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Can Suffering End Totally So That There Is Compassion?

From the series:

Ten Public Meetings at Brockwood Park - 1975

Sunday, September 7, 1975

Second Public Talk at Brockwood Park

It is a lovely morning, but this gathering isn't an entertainment. We are rather serious and we must be serious in facing what we have to do in life, with all the problems, miseries, confusion, violence and suffering. It is only those who are really earnest live, but the others fritter their life away and waste their existence. And if we may we will continue with what we were talking about yesterday. We were going to consider this morning, the whole complex problem of fear. Whether the human mind, which has lived so long, and so many centuries upon centuries, putting up with fear, escaping from it, trying to rationalise it, trying to forget it, or completely identifying with something that is not fear. We have tried all these methods, conscious as well as unconscious fear. And when one asks if it is at all possible psychologically and from that physiologically, whether it is at all possible to be free totally, completely of fear. And we are going to discuss this, talk it over together, and find out for ourselves if it is at all possible.

Before we go into that we must consider energy, the quality of energy, the types of energy, and the question of desire. So in order to understand completely, and if it is possible to be totally free of fear, we must go into, we must consider energy - whether we have sufficient energy to delve deeply into this question. We know the energy and friction of thought - it has created most extraordinary things in the world technologically. And also psychologically we don't seem to have that deep energy, drive, interest to penetrate profoundly into this question of fear.

So we have to first of all understand and go into this question of thought bringing about its own energy, and therefore fragmentary energy, and the energy through friction, which is through conflict. That is all we know: the energy of thought, the energy that comes in contradiction, in opposing, in duality, the opposites, and the energy of friction - all that is in the world of reality, reality being the things with which we live daily, both psychologically as well as intellectually and so on. Right? I hope we are, we can communicate with each other. Communication implies not only verbal understanding, but sharing, actually sharing what is being said. Otherwise there is no communion, communication. There is not only a verbal communication

but a communion which is non verbal. But to come to that non-verbal communion one must understand very deeply the question, very deeply whether it is possible to communicate with each other at a verbal level, which means that we both of us share the meaning of the words, have the same interest, the same intensity, at the same level, so that we can proceed step by step. That requires energy. And that energy can come into being only when we understand the energy of thought and its friction, in which we are caught. That is all we know actually. If you investigate into yourself you will see that what we know, or experience, or are aware of, is the friction of thought in its achievement, in its desires, in its purposes - the striving, the struggle, the competition. All that is involved in the energy of thought.

Now we are asking if there is any other kind of energy, which is non mechanistic, non traditional, non-contradictory, and therefore tension and that tension creates energy. I hope you are all meeting all this. To find that out, if there is another kind of energy, not imagined, not fantastic, not superstitious, traditional, but to find out, we have to go into the question of desire. May we go along? We are communicating with each other, a little bit at least?

Desire, as most of us have, is the want of something. Right? That is one fragment of desire. Then the longing for something, whether it is sexual longing or psychological longing, or the so-called spiritual longing. And the third part of that desire, the other fragment, is how does this desire arise? You follow? There is desire - desire is the want of something, the lack of something, missing something. Then the longing for it, either imaginatively, or actually wanting, like hunger. And there is this whole problem how desire arises in one. Because in comprehending, in coming face to face with fear, we have to understand desire. Desire may be the root of fear. Not the denial of desire, but the insight into desire. The religious monks throughout the world have denied desire, they have resisted desire, they have identified that desire with their gods, with their saviours, with their Jesus and so on, so on, so on. But it is still desire. And without the full penetration into that desire, having an insight, fear cannot possible be free from one's mind.

So first, how does desire arise? Please, you are following all this? That is, we need a different kind of energy, not the mechanistic energy of thought, because that has not solved any of our problems. On the contrary it has made it much more complex, more vast, impossible to solve them. So we must find a different kind of energy, whether that energy is related to thought, or independent of thought, and in enquiring into that one must go into the question of desire. Right? You are following this? Not somebody else's desire, but your own desire. Now how does desire arise? If you have observed yourself, how does this whole feeling of desire, which is the lack or the want of something? One can see that this movement of desire takes place through perception, seeing - visual, then sensation, contact and desire - you follow? One sees something beautiful, the contact of it, visual, and physical, sensory, then sensation, then from that the feeling of the lack of that, and from that, desire. That is fairly clear.

