

Jiddu Krishnamurti

Second Talk in Santiago

From the series:

Three Public Meetings in Santiago - 1935

Saturday, September 7, 1935

Second Talk in Santiago

Friends,

I want to talk briefly this afternoon about action and fulfillment. We realize the frustration and limitation which appear through our action. By one act we seem to create many problems, and our life becomes one endless series of them, with their conflict and misery. The mind in its movement seems to increase its own limitation, and action which should be liberating merely intensifies its own frustration. To understand this question of action and fulfillment, mind must be free from the idea of vested interest. Where there is vested interest - whether in an ideal, in a belief, in a hope, or in any other thing - there must be fear; and any action born of fear must bring about frustration, limitation.

I will try to explain what are the hindrances that really stand in the way of fulfillment. I am not going to describe what is fulfillment, because the mere explanation of that cannot indicate to us the limitations and the manner of liberating the mind from them. Please see why it is necessary to understand what are the hindrances, and how they are created, and not what is fulfillment. If I were to define what it is, the mind would make of that a rigid system and merely imitate it. The very desire for fulfillment becomes a great hindrance. Instead of imitating, if we can discover for ourselves what are the limitations that cripple the mind, and free it from them, then in that very freedom is fulfillment.

Fulfillment, then, is not the search for security. Where there is a search for certainty, safety, comfort, that very search must engender fear. Most people, subtly or grossly, are craving for this security and by their acts create fear. So where there is fear, there is a deep longing for certainty. This desire creates its own limitations, and authority or compulsion is one of them.

There are many subtle expressions of authority. It is expressed through the desire to follow an ideal, a person, or a system. Why do we want to follow an ideal? Life is chaotic, conflicting, full of pain, and we think that, if we can find an ideal, then we shall be able to guide ourselves across this aching turmoil. But in

reality, what is it that we are doing? We are creating what we call an ideal as a means of escape from conflict, from suffering. By following and submitting ourselves to an ideal, we think we shall be able to understand our contradictory and sorrowful life. Instead of liberating ourselves from those causes which are preventing us from living humanly, with love, with consideration, we try to escape into the illusion of an ideal. We hope by molding our minds and hearts through discipline, through the imitation of certain ideals and beliefs, to achieve that intelligent human state. This imitation creates a hypocritical attitude towards life. With a desire to escape from the movement of life, which is ever of the present, we seek to know the purpose of life. With a desire to escape from actuality, the mind submits itself to the compulsion of ideals, which are but self-protective memories against life.

There is, then, this compulsion which is imposed through self-defensive memories. Most of us think that through a continual series of experiences, the mind can free itself from all its many limitations. But this is not so. What happens is that each experience leaves on the mind certain scars, memories of self-protection which are used as a means of defense against a new experience. That is, you have an experience, and you think you have learned something from it. What you have learned is to be careful, not to be caught in sorrow again. So through each experience you develop certain layers of memories, which act as barriers between the mind and the movement of life.

Ideals and memories, with all their significance, prevent each one from living completely in action, in experience. Instead of living with experience completely, with your whole being, you bring forward all your prejudices of ideals, self-protective moralities and memories, and those prevent fulfillment. Where there is no fulfillment, there is ever the fear of death, and the thought of the hereafter. So gradually the present, the living movement of life, loses all its beauty and significance, and there is only emptiness and fear.

If there is to be true fulfillment, mind must be free from ideals and memories, with all their significance. Through the desire for security, these memories and ideals become the means of compulsion. Where there is security there cannot be fulfillment.

Questioner: You have often said, "Perceive and understand the full significance of environment." Does this necessarily mean action coming into conflict with environment? Or is it mere perception, without any dynamic expression in action?

Krishnamurti: How can one truly discern if there is not action? There cannot be an intellectual discernment. There is either deep understanding or the creation of mere theory. If you desire to understand environment, not only the objective but the subjective which is so infinitely subtle, then you must individually come into conflict with it. It is only in conflict, in suffering, that you, the individual, begin to discern the true significance of values; and as most people are afraid to come into contact with suffering, they would rather intellectually perceive their significance. So they leave the responsibility of action to the mass, that vague and unreal entity, which they hope will miraculously alter their environment, and so bring happiness to them.

