

Jiddu Krishnamurti

Second Public Talk in Bangalore

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If we may, we'll continue with what we were talking about the last time that we met here. I would like this evening, if I may, to talk about a great many things: fear, pleasure, love and death. But bearing in mind that the word is not the thing, the description is not the described and that the word, though necessary to communicate, does not necessarily convey the full significance of that word. And as most of us are prisoners to words, we must go beyond the word, which would be a real communication. Communication, as we said the other day, is not merely listening to someone but sharing in what is being said. Sharing implies not only the verbal communication but sharing the space between the words, reading between the lines. And to share is a responsibility. And to share it properly, we must both meet at the same point, at the same time, with the same intensity; otherwise there is no sharing at all. So it's your responsibility this evening not only to listen to what is being said but also to share seriously in the thing that is being said. To share properly both of us must be interested in it. Both of us must be sufficiently serious, sufficiently adventurous enough to go deeply into the questions that we are going to talk about.

We must think together and that's part of sharing. Not you comply or agree or disagree but together we are going to investigate. That word 'investigate' means to trace out - trace out from the beginning to the end. And to do that, there must be a sustained quality of attention; a quality of mind that is willing to set aside its own particular opinions, judgements, evaluations, experiences and together proceed slowly, hesitantly, but with a mind that is clear, sharp, alive. And that's not possible if you are merely caught in a tradition. Then you are like an animal tied to a post, it can go only that far, no further. So when you are going to investigate into this question, into these questions of fear, pleasure, whether the mind can ever be free of death and what is the nature, the quality of a mind that is compassionate.

It's a nice evening, isn't it? I'm always struck by the beauty of the land. It's a marvellous land, this geographical part of the world called India. It's a beautiful country - with hills, streams, marvellous trees, with lakes and rivers, but the men that inhabit it seem so corrupt. This country is degenerating. Perhaps you

are not aware of it; you are too close to it. The culture, the ancient culture upon which this country has lived, is dead. It may be in the book, it may be in the tradition, but those who live in this beautiful earth, they have never found a way of living which is total, real, actual, not theoretical. And when we are going to talk about fear, you may regard it abstractly, that is, draw a theory, a conclusion about fear and look at it ideologically. Please follow this a little bit.

Most human beings throughout the world draw an abstract idea of 'what is' and look at 'what is' with that abstraction. They never face actually 'what is'. And this evening, if we can, we are going to together look at this problem which is very complex, of fear, not only at the conscious level - what a lovely sunset, isn't it? - the other way! There's some old friends of mine from Italy sitting there. We are going to look at this question of fear which is very complex, actually as it is, not theoretically, not what you should do with fear, how to transcend it, how to go beyond it, but actually, non-theoretically observe it. In our education, from childhood, we are nurtured in fear. Our education is a competitive way of training the mind to conform to a particular knowledge and that knowledge used as a means of success. To us success is tremendously important, not only in the business world and social world, but also artistically and specially religiously. Please, observe this in yourselves. Fear to succeed, fear of not succeeding with all its frustrations, fear of not being able to stand completely alone, but always depending on knowledge which is the accumulated memory of the past, the known, and depending on belief, on the experience of others, on following a particular authority of a guru or a saint or a teacher or a saviour, we are brought up from childhood never to stand completely alone, totally rely psychologically upon ourselves. So dependency plays a tremendous part in our life. Where there is dependency there is fear and where there is dependency there is the pain of that which you depend upon being taken away. Whether that dependency be a function from which you draw a status and afraid that you might lose the status and thereby become more inefficient in function. I hope you are following all this.

