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A Religious Mind?

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This is the last talk. We have talked about a great many things that concern our daily life. We ought to talk over together the significance of death, not that it is a morbid subject. Also we should have a dialogue about what is religion and meditation. But before we go into all that, I wonder if one is aware of what is happening to our minds, to our brain, if one is aware of the extraordinary capacity of the brain in the technological world, the extraordinary things that the brain, which is the seat of thought, has brought about - extraordinary things are happening in the technological world of which most of us are unaware. And technologically we have progressed, advanced so rapidly, and psychologically - that is what we are, our behaviour, our attitudes, our actions - we are more or less unevolved. We are still aggressive, brutal, cruel, thoughtless - for thousands and thousands of years. And apparently man is still behaving more or less as he behaved 40,000 years ago. And if one had that same energy, that same intensity as one uses in the technological world, if we could go very, very deeply into ourselves and go beyond ourselves, the brain has infinite capacity there too. But very few have taken that journey, very few have gone into this question whether the mind, the brain, can ever be free, totally free and therefore enquire very, very deeply, search out what lies beyond, if there is anything beyond thought. And we are going to talk over that presently.

Some of you perhaps have heard of genetic engineering. That is, man has not progressed, evolved to the same extent as the technological efforts. So the genetic experts say that they assume a factor, a creative element handed down from father to offspring, certain tendencies, qualities. This is what is called in part of the beginning of engineering, genetic engineering, they are saying since man - you - have not changed fundamentally for thousands of years, perhaps - and they assume - that man can be changed through genetic interference. We are putting it very, very briefly. It is a very complex question which we are not going to discuss, but we must understand what is going on. That as human beings have not deeply changed their characteristics, their way of life, their violence, they are hoping through certain chemical and so on to change the genes, the factors of that create certain characteristics from the father to the son.

And also we should consider what is happening in the computer world. We cannot neglect all this - the genetic engineering and what is happening in the computer world. They are trying, perhaps successfully, or not, to create a mechanical intelligence, ultimate intelligence through the computer which will then think much more rapidly, more accurately and inform to the robots what they should do. This is happening already. And they are trying, as we have talked to others about this matter, they are trying to bring about a machine, a computer which has ultimate intelligence. You understand all this? So there is on the one side genetic engineering, on the other the computer taking, acting, as human beings, inventing generation after generation of computer, improving and so on - I won't go into all that. So what is going to happen to the human mind? You understand? What is going to happen to us when the computer can do almost everything that we do? It can meditate (laughter), it can invent gods, much better gods than yours, it can inform, educate your children far better than the present teacher, educators, and it will create a great deal of leisure to man. One has seen in Japan on a television, a computer instructing a robot how to build a car and the robot did some mistake, the whole machinery stopped and the computer told him what went wrong, and the computer did the right thing, and the whole thing started. You are understanding the nature of all this, the significance of all this? That is, what is going to happen to our minds when the computer and the genetic engineering are rapidly advancing, what is going to happen to us? We will have more leisure, the computer plus the robot will do a great many things that we are doing now in factories, in offices and so on. Then man will have leisure. And how will he use that leisure? You understand? Please go into this with me for a while. If the computer can outthink you, remember far more than you do, calculate with such astonishing speed and gives you leisure, either you pursue the path of pleasure which is entertainment - cinemas, religious entertainments - you know all the industry of entertainment, including gurus - and either entertainment or psychological search, seek out inwardly and find out for oneself a tremendous area that is beyond all thought. These are the only two possibilities left for us: entertainment or delving into the whole structure of the psyche and acting.

Now, we are asking what is our human mind, our brain. We are going to find out for ourselves. So please, as we've said over and over again, we are thinking together, you are not merely listening to the speaker, accepting some words, ideas, or we are communicating with each other, thinking together and finding out.

So we'll first begin by asking: what is the significance of death? It is not an old man's question. It is the question of all humanity whether we are very young or very old. What is the meaning, the significance, the extraordinary thing called death? Yesterday evening, we talked about several things including what is love, compassion. What is the relationship of life which is not only the whole human existence, what is its relationship to love, to death and to the whole search of man for thousands of years to find something that is beyond all thought. To understand the meaning of death, because we are all going to die - thank the lord. Right? We are all going to die. That is absolute certainty. And we are so afraid of it, or you rationalise it - you say yes, I accept it. I accept death as I accept pain, as I accept sorrow, as I accept loneliness, I also accept death. Which is to submit to suffer death, to allow the whole of existence of a human being to come to an end, either through disease, through old age or through some incident. We have never found out what it means to die while we are living, not commit suicide but to understand the depth of it. I hope we are together looking at it. You are looking at it as an incident of life, as a fact of life, as violence is a fact of life, as hatred is a fact of life. And we must if we are at all reasonable, sane, we must look at this question of death in similar manner, not accept it, not just say it is inevitable or try to find out what lies beyond death, but to observe the nature of dying.