Why does the mind, the whole sensory organism, lack - you follow? Why is there this feeling of lacking something, or wanting something? I hope you are giving sufficient attention to what is being said because it is your life. You are not merely listening to words, or ideas, or formulas, but actually sharing in the investigating, in the investigating process so that we are together walking in the same direction, with the same speed, with the same intensity, at the same level. Otherwise we shan't meet each other. That is part of love also. Love is that communication with each other, at the same level, at the same time, with the same intensity.

So why is there the sense of lacking or wanting in oneself? I do not know if you have ever gone into this question at all: why the human mind, human beings, are always after something, apart from technological knowledge. Apart from learning languages and so on, so on, why is there this sense of wanting, lacking, pursuing something all the time - which is the movement of desire, which is also the movement of thought as time and measure? All that is involved in that. I hope you are following. Can we go on?

We are asking why there is this sense of want; why there is not this sense of complete self sufficiency; why is there this sense of longing for something in order to fulfil, or cover up something? Is it because for most of us there is this sense of emptiness, loneliness, sense of void? Physiologically we need food, clothes and shelter, that one must have. But that is denied when there is political, religious, economic division, nationalistic division, which is the curse of this world, which has been invented by the western world, it did not exist in the eastern world, this spirit of nationality. It has come recently into being there too, this poison. So when there is division between people, between nationalities and therefore between beliefs, dogmas, and from that arises economic division, security for everybody becomes almost impossible. And the tyrannical world, the dictatorship is trying to provide that, food for everybody, but it cannot achieve that for everybody. We know all that. We can move from that.

Then there is this question why psychologically there is this sense of want, this sense of lacking. And what is it that we lack? Knowledge? Knowledge being the accumulation of experience, both scientific, psychological and other directions, which is, knowledge is the past. Knowledge is the past. Is this what we want? Is this what we miss? Is this what we are educated for? - to gather all the knowledge you can possibly have, to act skilfully in the technological world. You're following? Or, is there a sense of lack, want, psychologically, inwardly? Which means you will try to fill that inward emptiness, which is the lack, through or with experience, which is the accumulated knowledge. So you are trying to fill that emptiness, that void, that sense of immense loneliness, with something which thought has created. Therefore desire arises from this urge to fill that emptiness. After all when you are seeking enlightenment, as you call it, or self-realisation as the Hindus call it, it is a form of desire. This sense of ignorance which will be wiped away, or put aside, or dissipated by acquiring tremendous knowledge - enlightenment. It is never the process of investigating 'what is', but rather of acquiring. I wonder if you follow all this!

Not actually looking at 'what is', but inviting something which 'might be', or hoping for a greater experience, greater knowledge. So we are always avoiding 'what is'. And the 'what is' is created by thought - my loneliness, emptiness, sorrow, pain, suffering, anxiety, fear - that is actually 'what is'. And thought is incapable of facing it and tries to move away from that.

So. In the understanding of desire, which is perception, seeing, visual perception, contact, sensation, and the want of that which you have not, which there is not, and the desire, the longing for it. That involves the whole process of time: I have not, but I will have; when I do have, it is measured by what you have. So desire is the movement of thought in time as measure. Right? Please, you are not agreeing with me. I am not interested in doing propaganda. I don't care if you are here or not here, if you listen or don't listen. But as it is your life, as it is so urgently important that we be deadly serious, because the world is disintegrating. You have to understand this question of desire, energy and the enquiry into a different kind of non-mechanistic energy. And to come to that you must understand fear. You get it now? That is, does desire create fear, the want of something? So what is fear? We are going to enquire together into this question of fear, all related to each other, they are not something separate. You say, 'Well let's forget about energy and desire and let's... please help me to get rid of my fear' - that is too silly. They are all related. You can't take one thing and approach it that way. You must take the whole packet.