Function, which is part of action based on knowledge is always efficient. When you are functioning without seeking status, then in that functioning efficiency becomes great, necessary, but when you introduce status in function, then function becomes inefficient and corrupt. And that's what is happening in this country and everywhere. The cook has his function, as the minister, but you give, and the minister gives, a status to his position. So psychologically, inwardly the status becomes far more important than function and you respect the status, not the function. Do watch this, please, in yourselves. How you look at a cook and how you regard the minister. You completely fall over when a minister comes along or the guru comes along, you are flat on the ground. And the cook, you hardly look - if you have a cook. So to you status matters enormously, not the function and in that there is tremendous fear.

We are examining not only the superficial fears of a conscious mind, but also the hidden fears that lie deeply undiscovered. And dependency implies attachment: attachment to a belief, attachment to a tradition, attachment to a person, attachment to the position that gives you status. Now I wish you could see this clearly. In this country status has taken the place of efficiency and therefore there is degeneration going on. And what we are concerned with is to bring about a different kind of culture, a culture that is entirely different in which the human being with his fears, with his dependencies has put aside and acts totally differently. And that's what we are investigating together this evening.

Dependency and attachment are one of the factors of fear. There is the fear of losing a job, specially in a country like this where there is over-population. There is fear of recurring pain physically: you might have had pain yesterday or last week and one is afraid that it might return. Then there are fears of not being a success in this life; in the religious field as well as in the artistic, scientific, business field. And there are fears of public opinion, of not going with the herd, with the crowd, which all indicate, don't they, that the mind is always looking to others; the mind is always wanting a security in some form of experience or in belief or in a projected idea called God. And so there are innumerable fears and ultimately the fear of death, of not being. Which we will go into presently.

And there are all the unconscious, deep, hidden layers in which the communal, collective fears and the personal fears, the family fears and so on, they are all accumulated. Now what can one do about these fears? Is it possible for the mind to be totally free, not only of the physical fears, but also all the psychological fears that man has built throughout his existence. You are following all this? It's your life that I am talking about, not my life. Can the mind, trained, educated, conditioned to accept fear as a way of life from childhood - security of the mother, security of the family, security in a conclusion, in a formula, security in the Government or in the ideological Government and security outwardly and security inwardly - your experience, your beliefs, your opinions, your knowledge, your gods, and all the rest of it. Now, can the mind, that is your mind, be totally free of this accumulated fear of the society, the culture round you and also the personal fears? Is that possible? If it is not possible, then we live and function always in distortion; our life is distorted. It's like living in darkness with occasional flashes of light. Fear is the most dreadful thing to carry with us. Fear in any form, conscious or fears that you are not aware of. Now, is this possible? Man has never solved this problem. He always has said fear will go on, but in heaven or in some place we'll find peace. And he escapes from fear through the assertions of others, ideologically, religiously or politically.

So, he knows he is afraid; he knows he is dependent; he knows that this fear is like living in a dungeon making life intolerable, painful. And from this fear arises violence of every kind. Not being able to solve it totally, he resorts to various forms of escapes: drugs, sex, religion, gurus and all the rest of it.

Now, we have stated the problem. It's your problem. Now we are asking whether the mind, your mind, can ever be free of this terrible thing called fear - fear of death and fear of living - you follow? - fear of living and fear of dying. So, what is fear? How does it come about? Do look at that sunset. You know, the sense of beauty, not the emotional response to beauty, the quality of a mind that sees beauty, is part of a religious mind that is not fragmented. A mind that is fragmented is a corrupt mind. It's not only the corruption of the politicians and all the rest of it, which is to collect money, but corruption is much deeper. That corruption takes place when there is a fragmentation in action, fragmentation in thought, fragmentation in our activities - business, social, religious, politics - you follow? - all broken up. And beauty is that quality of mind in which fragmentation has never touched it. So look at the sunset.

