

Jiddu Krishnamurti

First Public Talk in The Oak Grove

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To understand the confusion and misery that exist in ourselves, and so in the world, we must first find clarity within ourselves, and this clarity comes about through right thinking. This clarity is not to be organized, for it cannot be exchanged with another. Organized group thought becomes dangerous, however good it may appear; organized group thought can be used, exploited; group thought ceases to be right thinking, it is merely repetitive. Clarity is essential, for without it change and reform merely lead to further confusion. Clarity is not the result of verbal assertion but of intense self-awareness and right thinking. Right thinking is not the outcome of mere cultivation of the intellect, nor is it conformity to pattern, however worthy and noble. Right thinking comes with self-knowledge. Without understanding yourself, you have no basis for thought; without self-knowledge, what you think is not true.

You and the world are not two different entities with separate problems; you and the world are one. Your problem is the world's problem. You may be the result of certain tendencies, of environmental influences, but you are not different fundamentally from another. Inwardly, we are very much alike; we are all driven by greed, ill will, fear, ambition, and so on. Our beliefs, hopes, aspirations have a common basis. We are one; we are one humanity, though the artificial frontiers of economics and politics and prejudice divide us. If you kill another, you are destroying yourself. You are the center of the whole, and without understanding yourself you cannot understand reality.

We have an intellectual knowledge of this unity, but we keep knowledge and feeling in different compartments, and hence we never experience the extraordinary unity of man. When knowledge and feeling meet, there is experience. These talks will be utterly useless if you do not experience as you are listening. Do not say, "I will understand later," but experience now. Do not keep your knowledge and your feeling separate, for out of this separation grow confusion and misery. You must experience this living unity of man. You are not separate from the Japanese, the Hindu, the Negro, or the German. To experience this immense unity, be open, become conscious of this division between knowledge and feeling; do not be a

slave to compartmental philosophy.

Without self-knowledge understanding is not possible. Self-knowledge is extremely arduous and difficult for you are a complex entity. You must approach the understanding of the self simply, without any pretensions, without any theories. If I would understand you, I must have no preconceived formulations about you, there must be no prejudice; I must be open, without judgment, without comparison. This is very difficult, for with most of us thought is the result of comparison, of judgment. Through approximation we think we are understanding, but is understanding born of comparison, judgment? Or, is it the outcome of noncomparative thought? If you would understand something, do you compare it with something else or do you study it for itself?

Thought born of comparison is not right thinking. Yet in studying ourselves we are comparing, approximating. It is this that prevents the understanding of ourselves. Why do we judge ourselves? Is not our judgment the outcome of our desire to become something, to gain, to conform, to protect ourselves? This very urge prevents understanding.

As I said, you are a complex entity, and to understand it you must examine it. You cannot understand it if you are comparing it with the yesterday or with the tomorrow. You are an intricate mechanism, but comparison, judgment, identification prevent comprehension. Do not be afraid that you will become sluggish, smug, self-contented if you do not compete in comparison. Once you have perceived the futility of comparison, there is a great freedom. Then you are no longer striving to become, but there is freedom to understand. Be aware of this comparative process of your thinking - experience all this as I am explaining - and feel its futility, its fundamental thoughtlessness; you will then experience a great freedom, as though you had laid down a wearisome burden. In this freedom from approximation and so from identification, you will be able to discover and understand the realities of yourself. If you do not compare, judge, then you will be confronted with yourself, and this will give clarity and strength to uncover great depths. This is essential for the understanding of reality. When there is no self-approximation, then thought is liberated from duality; the problem and the conflict with the opposites fall away. In this freedom there is a revolutionary, creative understanding.

There is not one of us who is not confronted with the problem of killing and non-killing, violence and nonviolence. Some of you may feel that, as your sons, brothers, or husbands are not involved in this mass murder called war, you are not immediately concerned with this problem, but if you will look a little more closely, you will see how deeply you are involved. You cannot escape it. You must, as an individual, have a definite attitude towards killing and non-killing. If you have not been aware of it, you are being confronted with it now; you must face the issue, the dualistic problem of capitalism and communism, love and hate, killing and non-killing, and so on. How are you to find the truth of the matter? Is there any release from conflict in the endless corridor of duality? Many believe that in the very struggle of the opposites there is creativeness, that this conflict is life, and to escape from it is to be in illusion. Is this so? Does not an opposite contain an element of its own opposite and so produce endless conflict and pain? Is conflict necessary for creation? Are the moments of creativeness the outcome of strife and pain? Does not the state of creative being come into existence when all pain and struggle have utterly ceased? You can experience this for yourself. This freedom from opposites is not an illusion; in it alone is the answer to all of our confusion and conflicting problems.