To understand deeply the subtle significance of environment, you the individual must become conscious and break away from those limiting conditions, whether they are social, religious, or traditional. Truth, the beauty of reality, can be discerned only when the mind is fearless - not with the fearlessness of intellectuality, but of utter insecurity. You can know of this only through action.

Questioner: Is it of any value to pray to the great intelligences for help in our daily life?

Krishnamurti: None whatever. I will explain what I mean. What causes misery, conflict, suffering in our daily life? Traditions, selfish moral values, impositions of vested interest, attachment, acquisitiveness: these create conditions which prevent human happiness. And what is the use of praying to someone when you, through your own intelligence, can alter all this awful mess? Being unwilling to face suffering, we try to

escape through prayer. You may escape momentarily, but the strength of your desire asserts itself again, plunging the mind into misery and confusion. So what matters is, not whether it is of value to pray, but to awaken that intelligence which alone will solve our human miseries. A mind and a heart that are hardened, that have limited themselves through their egotistic fears, pray. But if there were love, then you would free the mind from its own egotistic fears, and this alone can bring about intelligence and happy order.

Questioner: Doesn't love freed from possessiveness lead to the cessation of reproduction and therefore to the extinction of mankind? As this seems to be unintelligent, is it not the outcome of a belief?

Krishnamurti: Before we can say it is the outcome of belief and so unintelligent, we must understand what our present love is. It is nothing but possessiveness, except in these rare moments when the perfume of love is known. To control, to possess, we have certain laws which we call moral. To me, where there is possessiveness there cannot be love. Without being aware of all its subtle impositions and cruelties, you say, "If we freed ourselves from possessiveness, wouldn't we get rid altogether of love?" To find out if you would, you must experiment, you cannot merely assert. Let the mind wholly free itself from attachment, possessiveness; then you will know.

It is when we have lost love through possessiveness that we have sexual problems; we want to solve them separately, apart from the rest of man's problems and difficulties. You cannot isolate a human problem and solve it singly, exclusively. To understand deeply the problem of sex and dissolve its difficulties, we must know where we are being frustrated, dominated. Through economic conditions the individual is turned into a machine, and his work is not fulfillment but compulsion. Where there should be the release of self-expression through work, there is frustration; and where there should be deep, complete thought, there is fear, imposition, imitation. So the problem of sex becomes all-consuming and intricate. We think we can solve it exclusively, but this is not possible. When work becomes true expression and when there is no longer the desire, through fear, to cling to beliefs, traditions, ideals, and religions, then there is the exquisite reality of love. Where there is love there is no sense of possession; attachment indicates deep frustration.

Questioner: Have we to better the order of things created by God himself?

Krishnamurti: That is the attitude of an exploiter. He wants to let things remain as they are, finding himself on the safe side. But ask the man who is in suffering, ask the man who lives in tattered clothes in a hovel; then you will know whether things should be left as they are. Both the poor and the rich want things to remain as they are: the poor are afraid of losing the little that they have, and the rich of losing all that they have. So when there is the fear of loss, of being made uncertain, there comes the desire not to interfere with the order of things which God or nature has created.

To bring about happy, human order, there must be within each one of you a deep, fundamental change. Where there is a continual adaptation to the movement of life, truth, there is never fear. Each one of you must feel the poison of compulsion, authority, and imitation. Each one must feel the immense necessity, through his own suffering, for a complete and radical change of thought and desire, free from the subtle search for substitution. Then there will be the true fulfillment of man.

Questioner: If sorrow is necessary for the purification of our souls, why do away with sorrow through the understanding of its cause?

Krishnamurti: Sorrow does not purify. Why is there sorrow? When the mind is stagnant, drugged to sleep by beliefs, crippled by limitations, and is awakened by the movement of life, that awakening we call suffering. Where there is the disturbance of our security through the action of life, that we call suffering. Instead of seeing that suffering is a hindrance, we try to utilize it to get some other result. Through an illusion you cannot come to reality.

Now, sorrow is but the indication of limitation, of incompleteness. When one discerns the impediment of

sorrow, one cannot make of it a means of purification. You must be rid of its limitation. You must understand the cause and its effects. If you use it as a means of purification, you are subtly deriving from it security, comfort. This only creates further hindrances, impeding the awakening of intelligence. Out of these many hindrances, these self-defensive memories, is born the limited consciousness, the 'I', which is the true cause of suffering.