So what is fear, how does it arise? Is there a fear at one level, and not at another level? Is there fear at the conscious level, or at the unconscious level? Or is there a fear totally? Now how does fear arise? Why does it exist in human beings? And human beings have put up with it for generations upon generations, they live with it. And fear distorts action, distorts clear perceptive thinking, objective efficient thinking, which is necessary - logical, sane healthy thinking. Fear darkens our lives. I do not know if you have not noticed it. If you have the slightest fear there is a contraction of all your senses. And most of us live, whatever relationship we have, in that peculiar form of fear.

Our question is whether our mind, our whole being can ever be free completely of fear. You see, the

education, society, governments, religions have encouraged this fear. All religions are based on this fear. And fear also is cultivated through the worship of authority. Right? The authority of the book, the authority of the priest, the authority of those who know, the authority of the politician and so on, so on, so on. We are carefully nurtured in fear - right? And we are asking whether it is at all possible to be totally free. So we have to find out what is fear. Is it the want of something, which is desire, longing? Is it the uncertainty of tomorrow? Or the pain and the suffering of yesterday? Is it this division between you and me, in which there is no relationship at all? Is it that centre which thought has created as the 'me' - the 'me' being the form, the name, the attributes, and losing that 'me'? Is that one of the causes of fear? Or is it the remembrance of something past, pleasant, happy, and the fear of losing it? Or the fear of suffering, both physiologically, neurologically and psychologically? You are following all this? So is there a centre from which all fear springs? Like a tree, though it has got a hundred branches it is a solid trunk, one at its roots, and it is no good merely pruning the branches. So we have to go to the very root of fear. Are we walking together?

What is that root of fear? Because if one can be totally free of fear, then heaven is with you. So what is the root of it? Is it time? Please, we are investigating, questioning, we are not theorising, we are not coming to any conclusion, because there is nothing to conclude. The moment you see the root of it, actually, with your eyes, with your feeling, with your heart, with your mind, actually see it, then you can deal with it - that is if you are serious. So what is the root of it? We are asking: is it time? - time being not only chronological time by the watch as yesterday, today and tomorrow, but also psychologically - yesterday, the remembrance of yesterday, the pleasures of yesterday, and the pains, the grief, the anxieties of yesterday, which is time. We are asking whether the root of fear is time - time to fulfil, time to become, time to achieve, time to realise god, or whatever you like to call it. And what is time - not by the watch, that is fairly simple, but psychologically what is time? Is there such a thing - please listen - as psychological time at all? Or we have invented psychological time? Is there psychologically tomorrow? And if you say there is no time as psychologically tomorrow, it will be a great shock to you. Won't it? Because you say, 'Well, tomorrow I will be happy. Tomorrow I will achieve something. Tomorrow I will become the executive of some business. Tomorrow I will become the enlightened one. Tomorrow the guru promises something and I'll achieve it.' To us tomorrow is tremendously important. And is there a tomorrow psychologically? We have accepted it: that is our whole traditional education that there is a tomorrow. And when you look psychologically, investigate into yourself, is there a tomorrow? Or has thought, being fragmentary in itself, projected the tomorrow? Please we will go into this, this is very important to understand.

One suffers physically, there is a great deal of pain. And the remembrance of that pain is marked, is an experience which the brain contains, and therefore there is a remembrance of that pain. Right? And thought says, 'I hope I never have that pain again' - that is, tomorrow. There has been great pleasure yesterday, sexual, whatever kind of pleasure that one has, and thought says, 'Tomorrow I must have that pleasure again.' You have had great experience - at least you think it is great experience - and it has become a memory, and you realise it is a memory but yet you pursue it tomorrow. Right? So thought is movement in time. So is the root of fear time? Time as 'me' compared to you, 'me' more important than you, 'me' that is going to achieve something, become something, get rid of something. So thought as time, which is to become, is the root of fear.

