the past, and the continuity of the past through the present to the future. Memory identified with my house, my family, my name, my acquisitions, virtues, struggles, experiences—all that is the 'me'; and we want the 'me' to continue. Or if you are tired of the 'me', you say "Thank God, death ends it all"; but that does not solve the problem either.

So we must find out, surely, the truth of this matter. What you happen to believe or disbelieve about reincarnation has no truth in it. But instead of asking what happens after death, can we not discover the truth of what death is? Because, life itself may be a process of death. Why do we divide life from death? We do so because we think life is a process of continuity,

of accumulation; and death is cessation, the annihilation of all that we have accumulated. So we have separated living from death. But life may be entirely different; it may be a process the truth of which we do not know, a process of living and dying each minute. All that we know is a form of continuity—what I was yesterday, what I am today, and what I hope to be tomorrow. That is all we know. And because the mind clings to that continuity, it is afraid of what it calls death.

Now, can the living mind know death? Do you understand the problem? It is not a question of what happens after death, but can a living mind, a mind that is not diseased, that is fully alert, aware, experience that state which it calls death? Which means, really, do we know what living is? Because living may be dying, in the sense of dying to our memories. Please follow this, and perhaps you will see the enormous implication of this idea of death.

We live in the field of the known, do we not? The known is that with which I have identified myself—my family, my country, my experiences, my job, my friends, the virtues, the qualities, the knowledge I have gathered, all the things I have known. So the mind is the result of the past; the mind is the past. The mind is burdened with the known. And can the mind free itself from the known? That is, can I die to all that I have accumulated—not when I am a doddering old man, but now? While I am still full of vitality, clarity and understanding, can I die to everything that I have been, that I am going to be, or think that I should be? That is can I die to the known, die to every moment? Can I invite death, enter the house of death while living?

You can enter the house of death only when the mind is free from the known—the known being all that you have gathered, all that you are, all that you think you are and hope to be.

All this must completely cease. And is there then a division between living and dying, or only a totally different state of mind?

If you are merely listening to the words, then I am afraid you will not understand the implication of what is being said. But if you will, you can see for yourself that living is a process of dying every minute, and renewing. Otherwise you are not really living, are you? You are merely continuing a state of mind within the field of the known, which is routine, which is boredom. There is living, surely, only when you die—consciously, intelligently, with full awareness—to everything that you have been, to the many yesterdays. Then the problem of death is entirely different. There may be no problem at all. There may be a state of mind in which time does not exist. Time exists only when there is identification with the known. The mind that is burdened with the known is everlastingly afraid of the unknown. Whatever it may do, whatever may be its beliefs, its dogmas, its hopes, they are all based on fear; and it is this fear that corrupts living.

September 15, 1956

VI

TALK IN HAMBURG

It seems to me that the whole world is intent on capturing the mind of man. We have created the psychological world of relationship, the world in which we live, and it in turn is controlling us, shaping our thinking, our activities, our psychological being. Every political and religious organization, you will find, is after the mind of man—'after' in the sense of wanting to capture it, shape it to a certain pattern. The powers that be in the

Communist world are blatantly conditioning the mind of man in every direction, and this is also true of the organized religions throughout the world, who for centuries have tried to mould the way of man's thought. Each specialized group, whether religious, secular, or political, is striving to draw and to hold man within the pattern of that which its books, its leaders, the few in power, think is good for him. They think they know the future; they think they know what is the ultimate good for man. The priests, with their so-called religious authority, as well as the worldly powers—whether it be in Rome, in Moscow, in America, or elsewhere—are all trying to control man's thought-process, are they not? And most of us eagerly accept some form of authority and subject ourselves to it. There are very few who escape the clutches of this organized control of man and his thinking.

Merely to break away from a particular religious pattern, or from a political pattern of the left or of the right, in order to adopt another pattern, or to establish one of our own, will not, it seems to me, simplify the extraordinary complexity of our lives, or resolve the catastrophic misery in which most of us live. I think the fundamental solution lies elsewhere, and it is this fundamental solution that we are all trying to find. Groping blindly, we join this organization or that. We belong to a particular society, follow this or that leader, try to find a Master in India or somewhere else—always hoping to break away from our narrow, limited existence, but always caught, it seems to me, in this conflict within the pattern. We never seem to get away from the pattern, either self-created, or imposed by some leader or religious authority. We blindly accept authority in the hope of breaking through the cloud of our own strife, misery and struggle; but no leader, no authority is ever going to free man.

I think history has shown this very clearly, and you in this country know it very well—perhaps better than others.

So if a new world is to come into being, as it must, it seems to me extremely important to understand this whole process of authority—the authority imposed by society, by the book, by a set of people who think they know the ultimate good for man and who seek to force him through torture, through every form of compulsion, to conform to their pattern. We are quick to follow such people because in our own being we are so uncertain, so confused; and we also follow because of our vanity and arrogance, and out of desire for the power offered by another.

Now, is it possible to break away from this whole pattern of authority? Can we break away from all authority of any kind in ourselves? We may reject the authority of another, but unfortunately we still have the authority of our own experience, of our own knowledge, of our own thinking, and that in turn becomes the pattern which guides us; but that is essentially no different from the authority of another. There is this desire to follow, to imitate, to conform in the hope of achieving something greater, and so long as this desire exists there must be misery and strife, every form of suppression, frustration and suffering.

I do not think we sufficiently realize the necessity of being free of this compulsion to follow authority, inward or outward. And I think it is very important psychologically to understand this compulsion; otherwise we shall go on blindly struggling in this world in which we live and have our being, and we shall never find that other thing which is so infinitely greater. We must surely break away from this world of imitation and conformity if we are to find a totally different world. This means a really fundamental change in our lives—in the way of our action,

in the way of our thought, in the way of our feeling.

But most of us are not concerned with that, we are not concerned with understanding our thoughts, our feelings, our activities. We are only concerned with what to believe or not to believe, with whom to follow or not to follow, with which is the right society or political party, and all the rest of that nonsense. We are never concerned deeply, inwardly, with a radical change in the way of our daily life, in the way of our speech, the sensitivity of our thought towards another; we are not concerned with any of that. We cultivate the intellect and acquire knowledge of innumerable things, but we remain inwardly the same—ambitious, cruel, violent, envious, burdened with all the pettiness of which the mind is capable. And seeing all this, is it possible to break away from the petty mind? I think that is the only real problem. And I think that in breaking away from the petty mind we shall find the right answer to our economic, social and other problems.

Without understanding the pettiness of ourselves, the narrow, shallow thoughts and feelings that we have—without going into that very deeply and fundamentally, merely to join societies and follow leaders who promise better health, better economic conditions, and all the rest of it, seems to me so utterly immature. Our fear may perhaps be modified, moved to another level, but inwardly we remain the same; there is still fear and the sense of frustration that goes with self-centred activity. Unless we fundamentally change that, do what we will—create the most extraordinary legislative order, bring about a Welfare State which guarantees everyone's social well-being, and all the rest of it—inwardly we shall always remain poor.