What does death mean to most of us? Please we are asking this question not rhetorically but to find out. Surely it means the ending both organically, biologically and to all the things that we have held dear, to all the wounds, pains, sacrifice, resistance, loneliness, despair - all that coming to an end. Which means either there is a continuity of the self, the 'me', or the ending of the 'me'. You are following all this? We said death is an ending. You can believe in reincarnation, as most of you perhaps do. If you do, you have to ask the

question, what is it that continues? Is there a continuity? Or is there constant change - breaking, ending, beginning? You are following? So if you believe, as most people in India perhaps believe, that you are going to be reborn and what is it that is going to be reborn? Surely not the physical body, but if you believe in that, it is a continuity of what you are now - right? - continuity of your beliefs, your activities, your greed and so on and so on and so on. That is the bundle which is the consciousness, which is the self. Right? That self which is essentially consciousness is put together by thought - your greed, your envy, your religious belief, superstitions, your angers and so on - all those are the activities of thought. You are the result of a continuous movement of thought. And if you believe in reincarnation - (coughs) this awful weather, full of smog, foul air - so, if you believe all that, you must find out if it is an illusion or a reality. If you are your name, your form, your ideas, your conclusions, your experiences, are they the factor of continuity as the 'me' in the next life?

Now what is that 'me'? Go on, sirs, please search out with the speaker. This is a very important question. Each one of us, we think, is a separate entity, so-called individuals. And what is that individuality? The name, the form, what you remember, your attitudes, your loneliness, your pain, your anxiety, your chaos, your sorrow and uncertainty. You may have a bank account, or not, you may live in a nice house or a small little room or in a nice flat, but you are all that. You are the bank account. Right? Are you following all this? When you are attached to a bank account, you are that bank account. When you are attached to a house, you are the house. When you are attached to your body, you are that. You may have lovely furniture, perhaps thirteenth, fourteenth century, you have marvellous furniture and if you are attached to that you are that furniture. So you are all that, which is what? Go on sir, think it out - when you are attached to a chair, to a person, to an idea, to an ideal, to your personal experiences, what are the implications of that attachment?

Why are you attached, because death says you cannot be attached - that's the end. You may believe in the future but death says you have ended, your attachments are over, your bank account is over, your guru and all your following is over. Right? So what is it that continues, that is reborn? Memories? Ideas? Which is what? Something dead. You are following? Or there is no continuity at all. You are following? Search out, please. Continuity means that which goes on modifying itself. You are becoming something, and achieving it and wanting more. Continuity implies security, certainty. Are you certain about anything? Is there security in your ideas? So we want continuity. We hope to have continuity because in continuity we think there is security. One has been married for ten years, fifteen years, or five days, or fifty years - there is certain continuity - legal responsibility, but in that continuity there is conflict, misery, unhappiness, all the rest of that in that relationship. So there is no continuity at all. There is constant change if you are aware of it. Either that can be superficial; or a total mutation - not transformation but mutation, change - that which has existed completely undergoes a change.

May I just stop a minute? A few seconds. (Pause)

One must find out for oneself what is fact, what is the truth of this matter. One cannot be convinced by argument, by so-called evidence and so on. One cannot be convinced about anything, one has to search out and seek and find what is true and what is illusion. We have lived with this illusion that we are separate entities. Whereas if you examine very closely, our consciousness which is you is shared by all humanity. They suffer as you suffer, they are uncertain as you, they are lonely, miserable, confused, anxious, as you are. So your consciousness is not yours. It is the consciousness of all humanity. So you are the entire humanity. It is not mere logical conclusion or observation but it is a fact. And we have been trained, educated both religiously, educationally that we are separate individuals. So we are frightened that individuality should come to an end. Right? You are following all this? But if one sees the reality, the truth that you are the rest of mankind, and then what is death? You understand? Instead of being frightened I may die and I hope to live next life, and I who wish to have continuity and hoping that continuing will modify, change gradually till it reaches god knows what, such a thought, such concept as an individual

when one approaches the question of death, there is immense fear of ending.