So there's every kind of fear and the ultimate fear is death. So, one asks what is fear? There are many forms, but the basic essence of fear. Please, take your particular fear. I'm sure you have some of them. Look at it, take it, observe it, invite that fear which you have avoided cleverly, abstractly, and invite it and look at it. What is fear? If this is not understood properly and gone beyond, all endeavour - please listen to this - all endeavour to find truth, all endeavour to meditate, all endeavour to live in peace, in harmony, in beauty is non-existent unless you basically solve this question. Your search, your endeavour to find God, truth, is meaningless, it's just an escape unless this question of fear is absolutely solved, understood and gone beyond. What is fear? How does it come? You know, to investigate such a question, you must be concerned not with the getting rid of fear, or resisting fear, but trace fear to the origin. So we are going to do it together. Not that you listen to the speaker, he is tracing out, and then accepting it or denying it, but together, you with your fear, having invited it, looking at it, without any resistance, without trying to transcend it, suppress it, but to look at it and in the very act of looking, you are asking this question: what is this thing called fear? How does it come?

May I go on? I am working hard for you. Because to me this is one of the most fundamental realities which must be solved for a mind that wishes or a mind that is concerned with truth, a mind that is a religious mind. A religious mind is a mind in which every form of fragmentation has come to an end and therefore strife. And one of the fragmentations of life is fear. So, we are asking what is the cause, the source, the essence of fear? It is not that we must cut the branches of fear because there are too many branches, expressions, ways of fear, but we are trying, we are doing, we are - 'trying' is a wrong word - we are investigating, looking at the very root of fear. To find that out, one must go into the question of the whole nature and structure of thought. Because, without deeply understanding the nature and the structure of

thought, we will never solve this question of fear. So, thought, thinking, is the factor, not the resolution of fear. You understand?

So, what is thought? Does thought breed fear? Yesterday or last week, there was pain, physical pain - please, listen to this - biological, psychological pain in the organism. That pain is registered in the brain as pain and there is the memory of that pain. Thought springs from that memory and says, 'I hope I will not have that pain next week'. So, thought is time. Right? Thought which is the response of memory of that pain, projects itself through time to next week and says, 'I hope there will be no pain'. So thought sustains fear and is the cause of fear. You understand this? Please, meet this. Don't argue. We'll argue later but see the truth of it, have an insight into it. You know, to have an insight means that you must forget for a moment your fear, forget how you have struggled against fear, but look at it with a mind that is really free for the moment to observe. So, you see that thought is responsible for fear: a week ago, pain, and not wanting it to happen again next week. The next: last week it happened, it may not happen again next week. The interval between last week and next week is time, which is thought. So, thought is time. Do see this. In the same way, when you see that lovely sunset with all the colours, the beauty of that line, the clouds and the sense of great delight, at that moment there is no thought, only the fact. Only what there is. Then thought comes along and says, 'How lovely it is. I wish I could photograph it; I wish I could paint it. I would like to keep it as an extraordinary memento'. Which is, thought sustains an incident through pleasure. You are following this? So thought contributes to fear, sustains pleasure. You have had a happy meal yesterday and you want it repeated, which is the pleasure whether it is sexual, whatever it is, the pleasure. And the continuity of that pleasure and the demand for pleasure, the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of fear are both sustained by thought. Right? When you see that sunset, see it completely and that's the end of it. Don't carry it over. But the mind, the thought says, 'I must have that again'. And the failure of that, that is not having pleasure breeds annoyance, breeds anger, violence and in its turn fear. You are following all this? So thought is responsible. Not that you didn't have pain a week ago, but thought says, 'I hope I won't have it next week'. You saw that sunset and took delight. It was an extraordinary event to see something marvellous, like a clear mountain with snow in a blue sky. But thought says, 'Let me have it again tomorrow, sex'. You follow? The whole structure of thought is a movement in time, avoiding pain, fear and pursuing pleasure and the root is thought.

So one asks, if thought is responsible for both, then how is thought not to interfere or distort that sunset or the pain? You are following all this? Are we together in this? Yes? We are journeying together, still hand-in-hand? It is up to you. Because, sirs, when you once understand this, you will walk out this evening without a shadow of fear. Then you will be real human beings standing alone, not depending on anybody, psychologically. You do depend on the postman and the milkman and all the rest of it, but psychologically not depending on any individual or any human being. You will be a light to yourself.