So how is the mind to break away from its own pettiness? I do not know if you have ever thought about this,

or if it is a problem to you. Perhaps you are merely concerned with improving conditions, bringing about certain reforms, establishing a better social order, and are not concerned with a radical change in human thinking. It seems to me that the real problem is whether a fundamental change comes about through outward circumstances, or through any form of compulsion, or whether it comes from a totally different direction. If we rely on any form of compulsion, on outward changes in the social order, on so-called education, which is the mere gathering of information, and so on, surely our lives will still be shallow. We may know a great deal about many things, we may be able to quote the various authorities and be very learned in the expression of our thought; but our minds will be as petty as before, with the same ache of deep anxiety, uncertainty, fear. So there is no fundamental transformation through outward change, or through any form of pressure, influence. Fundamental transformation comes from quite a different direction, and this is what I would like briefly to talk about, even though I have already talked about it a great deal during the last five meetings; because it seems to me that this is the only real issue.

So long as we ourselves are confused, small, petty, whatever our activity may be, and whatever concept we may have of truth, of God, of beauty or love, our thinking and our action are bound to be equally petty, confused, limited. A confused mind can only think in terms of confusion. A petty mind can never imagine what God is, what truth is; and yet that is what we are occupied with. So it seems to me important to discover whether the mind can transform itself without any compulsion, without any motive. The moment there is compulsion, the mind is already conforming to a pattern. If there is a motive for change, that motive is self-projected; therefore the

change, being a product of self-centred activity, is no change at all. It seems to me that this is the real thing which we have fundamentally to tackle, put our teeth into—and not whom to follow, who is the best leader, and all that rubbish.

The question is, can the mind, without any form of compulsion, without a motive, bring about a transformation within itself? A motive is bound to be the result of self-centred desire, and such a motive is self-enclosing; therefore there is no freedom, there is no transformation of the mind. So, can the mind break away from all influence and from all motive? And is not this very breaking away from all influence and from all motive in itself a transformation of the mind? Do you follow what I mean?

You see, we must abandon this world in which we are caught—the world of authority, of power, of influence, the world of conditioning, of fear, of ambition and envy—if we are to find the other world. We must let this world go, let it die in us without compulsion, without motive; because any motive will be a mere repetition of the same thing in different terms.

I think just to look at the problem, just to comprehend the problem, brings its own answer. I see that, as a human being, I am the result of innumerable influences, social compulsions, religious impressions, and that if I try to find reality, truth, or God, that very search will be based on the things I have been taught, shaped by what I have known, conditioned by my education and by the influences of the environment in which I live. So, can I be free of all that? To be free, I must first know for myself that my mind is conditioned, that is, I must be fully aware that I am not really a human being, but a Hindu, a Catholic, a German, a Protestant, a Communist, a Socialist, or whatever it may be. I am born with a label; and this, or some other label of my own choosing, sticks to me for

the rest of my life. I am born and die in one religion, or I change from one religion to another, and I think I have understood reality, God; but I have only perpetuated the conditioned mind, the label. Now, can I, as a human being, put all that away from me without any compulsion?

I think it is very important to understand that any effort made to free oneself from one's conditioning, is another form of conditioning. If I try to free myself from Hinduism, or any other ism, I am making that effort in order to achieve what I consider to be a more desirable state; therefore the motive to change conditions the change. So I must realize my own conditioning, and do absolutely nothing. This is very difficult. But I must know for myself that my mind is small, petty, confused, conditioned, and see that any effort to change it is still within the field of that confusion; therefore any such effort only breeds further confusion.

I hope I am making this clear. If your mind is confused, as the minds of most people are, then your thought, your action, and your choice of a leader, will also be confused. But if you know that you are confused, and realize that any effort born of that confusion can only bring still further confusion, then what happens? If you are fundamentally, deeply aware of that fact, then you will see quite a different process at work. It is not the process of effort; there is no wanting to break through your confusion. You know that you are totally confused, and therefore there is the cessation of all thinking.

This is a very difficult thing to comprehend, because we are so certain that thinking, rationalizing, logical reasoning, can resolve our problems. But we have never really examined the process of thinking. We assume that thinking will solve our problems, but we have never gone into the whole issue of what thinking is. So long as I remain a Hindu, a Christian, or what you will,

my thinking must be shaped by that pattern; therefore my thinking, my whole response to life, is conditioned. So long as I think as an Indian, a German, or whatever it is, and act according to that petty, nationalistic background, it inevitably leads to separation, to hatred, to war and misery. So we have to inquire into the whole problem of thinking.

There is no freedom of thought, because all thought is conditioned. There is freedom only when I understand that all thought is conditioned, and am therefore free of that conditioning—which means, really, that there is no thought at all, no thinking in terms of Catholic, Hindu, Buddhist, German, or what you will, but pure observation, complete attention. In this, I think, lies the real revolution: in the immense understanding that thought does not solve the problem of existence. Which does not mean that you must become thoughtless. On the contrary. To understand the process of thinking requires, not acceptance or denial, but intense inquiry. When the mind understands the whole process of itself, there is then a fundamental revolution, a radical change, which is not brought about through conscious effort. It is an effortless state, out of which comes a total transformation.

But this transformation is not of time. It is not a thing about which you can say to yourself "It will come eventually; I must work at it, I must do this and not that." On the contrary, the moment you introduce time as a factor of change, there is no real change at all.

The immeasurable is not of this world, it is not put together by the mind; because what the mind has put together, the mind can undo. To understand the immeasurable, which is to enter into a different world altogether, we must understand this world in which we live, this world which we have created and of which we are a part: the world of ambition, greed, envy, hatred, the world of separation, fear and lust. That

means we must understand ourselves, the unconscious as well as the conscious, and this is not very difficult if you set your mind to it. If you really want to know the totality of your own being, you can easily discover it. It reveals itself in every relationship, at every moment—when you are entering the bus, getting a taxi, or talking to someone.

But most of us are not concerned with that, because it requires serious endeavour, persistent inquiry. Most of us are very superficial; we are easily satisfied with such words as 'God', 'love', 'beauty'. We call ourselves Christians, Buddhists, or Hindus, and think we have solved the whole problem. We must shed all that, let it drop away completely; and it will drop away only when we begin to know ourselves deeply. It is only through understanding ourselves that we shall find something which is beyond all measure.

These are not mere words for you to learn and repeat. What you repeat will have no meaning unless you directly experience this. If you do not have your own direct understanding of it, the world of effort and sorrow, of misery and chaos, will continue.

Question: You talk so much against the church and organized religion. Have they not done a lot of good in this world?

KRISHNAMURTI: I am not talking against the church and organized religion. It is up to you. Personally I do not belong to any church or organized religion, because to me they have no meaning; and I think that if you are earnestly seeking what is real, you will have to put all those things aside—which does not mean that I am attacking. If you attack, you have to defend; but we are neither attacking nor defending. We are trying to understand this whole problem of existence, in which the church and organized religions are included.

I do not think any organized religion helps man to find God, truth. They may condition you to believe in God, as the Communist mind is conditioned *not* to believe in God; but I do not see much difference between the two. The man who says "I believe in God", and who has been trained from childhood to believe in God, is in the same field as the man who says "I do not believe in God", and who has also been conditioned to repeat this kind of nonsense. But a man who wants to find out, begins to inquire for himself. He does not merely accept some authority, some book or saviour. If he is really in earnest, pursuing understanding in his daily thoughts, in his whole way of life, he abandons all belief and disbelief. He is an inquirer, a real seeker, without any motive; he is on a journey of discovery, single, alone. And when he finds, life has quite a different significance. Then perhaps he may be able to help others to be free.