We have said time is necessary to learn a language. Time is necessary to learn any technique. And we think, we apply the same process to the psychological existence. You are following? I need several weeks to learn a language and I say in order to learn about myself, what I am, what I have to achieve, I need time. And we are questioning the whole of that - whether there is time at all psychologically - actually, or is it an invention of thought, and therefore fear? You are getting it? That is one problem.

And consciously we have divided consciousness into the conscious and the hidden. Again division by thought. And we say, 'I may be able to get rid of conscious fears, but it is almost impossible to be free of the

unconscious fears having their deep roots in the unconscious.' You follow? We say that it is much more difficult to be free of unconscious fears - which is the racial fears, the family fears, the tribal fears, the fears that are deeply instinctively rooted. We have divided consciousness into two levels. And then we ask: how can I, how can a human being delve deeply into the unconscious? - having divided it, then we ask this question, as the Christians who first invented sin, and then the Saviour who will save you from the sin! This is the same old problem.

And we say it can be done through careful analysis, introspection. Careful analysis of the various hidden fears, through dreams - I haven't time to go into all that, I must be quick because there is much, there is a great deal to cover in one hour. To uncover the unconscious with all the inherited fears, the racial, the family, the name, the form, all that is hidden there, and we say we must analyse it. Right? That is the fashion. We never look into the whole process of analysis, whether it is self-introspective, or professional. In analysis is implied the analyser and the analysed. Who is the analyser? Is he different from the analysed? Or the analyser is the analysed, and therefore it is utterly futile to analyse? I wonder if you see that! Right? If the analyser is the analysed, then there is only observation, not analysis. Right? But if the analyser is different from the analysed, which is what you all accept, all the professionals, all the introspective, all the people who are trying to improve themselves - god forbid! - they are all concerned with this thing, that there is a division between the analysed and the analyser. But the analyser is a fragment of thought which has created that thing to be analysed. I wonder if you follow all this. Bene? So in analysis is implied a division, and that division implies time - because you have to keep on analysing till you die!

So when analysis is totally false - I am using the word 'false' in the sense, incorrect, it has no value - then you are only concerned with observation, that is, to observe. So we have to understand the whole question of what is observation. You are following all this?

That is, we started out by enquiring if there is a different kind of energy. I am sorry I must go back to it so that it is in your mind - not memory (laughs) - then you can read a book and repeat to yourself, that is nothing. So we are concerned, or enquiring into energy. We know the energy of thought. It's mechanistic, a process of friction, because thought in its very nature is fragmentary, thought is never the whole, therefore it is a fragment. And we have said, is there a different kind of energy altogether? And we are investigating that. In enquiring into that you see the whole movement of desire. Desire is the state of wanting something, longing for something. And that desire is a movement of thought as time and measure. 'I have had this, I must have more'. And we said, in the understanding of fear, the root of fear may be time as movement. That may be the root of it. And if you go into it you will see that it is the root of it, not may be. That is the actual fact. Then is it possible for the mind to be totally free of fear? That is, the brain which has accumulated knowledge and can only function effectively when there is complete security. Right? And that security may be in some neurotic activity, in some belief, in the belief that you are the great nation, in the belief - oh, dozens and dozens of things. All belief is neurotic, obviously, because it is not actual.

So the brain can only function effectively, sanely, rationally, when it feels completely secure, and fear does not give it security. And to be free of that fear we say, analysis is necessary. And we see that analysis does not solve fear. So when you have an insight into the process of analysis, you stop analysing. Right? And then there is only the question of observation, seeing. If you don't analyse, what are you to do? You can only look. And it is very important to find out how to look. What does it mean to look? What does it mean to look at this question of desire as movement in time and measure? How do you see it? You are following this? Do you see it as an idea? As a formula because you have heard the speaker talking about it, therefore abstract what you hear into an idea and pursue the idea, which is still away from fear. I don't know if you see this. So when you observe it is very important to find out how you observe. Can you observe your fear without the movement of escaping, suppressing, rationalising, or giving it a name, which is quite complex? That is, can you look at fear, your fear of not having a job tomorrow, of not being loved, a dozen forms of fear, can you look at it without naming, without the observer who is different from that which is observed,

because the observer is the observed? I don't know if you follow all this! So the observer is fear, not, he is observing fear. Is this getting all too much?