So, what is the function of thought? You are following? We see thought sustains and nourishes fear as well as pleasure. So one asks, what is the function of thought? Has it any function psychologically or only functionally? You understand what I am saying? Psychologically, that is, the pursuit of pleasure, the avoidance of pain, avoidance of fear which is all part of the psyche, the pursuit of thought inwardly. So what is the function of thought? You understand? Am I putting the right question? Because if you put the right question, you get the right answer. If you put the wrong question, you get lost. So I am asking if we are putting the right question. Which is, we see what the movement of thought is, always within the field of time from the known, which is knowledge, experience, the past, and thought projects itself beyond its limit and invents its gods, its systems, philosophies and all the rest of it. So what is the function of thought? Obviously thought is part of communication, linguistic and so on. The word is part of the structure of thought, but the word is not the thing, the description is not the described. So what is the function of thought? Has it any other function than in the field of the known? That is, in the field of technology, in the field of business, in the field of Government, which is function. Please listen to this; I am thinking, going,

investigating it and I hope you are too, not just merely listening to the speaker. Thought has its function only in the field of the known. That field may be contracted or expanded but it's always within that field because thought is never free. Thought is never new, because thought is the response of memory. Memory is knowledge, experience, which is the past. So thought is always responding to any challenge, to any demand from the known, the past. And that is only its function and it has no other function. Because when it is only functioning within that field, it may be extended vastly, then thought is logical, efficient, true. But when thought out of that functioning pursues status then thought creates a contradiction, then thought becomes inefficient in function. You are following this?

The pursuit of status is a psychological state, not a factual state. It is a state invented by man in the social structure in which he lives. So as long as thought is functioning within the field of the known, then it is totally objective, efficient, capable and that is its function; but when thought pursues psychological status, then it enters into a field that is destructive. Am I conveying? Am I making this clear? So thought has its place, completely, logically, sanely but thought creates insanity when it pursues, goes beyond into the unknown - which is, all our religions are based on. So, thought is dissatisfied with the function and pursues out of this dissatisfaction security in the field of the unknown, in the psychological field. That's why all neurotic action takes place when you leave the function. A man who is seeking status is neurotic because he is using thought to sustain an unreality which makes functioning ineffective. You are getting all this? It's your life, sir, your life.

Now, seeing that, see that, have an insight into it, and insight is only possible when you listen, when you don't argue, accept, when you are actually listening to facts, not to opinions; these are absolute facts. Then when the mind is observing without the observer, the observer is thought in the field of the psyche. The observer is created by thought, the observer is time, thought is time and where there is an observer, insight is not possible. I want to go on, there's so much more.

So, the mind that has seen the nature and the structure of thought and understands its function - not intellectually, there is no such thing as intellectual understanding, that is only, when you say I understand it intellectually, you mean verbally I have understood. Now, when you see the nature of thought, then fear with all its weight begins to fade away. I must go on. I would like to go into this much more, but we haven't time. The whole field of the deep layers of the mind, how to bring all that up into the open. We haven't time to go into that.

Then the question is: what is love? Because we said we are going to talk over together this question of fear and pleasure and love. What is love? Is it pleasure? We have made it into pleasure, sexual, other forms of pleasure, devotional, pure God is pleasure. It's nothing to do with love of truth. It gives you pleasure to be devoted to some idiotic statue or to a person. And is love pleasure? Look at it, sirs, don't avoid it. Is love attachment? When you say I love somebody, in that there is attachment, isn't it there? And when that person leaves, you become jealous, angry, full of antagonism, hate, violence. So, is love pleasure, is love jealousy, is love envy? And the man who is ambitious, wanting success, fame, notoriety, publicity, ambitious, can such a man who is ambitious, be aware of what love is? Come on, sirs, answer it?