The questioner wants to know if the organized religions have not done good. Have they? I believe there is only one organized religion which has not brought misery to man through war—and it is obviously not Christianity. You have had more wars, perhaps, than any other religion—all in the name of peace, love, goodness, freedom. You have probably suffered more than most people the terrors of war and degradation—with both sides always claiming that God is with them. You know all this so well, without my repetition.

I think it is we who have made this world what it is. The world has not been made by wisdom, by truth, by God; *we* have made it, you and I. And until you and I fundamentally change, no organized religion is going to do good to man. They may socially do good, bring about superficial reforms. But it has taken centuries to civilize religions, and it will take centuries to civilize Communism. A man who is really in earnest must be free from all these things. He must go beyond all

the saviours, all the gods and demagogues, to find out what is true.

Question: Will self-knowledge put an end to suffering, which apparently necessitates the soul taking birth over and over again?

KRISHNAMURTI: The idea is that so long as you have to suffer, you must be reborn, till you transcend suffering. That is the old Hindu, Buddhist, or Asiatic idea. They say you must return to the earth, be reborn over and over again and continue to suffer, till you understand the whole process of suffering and step out of it.

In one way it is true, is it not? Our life *is* suffering. Year after year, from the time we are born till we die, our life is a process of struggle, suffering, pain, anxiety, fear. We know this all too well. It is a form of continuity—the continuity of suffering, is it not? Whether you will be reborn, to suffer again till you understand, is irrelevant. You *do* suffer now, within the present lifetime. And can we put an end to suffering, not at some future date, but immediately, and not think in terms of time?

I think it is possible. Not that you must accept what I say, because acceptance has no validity. But can one not begin to inquire for oneself whether suffering can come to an end? I am talking of psychological suffering, not the bodily aches and pains—although if we understand the psychological state of the mind, it may perhaps help to ameliorate our physical suffering also. So, can suffering come to an end? Or is man doomed to suffer everlastingly—not in the Christian sense of hell-fire and all that rubbish, but in the ordinary sense? After all, fifty years or so of suffering is good enough. You don't have to speculate about the future.

If we begin to inquire into it, I think we shall find that suffering exists so long as there is ignorance of the whole process of one's own being. So long as I do not

know myself, the ways and compulsions of my own mind, unconscious as well as conscious, there must be suffering. After all, we suffer because of ignorance—ignorance in the sense of not knowing oneself. Ignorance is also a lack of understanding of the ordinary daily contacts between man and man, and out of that ignorance comes much suffering also; but I am talking of our utter lack of self-knowledge. Without self-knowledge, suffering will continue.

Question: Is it possible to influence the thinking of mankind in the right direction by suitable thoughts and meditation?

KRISHNAMURTI: I think this is one of the most extraordinary concerns of man—the desire to influence somebody else. That is what you are all doing, is it not? You are trying to influence your son, your daughter, your husband, your wife, everybody around you—thinking that you know, and the other does not. It is a form of vanity.

Really, what *do* you know? Very little, surely. You may be a great scientist and know a lot of facts; you may know many things that have been written in books, you may know about philosophy and psychology—but these are all merely the acquisitions of memory. And beyond that, what do you know? Yet you want to influence people in the right direction. That is what the Communists are doing. They think they know; they interpret history in a certain way, as the church does, and they all want to influence people. And they jolly well *are* influencing people—putting them in concentration camps, trapping them with threats of hell-fire, excommunication, and all the rest of it. You know all this business—which is supposed to be influencing people in the right direction. Those who do the influencing think they know what the right direction is. They all claim to have the vision of what is true. The Communists claim it, and in the

case of the church it is supposed to be God-given. And you want to join one or the other of them, through 'right thinking', as you call it.

But first of all, do you know what thinking is? Can there ever be right thinking so long as the mind is conditioned, so long as you are thinking of yourself as a Christian, a Communist, or what you will? Surely the whole idea of trying to influence people is totally wrong.

Then you may ask, "What are *you* trying to do?" I assure you I am not trying to influence you. I am pointing out certain obvious things, which perhaps you have not thought about before—and the rest is up to you. There is no 'good' influence or 'bad' influence when you are seeking what is true. To find out for oneself what is true, all influence must cease. There is no 'good' conditioning or 'bad' conditioning—there is only freedom from *all* conditioning. So the idea of trying to influence another for his 'good' seems to me utterly immature, completely false.

Then there is this problem of meditation, which the questioner raises. It is a very complex problem, and I do not know if you want to go into it.

Unless we know for ourselves what meditation is, and how to meditate, life has very little depth. Without meditation there is no perfume to life, no beauty, no love. Meditation is a tremendous thing, requiring a great deal of insight, perception. One may know that state, one may feel it occasionally. When one is sitting very quietly in one's room, or under a tree looking at the blue sky, there comes a feeling of immensity without measure, without comparison, without cognition. But that is entirely different from the things that you have learned about meditation. You have probably read various books from India, telling how to meditate, and so you want to learn a technique in order to meditate.

The very process of learning a technique in order to meditate, is a denial

of meditation. Meditation is something entirely different. It is not the outcome of any practice, of any discipline, of any compulsion or conformity. But if you begin to understand the process of conformity, of compulsion, the desire to achieve, to gain something, then the understanding of all that is part of meditation. Self-knowledge—which is to know the ways of your own thought, and to pursue thought right to the end—is the beginning of meditation.

It is very difficult to pursue a thought to the end, because other thoughts come in, and then we say we must learn concentration. But concentration is not important. Any child is capable of concentration—give him a new toy and he is concentrated. Every business man is concentrated when he wants to make money. Concentration, which we think we should have in order to meditate, is really narrowness, a process of limitation, exclusion.

So when you put the question, "How am I to meditate?", what is important is to understand why you ask 'how'. If you go into it, you will find that this very inquiry is meditation.

But that is only a beginning. In meditation there is no thinker apart from thought; there is neither the pursuer nor the pursued. It is a state of being in which there is no sense of the experiencer. But to come to that state, the mind must really understand the whole process of itself. If it does not understand itself it will get caught in its own projection, in a vision which it has created; and to be caught in a vision is not meditation.

Meditation is the process of understanding oneself; that is the beginning of it. Self-knowledge brings wisdom. And as the mind begins to understand the whole process of itself, it becomes very quiet, completely still, without any sense of movement or demand. Then, perhaps, that which is not measurable comes into being.

September 16, 1956

I

TALK IN ATHENS

I do not think that the social problem can be separated from the individual problem; and to resolve the social as well as the individual problem, surely one must begin with oneself. If one wants to bring about a fundamental change in society, it seems to me that it is first necessary to bring about a fundamental change in oneself. So I am going to talk this evening, and at the next two meetings, about those problems which I feel are fundamental to the individual, and which reflect in our social activities; and I hope you will understand that I am talking to you as an individual, and not as a collective group.