So can you observe without the observer - the observer being the past? Then is there fear? You follow? We have the energy to look at something as an observer. I look at you and say you are a Christian, a Hindu, Buddhist, whatever you are. I look at you saying, 'I don't like you', or 'I like you'. If you believe in the same thing as I believe, you are my friend. If I don't believe the same thing as you do, you are my enemy. So I am always looking at you or at another - not I, I don't, thank god - can you look at another without all these movements of thought, of remembrances, of hope, all that. Just look at yourself, look at that fear which is the root of time. Then is there fear at all? You understand? You will find this out only if you test it, if you work at it, not just play with it.

Then there is the other form of desire, which not only creates fear but also pleasure. No? Desire is a form of pleasure. Pleasure is different from joy, from enjoyment. Pleasure you can cultivate, which the modern world is doing, both sexually, in every form of cultural encouragement, and so on - pleasure, tremendous pleasure and the pursuit of pleasure. And therefore in the very pursuit of pleasure there must be fear also, because they are the two sides of the same coin. And joy you cannot invite. If it happens then thought takes charge of it and remembers it and pursues that joy which you have had a year ago, or yesterday, which becomes pleasure. And when there is enjoyment - seeing a beautiful sunset, a lovely tree or a deep shadow of a lake - then that enjoyment is registered in the brain as memory and the pursuit of that memory as pleasure. Do you follow? There is fear, there is pleasure, joy and enjoyment. And is it possible - this is a much more complex problem, this - is it possible to observe the sunset, the beauty of a person, the lovely shape of an old, ancient tree in a solitary field, the enjoyment of it, the beauty of it, and observe it without registering it in the brain, and which then becomes memory, and the pursuit of that tomorrow? Do you follow? That is, to see something beautiful and end it, not carry it. What time is it?

So there is this problem of fear, pleasure, and also there is another principle in man: that is the principle of fear, the principle of pleasure, and suffering. Is there an end to suffering? We want suffering to end physically, therefore we take drugs, and do all kinds of yoga tricks and all that. But we have never been able to solve this question of suffering, human suffering, not only of a particular human being but the whole of humanity suffering. You understand? There is your suffering and millions and millions of people in the world suffering, through war, through starvation, through brutality, through violence, through bombs, and can that suffering in you as a human being end? Because if it comes to an end in you, as your consciousness is the consciousness of the world, because your consciousness is the consciousness of every other human being - you may have different peripheral behaviour but basically, deeply, you, your consciousness is the consciousness of every other human being in the world, they suffer, they have pleasure, they have fear, they are ambitious - you follow? - all that is your consciousness. So you are the world. And if you are completely free of fear you affect the consciousness of the world. You understand how extraordinarily important it is that we human beings change, fundamentally, because that will affect the consciousness of every human being. That Hitler has done, Stalin affected all the consciousness of the world, what the priests have achieved in the name of somebody, it has affected the world. So if you, as a human being, radically transform yourself, be free of fear you will naturally affect the consciousness of the world.

Similarly, if there is a freedom from suffering, because when there is freedom from suffering there is compassion, not before. You can talk about it, write books about it, discuss what compassion is, but the ending of sorrow is the beginning of compassion. And can your human mind, which has put up with suffering, endless suffering, having their children killed in wars, suffering, and willing to accept further suffering by future wars. The suffering through education - modern education is to achieve a technological... nothing else and that brings great sorrow. So compassion, which is love, can only come when you understand fully the depth of suffering and the ending of suffering. And can that suffering end - not in somebody else, in you? The Christians have made a parody of suffering - sorry to use that word, but it is

actually so. The Hindus have made it into an intellectual affair, that what you have done in the past life, you are paying for it in the present life, and for the future there will be happiness for you if you behave properly now. But they never behave properly now. (Laughter) So they carry on with this belief which is utterly meaningless. But if a man who is serious, who is concerned with compassion, what it means to love, because without that you can do what you like, you can build all the skyscrapers, have a marvellous economic world and social behaviour and all that, without that life becomes a desert.