Audience: No.

K: Don't say no, because you are ambitious. (laughter) Don't laugh sir, don't. This is dreadfully serious, all this. You laugh at every silly thing. This is real life. This is our problem. You ought to shed tears. Our life is destroyed by all this. So, what is love? Love of God, your God which you have invented, because out of your projection, out of your fear, out of your sense of insecurity, you create the temples, mosques, churches. So, what is love? You know, through negation you come upon the positive. When you negate, not verbally, not intellectually, but actually in daily life; negate completely envy, jealousy, the desire for success, ambition, in your life, in your act, in your thought, negate that, then there is that thing called compassion. You cannot

possibly cultivate compassion or love. That's one of your tricks. It's like a man who is vain cultivating humility, his humility is part of his vanity.

So, love is the negation, total negation of what it is not. Compassion, the word means passion for all. You understand, sir, passion for all. And passion, the word 'passion' comes from sorrow. You know, human beings suffer a great deal. Our lot is sorrow, not only personal, but collective sorrow; the sorrow of seeing the villagers with hardly a proper meal, living everlastingly in their little village and you ride in the big car and they never having an opportunity. The life of ignorance is sorrow. So there is sorrow. So when there is sorrow, not to escape from it, but be with it. Not morbidly because out of that confrontation with sorrow passion comes, because without passion you cannot live, do, act. So, there's a lot more to be said about this, but we must go on. You know, there is compassion not only for human beings, but for animals. In this country, you don't know what it is to be kind to animals. That's your misfortune.

So we must go to the next thing, which is death. Our question is: can the mind be free of death? All religions have given you comfort in the idea of resurrection by the Christians or in reincarnation which you believe in the whole of the East. That gives you comfort. But there is no freedom from death. Now, we are investigating that. Not what will give you more comfort. Not a new belief, a new concept. If you really, actually, in daily life, you believe that you will be born next life, if you actually, what a real thing to you, a burning reality, then every day means that you have to live totally, your conduct, your action means that whatever you do now you will pay for it next life, but you don't believe that way. You believe just as an idea and thereby you become hypocrites.

So we are now going to see not whether there is life after death, one has to go into this, I haven't got time. But rather to incarnate now. You understand what I am saying? To be reborn now, not next life. That's what we are going to find out, whether the mind can be free of death which is to be reborn, totally incarnate every day and every minute. You understand the beauty of that, sir? Do you? No, you don't. Can the mind be free of death? Have you ever asked this question or you have always been frightened - postpone it, postpone it? Old age, disease, accident happens, then it's too late. While living, active, perceptive, attentive, we are asking this question: can the mind be free of death? That is, can the mind be free of time? You understand this? Is this becoming too difficult, too complicated? Can the mind live with the unknown which is death and with the known which is knowledge? You understand? Live with the unknown and the known harmoniously together. Right, sir?

You see, can the mind be free of the known? The freedom of the known is death. The known, your knowledge, your ambitions, your greeds, your envies, your professionalism, all that, the known. The freedom of the known is death. The freedom of the known is the 'me', the 'me' who has accumulated, identified, furniture, wife, family, country, job - you follow? - the 'me' which is the known, which is time. Can the mind - just listen to the question - can the mind be free of the known and therefore the dying to the known and living with the unknown? The unknown is never describable. That is, freedom can never be described. You can say I am free from anger, or free from disease, free from that, but that's not freedom. Freedom is that quality of mind which has understood the function of memory, knowledge and experience in function and lives in that state of mind in which death of the known is happening all the time. I wonder if I can convey it any more. Therefore, one has to understand fear, pleasure, then the beauty and the quality of compassion, love and then this strange thing called death. They all go together. It isn't that you keep fear, understand fear or pursue pleasure, it's all tied together. They are one whole.

So a mind that is living in harmony with the known and dying to the known, which means dying to time because there is no tomorrow, there is only the known and that known coming to an end each day. And that is to incarnate anew each day, not next life. All this is the way to live daily, not occasionally, but every day of one's life.