It seems to me that it is very important for the individual to bring about a fundamental, unforced revolution or transformation within himself. Considering the many problems that we have, not only in this country but all over the world, I think that the right response to them can come about only if there is a totally different kind of religion, a wholly new approach. The world is broken up, as we can see only too well, into conflicting ideologies, competing religions, and various forms of social culture. There is not only the Communist ideology, but the many religious ideologies, all of which separate man from man. So it seems to me very important that we should try to bring about a different kind of world, a different view of life altogether, so that we can have a totally new comprehension of religion.

I do not mean by religion an organized set of beliefs, but something which is totally different from that which exists everywhere at present. Because, after all, religion is a fundamental necessity for man—more so, it seems to me, than bread. And what I mean by religion is the discovery of the fundamental solution, the ultimate answer to all our

major problems. I do not mean by religion a mere belief, a dogma, nor following a certain ecclesiastical authority—which is what is called religion today. But is it not possible for something else to take place? Is it not possible for the mind to be totally free from the vast tradition of centuries? Because it is only a free mind that can discover truth, reality, that which is beyond the projections of a conditioned mind. That is why I think that the unconditioned mind is the only truly religious mind, and that only the truly religious mind is capable of a fundamental revolution.

Our life, both in our work and during our free time, leads to a very superficial relationship between man and man, does it not? It is a false life. And I feel that a fundamental change depends upon understanding what is true, and not upon belief in any religious dogma or spiritual authority. If you feel really deeply the need to be aware of what is true, then you will see that every form of belief or dogma is a hindrance. We are, after all, brought up to believe in certain ideas, whether of the Communist world, of the Western world, or of the Eastern world; we have accepted established beliefs, and to free ourselves from this conditioning is not easy. But surely it is impossible, under any circumstances, to find out what is true, what is God, so long as one merely believes in certain ideas, certain concepts which man has himself created for his own security.

If I am born in India, for instance, and am educated in a certain sphere of thought, subjected to certain influences and pressures, my mind is obviously conditioned; it is as conditioned to believe as the Communist mind is conditioned *not* to believe. And if I would find out what is true, what is God, what is beyond the mere measure of the mind, surely I must free my mind from this conditioning—which seems so obvious.

And is it possible for the mind to free itself from its conditioning? That, it seem to me, is the only realistic

approach. If the Hindu merely continues to repeat certain words and perform certain ceremonies because he has been brought up in that way, and the Christians, the Buddhists, and others do likewise, then surely there is no freedom; and without freeing the mind from all conditioning, we cannot find out what is true. To me, this freedom of the mind from all conditioning is therefore the only real solution.

So, first of all, it is very important to become aware of our conditioning. And I assure you it is extremely difficult to realize that one is conditioned, and be free of all conditioning. What usually happens is that we move away from one set of concepts to follow another. We give up Christianity for Communism, or we leave Catholicism for some other equally tyrannical group, thinking that we are progressing towards reality; but we have merely changed our prison.

Surely, what is important is to free the mind from *all* conditioning, and not just find a so-called better conditioning. Only freedom from all conditioning can bring about this revolution which I call religious. I am talking about an inner revolution, a revolution within the mind itself, whether it be a Christian mind, a Hindu mind, or a Buddhist mind; for without this revolution, this freedom, surely there can be no deep understanding. I think this is fairly clear: that the mind can find out what is true only when it is free of all beliefs, however apparently good and noble.

Economic or social revolutions do not solve our problems, because, being superficial, they can only bring about superficial results. When we look to outward reforms to bring about a fundamental change, it is surely a wrong approach to the problem. We obviously need a fundamental change in our way of thinking and feeling; and to rely on any social or economic solution only brings further problems on the same level.

So the solution to all our problems, it seems to me, lies in bringing about a

fundamental, religious revolution in ourselves. This really means, does it not?, finding out whether the mind can free itself from all the impositions, from the ambitions, the beliefs and dogmas in which at present it feels so secure. Can the mind—your mind and my mind—, which has been conditioned from childhood to believe or not to believe, free itself from all its present conditioning without falling into a different kind of conditioning?

The problem is complicated, because it is not merely a matter of freeing the conscious mind from its conditioning. Besides the waking consciousness of our daily activities, there are also the deep layers of the unconscious, in which there are the accumulated influences of the past. All these hindrances make up the conditioning of the mind, and unless it is totally free from them our inquiry is bound to be limited, narrow, without much significance. Merely to drop certain beliefs or daily habits does not solve the problem. There must be a change, not in just a part of our consciousness, but in the totality of our being, must there not?

Now, how is this to be done? That is our problem. Is there a particular technique or method which will bring about a fundamental revolution in one's consciousness? We see that necessity for a radical change, and by following a method, a technique, we hope to bring it about. But is there any method that can bring it about? Or does the very action of seeking a method, the very desire to find the 'how', create another conditioning of the mind? I think it is very important, instead of merely desiring a method, to find out for ourselves whether a method is necessary at all; and to find out, we shall have to go very deeply into this question. After all, when we ask for a method, it is because we want a result; but the desired result is a projection of the conditioned mind, and in pursuing it the mind is merely moving towards another form of conditioning.

First of all we must inquire, must we not?, why we are seeking, and what it is we are seeking. We know that we go from one teacher to another. Each teacher offers a different method of discipline or meditation—and all that is so absurd. What is important, surely, is not the teacher and what he offers, but to find out what it is you are seeking. By delivering yourself into the hands of another, by following some authority, by practising a discipline, controlling yourself, sooner or later you will find what you want; but it will not be the truth. The following of any method only perpetuates conditioning, perhaps in a new form, and so the mind is never free to understand what is true.

Now, if one really perceives that the very demand for a method—whether it be the Buddhist method, the Christian method, or any other—is only another form of conditioning which prevents the mind from finding the truth, then what is one to do? One can understand superficially, perhaps, that dependence on authority, however promising, is detrimental to the discovery of what is true; but it is very difficult, is it not?, to free ourselves from all dependence on authority, whether it be the authority of the church, of society, or the authority which one has created for oneself through one's own experience. If you are serious in these matters, if you are really trying to find out whether the mind can free itself from authority, you will know how difficult it is. Yet the mind *must* be free from authority, obviously, otherwise it can never find out what is true. We depend on authority because, among other things, we are afraid of not attaining salvation; and the mind that is dependent cannot know the immeasurable, that which is beyond all churches, all dogmas and beliefs. There must be total freedom, which means that the mind must be capable of standing completely alone.

So, can the mind completely free itself from fear, from the dictates of society and so-called religious beliefs?

Surely, if one really desires to find the truth, one must be totally free from all conditioning, from all dogmas and beliefs, from the authorities that make us conform. One must stand completely alone—and that is very arduous. It is not a matter of going out into the country on a Sunday morning, sitting quietly under a tree, and so on. The aloneness of which I am speaking is pure, incorruptible; it is free of all tradition, of all dogma and opinion, of everything that another has said. When the mind is in this state of aloneness, it is quiet, essentially still, not asking for anything; and such a mind is capable of knowing what is true. Otherwise we are ever burdened with fear, which creates so much conflict and confusion in us and in the world.