So to understand what it means, or to live with compassion, you must understand what suffering is. Is suffering apart from the physical pain, physical disease, physical accident, which generally affects the mind, distorts the mind? If you have had physical pain for some time it twists your mind, and to be aware that the physical pain cannot touch the mind requires tremendous inward awareness. And then there is the suffering, apart from the physical, there is suffering of every kind - suffering in loneliness, suffering when there is no love and you are not loved, the longing for you to be loved and never finding it satisfactory, because we make love into something to be satisfied, we want love to be gratified; and suffering because there is death, suffering because there is never a moment of complete wholeness, a complete sense of totality, but always living in fragmentation, which is contradiction, strife, confusion, misery. And to escape from that we go to temples, drugs and to various forms of entertainment, religious and non-religious, group therapy, and individual therapy. You know all those tricks we play upon ourselves and upon others, if you are clever enough to play tricks upon others. So there is this immense suffering brought by man against man. We bring suffering to all the animals, we kill them, eat them, we have destroyed species after species because our love is fragmented: we love god and kill human beings.

So there is this problem. Can that end? Can suffering totally end so that there is complete and whole compassion? Because suffering means, the root meaning of that is to have passion, not the Christian passion, passion, not lust, that is too cheap, that is very easy, but to have compassion, which means passion for all, for all things, and that can only come when there is total freedom from suffering.

Shall we go on with it? Can you bear an hour and a quarter, an hour and a half of this? (Laughs) Or shall we go on till next...

Questioner: No.

Krishnamurti: You know it is a very complex problem, like everything, like fear, pleasure and suffering, they are all interrelated, and to go into it and see whether the mind, which includes the brain can ever be free completely of all psychological suffering, inward suffering. If we don't understand that and are not free we will bring suffering to others, as we have done - though you believe in god, in Christ, in Buddha, and all kinds of beliefs, you have killed men generation after generation. You understand? What we do, what our politicians do in India, and here. So what is suffering? And why is it that human beings who think of themselves as extraordinarily alive and intelligent, why have they allowed themselves to suffer? Do you understand? There is the suffering when there is jealousy - jealousy is a form of suffering, a form of hate, not only jealousy of those who have achieved something in this world, or supposedly achieved in another world, envy is part of our structure, part of our nature, which is to compare ourselves with somebody else. And can you live without comparison? We think without comparison we shall not evolve, we shall not grow, we shall not be somebody. But have you ever tried to live really, actually without comparing yourself with anybody? You have read the lives of saints, etc., etc., and if you are inclined that way, as you get older, you want to become like that, not when you are young, you spit on all that; but as you are approaching the grave you wake up.

So there are different forms of suffering and can you look at it, observe it, without trying to escape from it, just remain solidly with that thing? When my wife - I am not married - when my wife runs away from me, or looks at another man because the wedding has by law said she belongs to me and I hold her - stupid stuff

all this! And when she moves away from me I am jealous because I possess. In possession I feel satisfied, I feel safe. And also it is good to be possessed, that also gives satisfaction. And that jealousy, that envy, that hatred, can you look at it without any movement of thought and remain with it? You understand what I am saying? Jealousy is a reaction, a reaction which has been named through memory as jealousy, and I have been educated to run away from it, to rationalise it, or to indulge in it, and hate, anger and all the rest of it. But without doing any of that can my mind solidly remain with it without any movement? You understand what I am saying? Do it and you will see what happens

In the same way when you suffer, psychologically, to remain with it completely without a single movement of thought. Then you will see out of that suffering comes that strange thing called passion. And if you have no passion of that kind you cannot be creative. So out of that suffering comes compassion. And that energy is totally different from the mechanistic energy of thought. Right?

Do you want to ask any questions, or is it too late? Too near lunchtime, isn't it? (Laughter)