Do we ask any questions?

Q: (Inaudible)

K: Sir, why don't you ask much more. This gentleman asks, please explain why we are here, the observer and the observed and so on. Aren't they irrelevant questions? You are here. You are suffering. Why don't you ask real questions?

Q: (Inaudible)

K: I can't hear sir, I am sorry.

Q: (Inaudible)

K: From there sir, I think it will be possible.

Q: (Inaudible)

K: Sir, we don't hear. Yes sir, what is it sir, what is the question?

Q: Shri Arabindo has said indeed in his Divine Life...

K: Who?

Q: Shri Arabindo.

K: Somebody, he is quoting somebody.

Q: Sri Arabindo.

K: I don't know who the gentleman is. Don't quote somebody, sir.

Q: Without quoting I'll say, you see what has been stated by him.

K: Sir, please sir.

Q: Yes.

K: Don't quote somebody. Don't quote another.

Q: But I will put a question: is life terminable at will?

K: Is life?

Q: Terminable at will?

K: Go and sit down, sir, you have said it.

Q: Yes. I have got sick of this desire and I have been preaching to the universal beings, it will relieve me from this pain, from this worldly suffering. Is it terminable at will?

K: Should I commit suicide?

Q: No, I don't want to do it. It is not true, it is not advisable. I don't want to end my life. I want to be free from this life, in a peaceful manner.

K: He doesn't want to end his life but he wants to...

Q: A relief from this life.

K: What, sir?

Q: A relief from this life.

K: Ah! He doesn't want to die, commit suicide but he wants to be released from the pains of this life. That's what we have been talking all this evening. Just listen, sir. That's what we have been talking about, communicating with each other, how to live a life in which suffering is not, a way of living in which suffering, conflict, fear doesn't exist. We spent an hour and a quarter and then you get up and ask me how to be free of the pains of life. You haven't listened.

Q: May I ask one question? Sir, you said that thought has a particular function and if that function is exceeded then this pursuit of pleasure or...

K: I didn't say that, sir.

Q: Can I complete?

K: Sit down, sir, sit down sir. Proceed, sir.

Q: Thought has a function and if that particular function is done, then it will be all right. If something else is done then definitely it results to fear. Now, I want to know do you mean that we have to condition our mind to do only that particular function and no further?

K: Sir, I said, the speaker said, he took a very simple example: when you pursue status and not efficiency in function, then function, which is part of our thinking, that function becomes inefficient, because you have laid emphasis on status. The status is an invention of thought, that is unreal. What is real is function. But society, you in your relationship with another have established status as far more important than function. And we are saying that thought has its legitimate place and thought when it pursues status becomes irresponsible. Full stop. You can enlarge that point all round.

Q: Sir, what is that looking which is in essence...

K: What is?

Q: What is that looking which you referred which is...

K: I understand. What do you mean by observing? What do you mean by hearing? Right, sir? They are both the same. Do you ever hear anybody completely? To hear somebody, you must give your attention. There is no attention if you are chattering, comparing, judging, evaluating, putting your own opinions. You are not actually listening. In the same way, when you observe your previous experiences, knowledge, thought is constantly interfering, distorting. So we are saying to observe without distortion.

Q: It's not possible.

K: What?

Q: It is not possible.

K: All right, it's not possible. The gentleman - then it's finished. Then you have no problem. But if a man who says I want to find out whether it is possible to look at the cloud, at the tree, at my wife, husband, at the children, at all the things that are happening around me - to look without distortion; I want to look at the gods that man has invented without distortion. Where there is distortion you have gods. Right? Put that in your pipe and smoke it! So, observe.

Q: (Inaudible)

K: What?

Q: (Inaudible)

K: Sir, I won't go into all that now, after explaining a whole hour. Really! I think that's enough, sir, for this evening.