You are faced with the problem of killing your brother in the name of religion, of peace, of country, and so on. How shall you find the answer, in which further conflicting, further opposing problems are not inherent? To find a true, lasting answer, must you not go outside of the dualistic pattern of thought? You kill because your property, your safety, your prestige are threatened; as with the individual, so with the group, with the nation. To be free from violence and nonviolence, there must be freedom from acquisitiveness, ill will, lust, and so on. But most of us do not go into the problem deeply and are satisfied

with reform, with alternation within the pattern of duality. We accept as inevitable this conflict of duality and within that pattern try to bring about modification, change; within it we maneuver to a better position, to a more advantageous point for ourselves. Change or reform merely within the pattern of duality produces only further confusion and pain and hence is retrogression.

You must go beyond the pattern of duality to solve permanently the problem of opposites. Within the pattern there is no truth, however much we may be caught in it; if we seek truth in it, we will be led to many delusions. We must go beyond the dualistic pattern of the 'I' and the not-'I', the possessor and the possessed. Beyond and above the endless corridor of duality lies truth. Beyond and above the conflicting and painful problem of opposites lies creative understanding. This is to be experienced, not to be speculated upon, not to be formulated, but to be realized through deep awareness of the dualistic hindrances.

Questioner: I am sure most of us have seen authentic pictures in movies and in magazines of the horrors and the barbarities of the concentration camps. What should be done, in your opinion, with those who have perpetrated these monstrous atrocities? Should they not be punished?

Krishnamurti: Who is to punish them? Is not the judge often as guilty as the accused? Each one of us has built up this civilization, each one has contributed towards its misery, each one is responsible for its actions. We are the outcome of each other's actions and reactions; this civilization is a collective result. No country or people is separate from another; we are all interrelated: we are one. Whether we acknowledge it or not, when a misfortune happens to a people, we share in it as in its good fortune. You may not separate yourself to condemn or to praise.

The power to oppress is evil, and every group that is large and well organized becomes a potential source of evil. By shouting loudly the cruelties of another country, you think you can overlook those of your own. It is not only the vanquished but every country that is responsible for the horrors of war. War is one of the greatest catastrophes; the greatest evil is to kill another. Once you admit such an evil into your heart, then you let loose countless minor disasters. You do not condemn war itself but him who is cruel in war.

You are responsible for war; you have brought it about by your everyday action of greed, ill will, passion. Each one of us has built up this competitive, ruthless civilization in which man is against man. You want to root out the causes of war, of barbarity in others, while you yourself indulge in them. This leads to hypocrisy and to further wars. You have to root out the causes of war, of violence, in yourself, which demands patience and gentleness, not bloody condemnation of others.

Humanity does not need more suffering to make it understand, but what is needed is that you should be aware of your own actions, that you should awaken to your own ignorance and sorrow and so bring about in yourself compassion and tolerance. You should not be concerned with punishments and rewards, but with the eradication in yourself of those causes that manifest themselves in violence and in hate, in antagonism and ill will. In murdering the murderer you become like him; you become the criminal. A wrong is not righted through wrong means; only through right means can a right end be accomplished. If you would have peace you must employ peaceful means, and mass murder, war, can only lead to further murder, further suffering. There can be no love through bloodshed; an army is not an instrument of peace. Only goodwill and compassion can bring peace to the world, not might and cunning nor mere legislation.

You are responsible for the misery and disaster that exist, you who in your daily life are cruel, oppressive, greedy, ambitious. Suffering will continue until you eradicate in yourself those causes that breed passion, greed, and ruthlessness. Have peace and compassion in your heart and you will find the right answer to your questions.

Questioner: At this time and in our present way of life, our feelings become blunted and hard. Can you suggest a way of life that will make us more sensitive? Can we become so in spite of noise, haste, all the

competitive professions and pursuits? Can we become so without dedication to a higher source of life?