So the religious revolution of which I am speaking can come about only when the mind is free from all the so-called religions, with their dogmas and beliefs, and from self-created inward authority. And there can be this freedom, surely, only through self-knowledge. But self-knowledge cannot be found in books; it is not a matter of reading psychology, or following the description of another as to what the self is made up of. Self-knowledge comes only in understanding oneself, in watching the movement of one's own mind in relationship with people, with things, and with ideas; it lies in being aware of the whole content of the mind, in observing the total operation of one's consciousness from moment to moment.

I shall now read a question which has been sent to me; but I think we must all understand that I am not answering the question, but rather we are considering the problem together. Most of us have problems, and want to solve them. Whatever the problem may be, we want an answer or a solution which will be satisfactory to us. That is, we are concerned with the answer, the solution, and not with the problem. Our attention is divided; with one part of the mind we are seeking a solution,

instead of trying with the totality of our being to understand the problem. The solution may or may not come; but to understand the problem, our concern must be with the problem itself, and not with the solution.

Question: What makes up a problem? And is any problem solved by dissecting it and finding its cause?

KRISHNAMURTI: What is a problem? Please do not just wait for an answer from me. You are not merely listening to someone talking, but we are trying to find out together what creates a problem. You each have your own problems. How do they come into being?

We have contradictory desires, do we not? I want to be rich, let us say, and at the same time I know or have heard that wealth is detrimental to the discovery of truth. So there is a contradiction in my desires—the contradiction of wanting and not wanting. It is this conflict of contradictory desires in us that creates a problem, is it not? We have many contradictory desires, many conflicting pursuits, ambitions, urges, and all these contradictions create a problem. Now, can the mind ever resolve the problem of self-contradiction by imposing one desire on another?

Take hatred, for example. What causes hatred? Surely, one of the biggest factors is chauvinism; another is the sense of superiority or inferiority created by economic differences; still another is the division created between man and man by what are called religions. These are the principal causes of hatred, and they give rise to many other major problems in the world today. Knowing all this, can the individual free himself from hatred? This is where our difficulty lies, and if you will listen carefully I think you will see it.

When I say "I know the cause of hatred", what do I mean by the words "I know"? Do I know it merely through the word, the intellect, or do

I know it with the totality of my being? Am I aware of the root of hatred in myself, or do I know its cause only intellectually or emotionally? If the mind is totally aware of the problem, then there is freedom from the problem; but I cannot be aware of it with the totality of my being if I condemn the problem. It is very difficult for the mind not to condemn; but to understand a problem there must be no condemning of that problem, no comparing of it with another problem.

I do not think we realize that we are all the time either condemning or comparing. Let us not try to excuse ourselves, but just watch our daily life, and we shall see that we never think without judging, comparing, evaluating. We are always saying "This book is not as good as the other one", or "This man is better than that man"; there is a constant process of comparison, through which we think we understand. But do we really understand through comparison? Or does understanding come only when one ceases to compare, and just observes? When your mind is integrated, you have no time to compare, have you? But the moment you compare, your attention has already moved elsewhere. When you say "This sunset is not as beautiful as that of yesterday", you do not really see the sunset, for your mind has wandered off to the memory of yesterday.

When the mind is capable of not condemning, not comparing, but merely examines the problem, then surely the problem has undergone a fundamental change; and then the problem ceases. Simple awareness is enough to put an end to the problem.

What do we mean by awareness? If you observe your own mind you will see that it is always comparing, judging, condemning. When we condemn or compare, do we understand? If we condemn a child, or compare him with his brother, obviously we do not understand him. So, can the mind

be simply aware of a problem, without condemning or comparing? This is extremely difficult, because from childhood we have been brought up to condemn and to compare. And can the mind cease to condemn and compare without being compelled? Surely, when the mind sees for itself that to condemn or to compare does not bring about understanding, then that very perception frees the mind from all condemnation and comparison. This means a complete separation of the mind from all traditions and beliefs.

To free one's mind in this deep sense requires a great deal of insight, because the mind is very easily influenced. It is always seeking security, not only in this world, in society, but also in the so-called spiritual world. If you go into the whole process of your own mind, you will see that this is so; and a mind that is seeking security can never be free.

To observe the total process of the mind without condemnation or comparison, to be conscious of it without judgment, to recognize and understand it from moment to moment—this is awareness, is it not?

You have listened to what is being said, and probably you either approve or disapprove of it, which means that you accept or reject it. But we are not just dealing with ideas, which can be accepted or rejected; we are not putting new ideas in the place of old ones. We are concerned with the totality of the mind, the totality of yourself, of your whole being, which cannot be approached through ideas. Please do not accept or reject, but try to find out, as you listen, how your own mind is operating. Then you will see that the mere observation of the process of the mind is in itself sufficient to bring about a fundamental transformation within the mind.

We see that there must be in us a radical change, and we think that we have to make an effort to bring it about. But any effort in that direction is merely

another form of wanting a result, so we are back again in the same old process. What is necessary, surely, is not more control, more knowledge, but rather awareness of the totality of oneself, without any sense of condemnation or approval. Then you will find that the mind is renewed and absolutely still. For this an exceptional amount of energy is required; but it is not energy spent in the usual way, on comparison, on suppression, on the imposition of discipline, nor is it the energy acquired through prayer. It is the energy that comes with full attention. Every movement of thought in any direction is a waste of energy, and to be completely still the mind needs the energy of absolute attention. When the mind is alert, aware, wholly attentive, it becomes very quiet, very still; and only then is it possible for that which is immeasurable to come into being.

September 24, 1956

II

TALK IN ATHENS

Communication is always difficult, because in communicating we must employ words, and certain words have different meanings for different people; and I think it is very difficult for most of us to go beyond the words and feel out for ourselves the full significance of what lies beyond. There are words which have not only a dictionary meaning, but more than that; our minds are heavily conditioned to them. Take words like 'love' and 'God'. Such words have come to have a particular meaning for each one of us, and they affect us in different ways, physiologically as well as psychologically. We accept such words very easily, because we have been brought up to believe in what they represent. But

what they represent for most of us is very restricted and superficial, and it will be a waste of time if we merely remain at the threshold of the meaning of words.

To follow what is being communicated and not be misled by words, requires a particular kind of attention, and this attention is difficult to come by. Most of us are satisfied with a certain set of words or phrases which we have often heard and which we repeat. But perhaps this evening we could go beyond the words and feel out for ourselves the significance of what is being said. Because after all, in these talks, we are not merely trying to express certain ideas, however pleasant or unpleasant, but if possible to go beyond the meaning of words and experience a new state which we all feel must exist.

Understanding depends on the way one listens. As we listen, are we discussing inwardly what is being said, interpreting it according to our individual opinions, knowledge and idiosyncrasies? Or are we simply listening, without any movement of adjustment or interpretation? There are two ways of listening. One can listen merely to the words, see their usual significance and understand only their outward meaning; or one can listen to the verbal exposition, and follow it inwardly—that is, understand what is being described as one's own experience. So may I suggest, if this experiment is to be useful and worth while, that we should not merely listen to the words, but in listening examine if we can the very process of our own thinking.