Questioner: Don't you think it is practically impossible for your lofty ideas and conceptions to germinate in brains degenerated by vices and disease?

Krishnamurti: Of course, that is obvious. But vice is a cultivated habit, a means of escape, generally, from life, from intelligence.

Take the question of drink. The vested interest sells liquor, and the governments support it. Then you form temperance societies and religious organizations to awaken man to the cruelty and stupidity of alcoholism. On one side you have the vested interest, and on the other the reformer; and the victim becomes the plaything of both. If you want to help man, which is yourself, then you will see to it that you are not exploited through your own stupidity. This demands discernment of existing values and perceiving their true significance. Because of illusion, stupidity, man is exploited by man. After surrounding ourselves with so many limitations which prevent human happiness, kindness, love, we think that we are going to be rid of them by seeking further substitutions. Through your acquisitiveness, through your fear, you are creating illusions, and in that net you are entangling your neighbor also.

Questioner: What is to be understood by God? Is he a personal being who guides the universe, or is God a cosmic principle?

Krishnamurti: May I ask why you want to know? Either you desire to be strengthened further in your beliefs, or you are seeking from me a means of escape from sorrow and conflict. If you are asking for confirmation, then there is doubt, which must not be allayed. You never ask another whether you are in love. And if anyone were to describe reality, it would no longer be real. How can you describe to one who has not known it, what it is to be in love?

Now, I say there is a reality; it cannot be measured by words. You cannot be aware of that reality if there is fear, if there are limitations that destroy the delicate pliability of the mind and heart. So instead of inquiring what God is, find out whether your mind and heart are enslaved by fear, which creates illusion and limitation. When the mind and heart free themselves from these self-imposed protections, then in fulfillment there is the understanding of that which is.

Questioner: In some of your earlier talks, you have said that conflict exists only between the false and the false, never between the real and the false. Will you please explain this?

Krishnamurti: There cannot be a struggle between light and darkness. Illusion gives rise to conflict, not between itself and reality, but with its own creations. There is never conflict between intelligence and stupidity.

Questioner: Please explain the meaning of pure action. Does it come about when life expresses itself through the liberated individual?

Krishnamurti: Let us for a moment leave aside the liberated individual and understand what we call action.

With certain limitations and prejudices the mind-heart meets life or experience. In this contact between the dead and the living, there is action. Desire is seeking fulfillment. In its realization, in its action there is pain and pleasure, and the mind records them. In the expression of other desires there is again pain and pleasure, and again the mind stores them; thus, the mind becomes the storehouse of memories. These memories are

acting as warnings. So action becomes more and more controlled and directed by these memories, based on pain and pleasure, on self-defense. Action, because it is born out of self-protective memories and desires, is continually creating restrictions, limitations. There is the action of self-defensive memories, and an action which is free from this center of self-imposed limitation.

Questioner: Do you hold back from the public something of what you know?

Krishnamurti: There is in most people a desire to be exclusive, to separate themselves from others through knowledge, through titles, through possessions. This form of seclusion gives strength to their self-importance, to their small vanities. Our society, both the temporal and the so-called spiritual, is based on this hierarchical exclusiveness. To yield to this separativeness creates the many gross and subtle forms of exploitation.

I have no secret teachings for the few. Naturally there are those who desire to go more deeply into what I say; but if they become exclusive and create a secret body, they are being encouraged to do so by their own desire to be exclusive.

Questioner: Do you believe in God?

Krishnamurti: Either you put this question out of curiosity to find out what I think, or you want to discover if there is God. If you are merely curious, naturally there is no answer; but if you want to find out for yourself if there is God, then you must approach this inquiry without prejudice; you must come to it with a fresh mind, neither believing nor disbelieving. If I said there is, you would accept it as a belief, and you would add that belief to the already existing dead beliefs. Or, if I said no, it would merely become a convenient support to the unbeliever.

If a man is truly desirous to know, let him not seek reality, life, God - which will only be an escape from sorrow, from conflict - but let him understand the very cause of sorrow, conflict, and when the mind is liberated from it, he shall know. When the mind is vulnerable, when it has lost all support, explanations, when it is naked, then it shall know the bliss of truth.