Krishnamurti: Is it not necessary, for clear and right thinking, to be sensitive? To feel deeply, must not the heart be open? Must not the body be healthy to respond eagerly? We blunt our minds, our feelings, our bodies, with beliefs and ill will, with strong and hardening stimulants. It is essential to be sensitive, to respond keenly and rightly, but we become blunted, hard, through our appetites. There is no separate entity such as the mind apart from the organism as a whole, and when the organism as a whole is ill-treated, wasted, distracted, then insensitivity sets in. Our environment, our present way of life, blunts us, wastes us. How can you be sensitive when every day you indulge in reading or seeing pictures of the slaughter of thousands - this mass murder reported as though it were a successful game. The first time you read the reports you may feel sick at heart, but the constant repetition of brutal ruthlessness dulls your mind-heart, immunizing you to the utter barbarism of modern society. The radios, magazines, cinemas are ever wasting your sensitive pliability; you are forced, threatened, regimented, and how can you, in the midst of this noise, haste, and false pursuits, remain sensitive for the cultivation of right thinking?

If you would not have your feelings blunted and hard, you must pay the price for it; you must abandon haste, distraction, wrong professions and pursuits. You must become aware of your appetites, your limiting environment, and by rightly understanding them you begin to reawaken your sensitivity. Through constant awareness of your thoughts-feelings, the causes of self-enclosure and narrowness fall away. If you would be highly sensitive and clear, you must deliberately work for it; you cannot be worldly and yet be pure in the pursuit of reality. Our difficulty is we want both - the burning appetites and the serenity of reality. You must abandon the one or the other; you cannot have both. You cannot indulge and yet be alert; to be keenly aware there must be freedom from those influences that are crystallizing, blunting.

We have overdeveloped the intellect at the cost of our deeper and clearer feelings, and a civilization that is based on the cultivation of the intellect must bring about ruthlessness and the worship of success. The emphasis on intellect or on emotion leads to unbalance, and intellect is ever seeking to safeguard itself. Mere determination only strengthens the intellect and blunts and hardens it; it is ever self-aggressive in becoming or not-becoming. The ways of the intellect must be understood through constant awareness, and its reeducation must transcend its own reasoning.

Questioner: I find there is conflict between my occupation and my relationship. They go in different directions. How can I make them meet?

Krishnamurti: Most of our occupations are dictated by tradition, or by greed, or by ambition. In our occupation we are ruthless, competitive, deceitful, cunning, and highly self-protective. If we weaken at any time we may go under, so we must keep up with the high efficiency of the greedy machine of business. It is a constant struggle to maintain a hold, to become sharper and cleverer. Ambition can never find lasting satisfaction; it is ever seeking wider fields for self-assertiveness.

But in relationship quite a different process is involved. In it there must be affection, consideration, adjustment, self-denial, yielding - not to conquer but to live happily. In it there must be self-effacing tenderness, freedom from domination, from possessiveness; but emptiness and fear breed jealousy and pain in relationship. Relationship is a process of self-discovery in which there is wider and deeper understanding; relationship is a constant adjustment in self-discovery. It demands patience, infinite pliability, and a simple heart.

But how can the two meet together - self-assertiveness and love, occupation and relationship? The one is ruthless, competitive, ambitious; the other is self-denying, considerate, gentle: they cannot come together. With one hand people deal in blood and money, and with the other they try to be kind, affectionate, thoughtful. As a relief from their thoughtless and dull occupations, they seek comfort and ease in relationship. But relationship does not yield comfort, for it is a distinctive process of self-discovery and

understanding. The man of occupation tries to seek, through his life of relationship, comfort and pleasure as a compensation for his wearisome business. His daily occupation of ambition, greed, and ruthlessness lead step by step to war and to the barbarities of modern civilization.

Right occupation is not dictated by tradition, greed, or ambition. If each one is seriously concerned in establishing right relationship, not only with one but with all, then he will find right occupation. Right occupation comes with regeneration, with the change of heart, not with the mere intellectual determination to find it.

Integration is only possible if there is clarity of understanding on all the different levels of our consciousness. There can be no integration of love and ambition, deception and clarity, compassion and war. So long as occupation and relationship are kept apart, so long will there be endless conflict and misery. All reformation within the pattern of duality is retrogression; only beyond it is there creative peace.