We are trying to find out what is the real process of life, and what lies behind the superficial activities of our daily existence. If we would really experience what we are talking about, it must be done directly, now; it is of no value to wait and think about it afterwards. That is, if you are taking notes, trying to capture certain phrases in order to think about all this afterwards, it will be of no value, because you will merely

be remembering words. To discover for yourself the significance of your own thinking, you must directly examine how you think and actually experience the whole process of it. Because it seems to me that thought is not going to solve our many problems; however reasonable, however clever, logical, thinking surely will not put an end to our ceaseless conflict. Not that you must accept this statement; but can we find out for ourselves what thinking is?

Please examine your own thought process as I am talking, and ask yourself what thinking is. Thinking is a process or reaction, is it not? It is a reaction according to our background, according to the environment in which we live and have been brought up; and without understanding this background, we shall never find out whether it is possible for the mind to go beyond the process of its own activities.

What happens when we think? Without realizing it, the mind divides itself, and then one section of the mind investigates the other, giving an answer out of its own accumulated experience, or according to the accepted experiences of others. This effort makes up what we call thinking, and the resulting answer is but the projection of a conditioned mind.

Surely our problems demand quite a different approach, they demand a really new psychological outlook; but we must understand the process of our own thinking before we can go beyond thought. That is why it is important to inquire for ourselves into how our thinking begins, and where it stops; because if we do not understand the activity of our own thought, we shall only create more problems, and perhaps bring about our own destruction.

When we think, we do so within a framework which society has imposed on us, or which we ourselves have adopted; and it seems to me that so long as we think within a framework, our problems, whether social or individual, will remain unsolved. I feel

it is very important that you and I as two individuals, not as a group, should investigate for ourselves the process of our own thinking.

Is there freedom in thinking, or is all thought limited? If you look into yourself, you will see that all thinking is conditioned. The mind, the conscious as well as the unconscious, is the result of time, of memory; it is the residue of various cultures, of centuries of knowledge and experience. The totality of consciousness is made up of thought; and thought, surely, derives from this residue of the past, both individual and collective. So our thinking is obviously conditioned.

If we examine ourselves we shall see that our consciousness is the outcome of many influences: climate, diet, various forms of authority, the *do's* and *dont's* of society, and of the religion in which we have been brought up, the books we have read, the reactions we have felt, and so on. All these influences condition and shape the mind, and from this background comes our thought. Furthermore, our thinking is based on hope, on fear, on the desire to become something, all of which is encouraged and stimulated by the competitive society in which we have been brought up. So all thinking is conditioned, it is merely a process of reaction according to the past; and the question is, can such thinking solve our many problems?

I hope you are giving close attention to all this, otherwise you will miss the significance of it. There is no unlimited thinking, thinking is always limited; and to find out what lies beyond thought, thought must first come to an end. After all, being limited, prejudiced, shaped by society, how can thought inquire into something which is measureless? If I want to find out what love is, for example, how shall I proceed? Shall I think about it, read what has been said in the *Bible*, in the sacred books, or by some priest? Surely, to find out what love is, I must first see

whether my mind is conditioned by the idea which society calls 'love', or by organized religion—which preaches love, but which has actually destroyed human beings. Because it is only when my mind is free from all conditioning that I shall be able to find out what love is. In the same way, to find out if there is truth, if there is God, my mind must be free from all the beliefs and prejudices in which it has been brought up.

So to discover something true, not conditioned, not contaminated, you must in one sense cease to think. I hope you understand what I mean. After all, if you have beliefs, if you hold on to certain ideas, they are obviously going to interfere with your listening to what is being said. In order to experience something real, something which is not merely an opposite, the mind must free itself from its own beliefs and be completely still. Having been brought up in a certain society, educated according to a particular ideology, with its dogmas and traditions, the mind is conditioned; and any movement of the mind to free itself, being the result of that conditioning, only leads to still further conditioning. The mind can free itself only when it is completely alone. Even though it is burdened with problems, with innumerable tendencies, conflicts, ambitions, through awareness without condemnation or acceptance the mind can begin to understand its own functioning; and then an extraordinary silence comes about, a stillness in which there is no movement of thought. Then the mind is free, because it is no longer desiring anything, no longer asking for anything, it is no longer anchored to an ideology or aiming at a purpose—all of which are merely the projections of a conditioned mind. Unless you undergo this actual experience, so that it is not merely a verbal statement which you have heard from another, life remains very superficial and sorrowful.

So for those who are really serious about this matter, it seems to me that what is important is not what you

believe or do not believe, but to understand the process of your own thinking. In that direct understanding of one's own thinking, a radical change in one's living will take place which is not according to any social plan or religious dogma; and only then will it be possible for the external structure of society to change also.

A number of questions have been sent to me, and I shall try to go into some of them.

Question: Psychoanalysts offer the panacea of analysis, asserting that by just knowing what it is all about, one is cured; but this does not always hold true. What is one to do when in spite of knowing the cause of one's trouble, one is still unable to get rid of it?

KRISHNAMURTI: You see, in this problem there is involved the analyser and the analysed. You may not go to a psychoanalyst, you may analyse yourself, but in either case there is always the analyser and the analysed. When you try to examine the unconscious, or interpret a dream, there is the examiner and the examined; and the examiner, the interpreter, analyses what he sees in terms of his own background, according to his pleasure. So there is always a division between the analyser and the analysed, with the analyser trying to reshape or control that which he has analysed. And the question is not only whether the analyser is capable of analysing, but more fundamentally whether there is actually any division between the analyser and the analysed. We have assumed that there is such a division; but is there in actuality? The analyser, surely, is also the result of our thinking. So really there is no division at all, but we have artificially created one. If we see the truth of this, if we realize the fact that the thinker is not separate from his thought, that there is only thinking and no thinker—and it is very difficult to

come to that realization—, then our whole approach to the problem of inner conflict changes.

After all, if you do not think, where is the thinker? The qualities of thinking, the memory of various experiences together with the desire to be secure, to be permanent, have created the thinker apart from thinking. We say that thinking is passing, but that the thinker is permanent. You may call the thinker permanent, enduring, divine, or anything else you like, but in reality there is no thinker, but only the process of thinking. And if there is only thinking, and not a thinker who thinks, then, without a thinker, an analyser, how shall we solve our problem?

Am I explaining the matter clearly, or only complicating it? Perhaps it is not very clear because you are merely listening to my words, you are not directly experiencing the thing. There is a great difference between having a toothache and listening to the description of a toothache, is there not? And I am afraid something of that sort is what is happening now. You are merely listening to the description, hoping to find a way to solve your problems.

Briefly, what I am saying is this: if you once fully understand that there is only thinking and no thinker, then there is a tremendous revolution in your whole approach to life; because in experiencing for yourself that there is only thinking, and not a thinker who must control thought, you have at one stroke removed the very source of conflict. It is the division between the thinker and the thought that creates conflict; and if one is capable of removing that division, there is no problem.

Question: What would happen to the world if all men and women were to arrive at a state so far removed from attachment to a definite person that marriage and love affairs became unnecessary?

KRISHNAMURTI: Is not the questioner putting a very hypothetical question? Should we not rather ask ourselves whether there is love when there is attachment? Our attachments are based on mutual satisfaction, mutual support, are they not? Each one needs the companionship of another. So instead of asking this theoretical question, I think it is important to find out if there is love at all when there is attachment.