Have you ever enquired what is the nature of ending. Not ending to begin something. Ending. That is, you are attached, that is a common fact - attached to your children, attached to your husband and wife, attached to something or other. And death comes along and wipes away that attachment. Right? You can't carry your money to heaven. You may like to have it till the last moment but you cannot take it with you, and death says, 'No.' So can we, living, understand the nature of attachment with all its fear, jealousy, anxiety, possessive feeling, while living be free of attachment? Are you following all this? Are you following what we are talking about? While you are alive, to end something voluntarily, easily without any pressure, without any reward or punishment, to end. In that there is great beauty. Then one understands the nature of freedom.

In the ending there is no beginning, something new, there is an ending. And when there is an ending there is that feeling of total freedom of all the burden that humanity has carried for centuries. I know... one knows that you listen to all this, smile, nod your head and agree but you will go on being attached. That is the easiest way, the most comforting and the most painful, anxious way, but you will go on. And you call that practical. Whereas if you understand the nature of ending, ending your ambition in a very, very competitive world, understand the ending of your arrogance, your pride, your status. So when this so-called organism ends, the content of consciousness of humanity goes on, unless you bring about a radical change in that consciousness, a mutation so that you are no longer in that stream of selfishness, you are no longer caught, engaged, put in prison of attachment, uncertainty and so on. There is a totally different way of living.

And also we should talk about religion. Again it is a very complex question, and together we are going to find out what is a religious mind, a mind that is religious - not the mind that does puja, you know all the ceremonials and all the beliefs and all that - that is not religion, those are the inventions of thought. God is your invention because you find life so dull, boring. It is such a pain so you invent god who is all perfect, all loving, all beautiful - you know all that stuff. And you worship that. You worship that which you have put together by thought. So thought is deceiving you. I don't know if you understand all this. But you will go on because you love to live in illusions. So we must find out what is a religious mind because a religious mind brings about a new world, a new civilisation, a new culture, a new outburst of energy. So one must find out for oneself, not be told, not be directed, not to be explained like a lot of children, what is a religious mind. Obviously all the religions in the world are the result of a great deal of intrigue, property, a great deal of wealth, all put together by thought. There is no denying that, however erudite you are, however sceptical you are or however religious you are - religious in the ordinary sense of that word. If you are willing to examine, as you must, if you are at all concerned with what is happening in the world and what is happening around you, you must enquire what is religion. Not accepting, not believing, not having faith - such activities are related to one's own desires, comforts, hope.

So what is a religious mind? You can only find out if you deny totally all the present religious structure, religious beliefs and ideas because it is only a free mind that can find out what is the quality of a religious mind.

First of all, one can see very clearly freedom is essential. Not freedom from something, a prisoner wanting freedom which means away from a prison. First he is caught in a prison, then he wants freedom to leave that prison. That is only a reaction. That reaction is not freedom. Freedom implies the total ending of all illusions, of all belief, of all your accumulated wants, desires. That freedom is something totally different from the desire to be free. A religious mind is a sane, healthy factual mind, faces facts, not ideas.

The speaker can go on explaining what is a religious mind. Perhaps you will accept the definitions or deny the definitions but merely arguing, analysing, questioning may help, but it may not necessarily bring about a religious mind. We have become too clever. So one has to have great humility, a sense of not knowing.

And also a religious mind acts, because it is compassionate. And that action is born of intelligence. Intelligence, compassion, love all go together.

What is meditation? Don't suddenly sit up properly (laughter). That has no meaning. You may sit cross-legged, breathe properly, practise various systems, that is not meditation. We are going to enquire, search out for ourselves what is meditation. The word 'meditation' means - the word - according to a good dictionary: to ponder over, to think over, to look closely, to come in touch with, not something sublime, invented by thought, but come close and touch your daily life. That is the ordinary dictionary meaning of that word 'meditation'. And also meditation implies measurement. The meaning of that word is to measure, also to think over, to ponder over, to consider and to measure. That is the meaning of that word.

So, we'll begin by asking why do we measure? What do we mean by measurement? You understand?

Are we talking together, or are you going to sleep? Are we both meeting each other or the speaker instructing you? If you are thinking he is instructing you, then you are totally wrong. He is not instructing you, he is not telling you what to do. But together find out what is meditation.