Is there love when we are attached, when we possess somebody? And why are we attached? To really go into it, to inquire why one is attached, not only to a man or a woman, but to children, to ideas, to property, and find out for oneself if it is possible to be free of all possessing and possessiveness—this, I think, demands a great deal of hard inner work. If you were not attached, what would happen? You would be at a loss, would you not? We are attached because in ourselves we are insufficient, psychologically dependent, and therein lies our misery.

Question: How is one to deal with a very small child if one is to avoid influencing him in any way?

KRISHNAMURTI: Why does one try not to influence a small child? Let us consider. Are we not all influenced? You are influenced by climate, by society, by the food you eat, by the papers you read—you are influenced by everything around you. It is not a matter of good or bad influence—we are considering influence itself. What you call a good influence, another society might call bad or false. What is important, I think, is to understand the whole problem of influence, and then perhaps we shall approach differently the education of the child. We know that we are being influenced in some degree by everything around us; and is it possible to be free from the influences which are strongly or subtly impressing us, dominating us? To be free of such

influences, we must be aware, must we not?, of the many factors which create them.

Take, for instance, the influence of the flag, of the nation, of the word 'patriotism'. We accept that influence all over the world, for every school, every government is sedulously conditioning us to accept it; and that is one of the basic causes of war, because it separates man from man. So can we, the grown-up people, free ourselves from this influence? If we can, then perhaps we shall be able to help the child to be free. But to be free from this particular influence demands a great deal of insight, understanding, for there is the possibility that you may be ostracized, you may lose your job, and you will be a nobody in society.

Let us take another example. Whether we live as of the world, or try to be religious, most of us are ambitious. We can see that ambition is destructive, but socially and religiously we accept it. The ambitious man can never love, because he is concerned with himself and his success—success in the name of God, in the name of family, in the name of country. The worship of success is also an influence throughout the world, is it not? And can one free oneself from this influence? Can you as an individual do it? Do not say "If I am not ambitious I shall be crushed by society". If you really see the truth that ambition is destructive and deeply understand the whole process of influence, you will be a different person; and then perhaps you will be able to help the child to understand and be free of all influence.

Question: Is it possible to live without any attachment?

KRISHNAMURTI: Instead of asking this question, why don't you find out? And to ask "How am I to become detached?" is another false question. Find out to what you are attached.

and why. You are attached to your family, to your property, to your name, to your beliefs and ideas, to your business—to a dozen things. To be free from this attachment, you must first be aware that you *are* attached, and not merely ask if it is possible to live without attachment; you must experience the fact that you are attached, and understand why. You are attached, for instance, to the idea of God, of truth, or to some belief or ideal, because without that concept and the feeling it evokes, your life would be empty, miserable; you would have nothing to rely on. So your attachment is a form of drug; and knowing the fundamental reason for attachment, you then try to cultivate detachment, which is still another escape. That is why it is very important to study the process of one's whole being, and not merely try to clarify what to believe and what not to believe, which is all so superficial.

The key to freedom lies within ourselves, but we refuse to use it. We are always asking someone else to open the door and let the light in.

September, 26, 1956

III

TALK IN ATHENS

It seems to me that one of the most difficult problems we have to face is how to bring about a fundamental change in ourselves; and everyone who is seriously interested in these things must surely face this problem. How is the mind to bring about a change in itself which will be a revolution, and not merely a new division, another alteration, a disciplined reform? If we want to create a world that is without hatred, a world in which there is love, in which man does not turn against man, then

I think it is essential that you and I as individuals should contribute to the realization of such a revolution by a fundamental transformation in ourselves. This is the subject on which I am going to talk this evening, and as it is rather complicated, I hope you will be patient enough to listen with attention.

To find out if it is possible to bring about such a revolution, I think one has to begin by experimenting with oneself. In this country, as in every other, you have many troubles. Although everyone is trying to bring peace, unconsciously we go on working towards war. We desperately need peace in the world, but the fact is that we are creating still more confusion and misery. That is what is happening in the world around us, and within ourselves. We have many contradictory desires, deep-rooted urges and restraining ideals which bring about conflict. We strive after harmony, but whatever we do only seems to create more confusion and less peace.

Seeing all this confusion taking place around us and within ourselves, one wonders how a radical change is to be brought about. If we look into ourselves, we can see that the mind is capable of improving a part of itself but it remains only a part; and even if that one part manages to dominate all the rest, the mind will be in a state of continuous conflict. Conflict is inevitable, is it not?, so long as one part of ourselves is trying to improve or to control the other part. The conflict arises, surely, from this division in the mind.

Now, is it possible to bring about a total change, and not merely a partial one? I do not know if you understand the problem, but I think it is very important to do so. Is it possible to bring about a fundamental transformation without conflict, without one part of the mind trying to dominate another part? It seems to me that this is possible only if we realize the urgency of a total change, and see the falsity of one part of ourselves, which we call

'higher', striving to dominate the 'lower'; for surely the 'higher' is still within the field of the mind, and is therefore also the outcome of conflict.

To change fundamentally, completely, without one part of the mind seeking to dominate another part and thereby creating further conflict, we must give our total attention to it. But usually we never give our full attention to anything, do we? We give only partial attention. We look at a problem of this kind through the screen of our religious beliefs and social convictions, or we give attention to it with the desire to achieve a result; therefore our attention is divided, it is never complete, whole. There can be full attention only when there is not the conflict of wanting a result, or pursuing an ideal; and it is only when the mind is capable of giving full attention that this radical change takes place within us.

Most of us think we must have ideals to entice us to change; but to me ideals are a distraction from the fact, they are merely a projection of the opposite of what we really are. We hope that by clinging to an ideal we shall achieve a radical change; but the continuous effort to discipline, to control ourselves, only brings about endless conflict.

Surely, a radical change can come about only when there is no effort. So long as there is any sense of achieving an ideal, of bringing about a change through compulsion, there cannot be complete attention. A person who is really concerned with transforming himself totally will have no ideals, because ideals are a distraction from the fact of what *is*. When you have an ideal your mind is not looking at the actual, but at what *should* be, and so attention is incomplete. To bring about a fundamental change, a new way of thinking, a revolution within oneself, one must understand the necessity of total attention without any distraction—which is, after all, a state of love. Love is not the product of effort, of distraction, of control according to an ideal; it is

total attention in which the contradictory impulses, with all their accumulative memories, completely cease.

To put it differently, what most of us are trying to do is to change through time. We think that time will give to the mind an opportunity to bring about a gradual change within itself. Being envious, we have the ideal of becoming free from envy in the future, and through time we think we shall achieve this ideal—which to me is an escape, a distraction from the actual fact. So, can one give one's total attention to the problem of envy, without any distraction? That is, can one approach the problem of envy completely anew?

It is true, is it not?, that we generally move from the known to the known; and this is not a radical change, it is not a revolution. The ideal is still within the field of the known, and does not bring about a fundamental transformation. The process of changing through time is based on the principle, preached by religious teachers and sacred books, "I am *this*, I must become *that*, and the change will come about in time through discipline, control". We can see how the mind works, how it has invented various systems of discipline to control itself; but surely this process is totally false, because all forms of discipline, control, compulsion are still within the field of the known and do not contribute to a radical change. In this process of continuity, moving from yesterday through today towards tomorrow, there is no fundamental transformation.

So the problem is—and I hope you are not just listening to words, but are experiencing the thing we are talking about—, can the mind come to an end without compulsion, without any form of discipline, which means that it has understood itself completely? Because that very understanding is a process of revolution. Truth or God is something totally unknown; you may imagine, you may speculate about it, you may believe it is this or that, but

it is still the unknown. The mind must come to it completely stripped of the past, free of all the things it has known; and the known is, after all, the accumulated memories and problems of everyday existence. So if there is really to be a radical change, a fundamental transformation, the mind must move away from the known. For love is not something which you experienced yesterday and are able to recapture at will tomorrow; it is totally new, unknown.

The mind, being the result of the known, of time, can never bring about a radical change within itself. Any change which it brings about can only be a superficial alteration within the field of the known. There can be a fundamental change in the mind only when the mind dies, when thinking dies—which means, really, when the self ceases to exist. This is not a system of philosophy to be conveyed by teaching. It is an inner experience to be lived, day in and day out, by the person who is seriously inquiring and who does not restrict himself to the mere repetition of phrases without meaning.

Many questions have been sent in, and I cannot go into all of them in the course of a few talks; so if your particular question is not answered, you will know why. Also, I am not 'answering' these questions, but we are together trying to investigate the problem. The problem is yours, and you have to find the answer within the problem itself, not away from it.

Question: In what way can self-knowledge help to solve the many pressing problems of the world—for instance, starvation?

KRISHNAMURTI: Is not the world, with all its lies, its corruption, hatred and starvation, brought about by human beings? Surely the problems which exist in this country and throughout the world are the product of each one of

you, because you are nationalistic; you want to be somebody, and therefore you identify yourself with the country, you consider yourself a Greek or a Christian, which gives you a sense of importance; and through your envy you have created a society based on acquisition. So to bring about a tremendous change in the world, you and I must change, must we not? We must know ourselves. Unfortunately most of us think that tyranny, politics, or various forms of legislation will solve our problems. But what the individual is, the world is, and to bring about a fundamental change you, the individual, must understand yourself; and the understanding of yourself must be complete, not just partial.

Self-knowledge is the beginning of wisdom; and to know yourself is not a miracle, or something extraordinary to be learned from books. You can see yourself exactly as you are in the mirror of relationship. Nothing can live in isolation; you are related to people, to things, to ideas, to nature, and in the mirror of that relationship you can see the totality of your own being. But if you condemn what you see, then obviously you stop all inquiry and understanding. Most of us have the instinct to condemn, to compare, to judge what we see. But if you once realize that to understand something, you must not condemn it, then condemnation ceases; and through the self-knowledge which comes when there is observation without condemnation, the whole mind, the unconscious as well as the conscious, can be understood. Only then is the mind completely quiet, and therefore able to inquire further.

Question: If a man has no ambition, how is he to live in this world of competition?

KRISHNAMURTI: I wonder why we are ambitious? You are ambitious in your job, in your school, in everything that you do, are you not? Why are we

envious, ambitious? Is it because there are a hundred motives encouraging us to be ambitious? Or is it that without ambition, without trying to get somewhere or to be something, we are nothing? If we were not ambitious, what would happen? We would be nobody, would we not? We would be unrecognized, have no dreams of success, of being great, and we would merely live; but just to live in that way does not seem very gratifying. So we create a competitive society in which ambition is encouraged, and anyone who wants to get rid of it is ignored by his neighbour. I am not talking of ambition only in the worldly sense. Anyone who wants to become something, whether in this world or the next, is ambitious. The priest who wishes to become a bishop, the clerk who wants to become an executive, the man who strives to have some so-called religious experience—they are all on the same level, because they are all anxious to be or to have something.

Now, seeing the havoc that ambition is causing in the world today, and realizing that a man who is ambitious can have no love, the question naturally arises, is it possible to be completely free from ambition? I cannot answer for you; you will have to find out for yourself. But you see, the fact is that most of us want security, we want safety, we want guarantees; therefore we live with ambition. Such people are not serious, though they may ask serious questions.

Question: What is the real meaning of brotherhood?

KRISHNAMURTI: It is fairly obvious, is it not? A man who is nationalistic, is not brotherly. Nor is he brotherly who is a communist, a socialist, a capitalist, or who belongs to a particular religion; because anyone devoted to an ideology, to a system, to a belief, obviously separates himself from other men. After

all, this is *our* world, it is yours and mine—not to live in as Greeks, or Americans, or Indians, or Russians, but as human beings. But unfortunately we have national, economic and religious barriers, and living behind these barriers we talk about brotherhood, we talk about love, peace, God. To really know what love is we must abolish all these barriers, and each one of us must begin with himself.

Question: Should one give any importance to one's dreams or not?

KRISHNAMURTI: To investigate this question directly we must understand the process of our own consciousness. Consciousness is surely the totality of one's being, but we have divided it as the conscious and the unconscious. Most of us are concerned with cultivating the conscious mind, and every school, every society is busy with the same thing. Society, of which we form a part, gives great importance to the so-called education of the conscious mind, and it tries to make us efficient, capable citizens by giving us a job.

Now, if you will observe yourself you will see that, while the conscious mind is concerned with your daily activities, there is at the same time a hidden activity going on in the mind, of which you are largely unconscious. You will also see that there is a division or conflict between the conscious and the unconscious mind—the unconscious being not only the hidden personal motives, but also the racial influences and the collective experience of centuries. When the conscious mind goes to sleep and is relatively quiet, the unconscious draws near, and its urges then become dreams. This is what actually happens to most of us, because during the day our conscious minds are so taken up with our superficial motives and pursuits that there is no time to receive the promptings of the unconscious. So we dream; and then the problem arises of how to interpret these dreams, so we go to specialists who

interpret dreams according to their pleasure, or in terms of their so-called knowledge.

It seems to me that the problem is not how to interpret dreams, but whether it is possible not to dream at all. Please do not reject this, do not drive it away. A mind that is perpetually active during the day, and unconsciously active when it is asleep, can never be creative. It is only when the mind is completely still, without movement, without action, that there is a possibility for a new state to come into being.

So, can the conscious mind be in such close relationship at all times with the unconscious, during the day as well as during the night, that there is never this state of confusion which necessitates the projection of dreams? Surely, when the conscious mind already knows the movements of the unconscious, so that the unconscious has no need to project dreams for the conscious mind to inter-

pret, then it is possible not to dream at all. That is, if you are constantly aware of your motives, of your prejudices, of your conditioning, of your fears, of your likes and dislikes—if you are aware of all this during the day, then when you sleep the mind is not everlastingly disturbed by dreams. That is why it is important to be aware of one's thinking, of one's ambition, of one's motives, urges, jealousies—not to push them aside, but to understand them completely. Then the mind is very quiet, silent, and in that silence it can be free from all its conditioning. Such a mind is a religious mind, and only such a mind is capable of receiving that which is true. The mind that *seeks* truth will never find it; but when the mind is completely still, without any movement, without any desire, then it is possible for the immeasurable to come into being.

September 30, 1956