We asked why is there in our mind and heart this constant measurement? Measurement means comparison. To compare myself with you, who are beautiful, clear, certain, the whole feeling of your being is totally different from me. And I compare myself with you, wanting to be like you, wanting to be like your guru, like your highest - whatever the example is. Why do we compare at all in life? And we say we compare in order to make progress. In the technological world you have to compare. There must be measurement. Measurement was invented by the Greeks, ancient Greeks - to measure. And with us, we are always comparing: you are beautiful, I am not, I want to be as beautiful, as powerful as you are. Right? We want to be enlightened as you are. So there is always this competition of comparison between us. We are never free of that movement, but if we are free then what are we? You understand my question? If you don't compare, as you must compare between two materials, two clothes or two cars - there you must naturally compare, but in human relationship why do we compare? And is it possible to be free of comparison, the ending of comparison? If you do, then you throw away a great burden that has no reality. Because then you are what you are. From there you can begin. But if you are always comparing, becoming somebody else, then you are fundamentally unhappy, anxious, frightened, and all the rest of it. So please ask the question of yourself whether you can live without comparison, without any form of measurement, which is quite difficult because we are trained, educated, convinced that we are this, but we will become that. The 'becoming that' is a form of measurement. To live without a single movement of measurement, that is part of meditation.

And most people who meditate now follow various systems. Each one has his own guru and he has laid down certain systems of meditation and you practise, repeat certain words over and over and over again, and you call that meditation. When you repeat over and over again, what is happening to your brain? You become more and more dull - which is what is... look at... You become a machine, and you think that is meditation. And you will go on doing it in spite of what the speaker is saying.

So when enquiring what is meditation, there can be no system, no effort. Effort means conflict. Right sir? Can you be free of systems, practice, realising the fact that your brain, your senses become dull? And perhaps that is what has happened to this country. And the tragedy of it. You are copying all the technology of the West. You have your own aeroplanes, your own guns, your own shells, and your own computers, your own - all from the West. And the West is making you more and more materialistic. We are not talking... we are not condemning the West. They have their own problems, as you have.

So, can you be free of systems? It is so logical, so sensible, so sane that when you practise over and over again, sitting straight - you know all that silly stuff - you are becoming gradually mechanical, gradually dull, like those people who belong to certain communities, form little groups. You can't talk to them reasonably. They believe, they practice, and they are killing themselves. So can the mind, the brain realise what it means

to follow somebody; to obey what somebody else tells you what to do, because he has got a different dress, calls himself a guru - all those things have destroyed the beauty of a religious mind. And meditation is none of these things, yoga included. Standing on your head and doing all those things, none of that is meditation, obviously. Then what is meditation?

We want experience. You are craving for some strange experience, so-called spiritual experiences. We have enough of experiences in this world, of pain, anxiety, sorrow, and we say we must have something more, greater experience. Experience has nothing whatsoever to do with meditation. To experience there must be an experiencer, and if there is an experiencer, that experiencer is the continuity of past memories which is the self. Meditation is the understanding of the whole structure of the 'me', the self, the ego, and whether it is possible to be totally free of the self. Not seek some super-self. The super-self is still the self.

So, meditation is something which is not a cultivated, determined activity. There must be freedom, and where there is freedom there is space. I wonder if we understand what space is. Have we space, apart from the physical world? Have we, living in Bombay, space? Hardly. Right? We live in a little flat or a little room and our minds gradually accept that little space. We are talking of space which has no walls. You know when you look at the sea, when the smog has gone and you see the far horizon, the vast distance, and when you look up at the stars and see their extraordinary brightness and vast space, and the space that you have in your mind, how small it is, how narrow it is. That space in your heart and mind is so controlled, shaped, put together, so there is hardly any space in you. To understand that which is sacred there must be vast space - in you, not out there in the sea. You understand? Space is not separation. Space is not division. When you divide there is space - between you and your wife, between you as India and another country. But that is not space. The space demands inwardly, can only exist when there is no conflict whatsoever. Then when there is that vast limitless space of the mind, then only in that space there is energy. Not the energy and friction of thought, because that energy is born out of freedom.

When there is that space and silence and that immeasurable energy, then that which is utterly nameless, measureless, timeless, then there is that which is sacred. But to find that, one must have great love, great compassion which must begin at home. One must love your wife, your children, your husband. Love cannot exist with attachment. Then if it is attachment, then you have all the problems of life.

So, sirs and ladies, it is your life. Either you bring about a great radical psychological revolution in yourself, or the chemists, the experts of the genetic world are going to make you do something. Then you will become merely machines. Then life will have very little meaning. But there is great significance, great meaning if you know, if you are aware what love is, compassion and intelligence, and out of that comes great silence and vast space. All that cannot exist if there is any shadow of selfishness. And this is meditation, and not the repetition of words, not the discipline of will, but the discipline of order which comes when there is no conflict.

Right sirs.