

Jiddu Krishnamurti

Third Public Talk in Paris

From the series:

Five Public Meetings in Paris - 1950

Sunday, April 23, 1950

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Is it not very important that those who would know what truth is should discover it through their own experience, and not merely accept or believe according to any particular pattern? Surely, it is essential to discover for oneself what reality is, what God is - the name you give to it is not of great importance - because that is the only thing that is really creative, that is the only door through which one can find that happiness which is not merely transient, which is not dependent. Most of us are seeking happiness in one form or another, and we try to find it through knowledge, through experience, through constant struggle. But surely, happiness that depends on something is not happiness. The moment we depend for happiness on possessions, on people, or on ideas, those things become very important, and happiness passes us by. The very things on which we depend for our happiness become more important than happiness itself. If you and I depend on certain people for happiness, then those people become important, and if we depend on ideas for our happiness, then ideas become important. The same thing happens with regard to property, name, position, power - the moment we depend for our happiness on any of these things, they become all-consumingly essential in our lives.

So, dependence is the denial of happiness, and the moment one depends on ideas, on people, or on things, obviously that relationship must isolate one. The very dependence implies isolation, and where there is isolation, there cannot be true relationship. Only in understanding true relationship is it possible to liberate oneself from the dependence which brings out isolation, and that is why I think it is important to go very deeply and fully into the question of relationship. If relationship is merely a dependence, then obviously it leads to isolation, and such a relationship must inevitably create various forms of fear, of self-enclosure, possessiveness, jealousy, and so on. When we seek happiness through relationship, whether it be with property, with people, or with ideas, invariably we possess those things; we must possess them because through them, we derive our happiness - at least, we think so. But from the very possession of the things on which we depend, there arises the process of self-enclosure; and so relationship, which should lead to the

destruction of the self, of the 'me', of the narrowing influences of life, becomes more and more stringent, more and more restricted, limited, and destroys the very happiness we seek.

So, as long as we merely depend for our happiness on things, on people, or on ideas, relationship is a process of self-enclosure, of isolation, and I think it is very important to realize this. At present, all relationship tends to limit our action, our thought, our feelings, and until we realize that dependence is hampering our action and destroying our happiness, until we really see the truth of that, there is no possibility of wider, freer movement of thought and feeling. After all, we go to books, to Masters, to teachers; we turn to disciplines or to experience and knowledge in order to find a lasting happiness; a safe refuge, a protection - and so we multiply Masters, books, ideas, knowledge. But surely, no one can give us that happiness; no one can free us from our own desires, from our own narrowing influences, and therefore it is important, is it not, to know oneself completely, not only the conscious, but also the inward part of oneself. That self-knowledge comes only through relationship because the understanding of relationship discloses the process of the self, of the 'me'. It is only when we understand the full extent of the 'me' and its activities, not only at the superficial level but on all the deeper levels, that there is freedom from dependence, and therefore a possibility of realizing what happiness is. Happiness is not an end in itself any more than virtue is, and if we make happiness or virtue an end, then we must depend upon things, upon people or ideas, upon Masters or knowledge. But none except ourselves, through understanding relationship in our daily life, can give us freedom from our own narrowing confusion, conflicts, and limitations.

We seem to think that the understanding of the self is extremely difficult. We have the impression that to discover the process of the self, the ways of one's thought in the secret places of one's own mind and heart, we must go to somebody else and be told or given a method. Surely, we have made the study of the self extremely complicated, have we not? But is the study of the self so very difficult? Does it need the aid of another, however advanced, at whatever level the Master may be? Surely, no one can teach us the understanding of the self. We have to discover the whole, total process of the self, but to discover it, there must be spontaneity. One cannot impose upon oneself a discipline, a mode of operation; one can only be aware from moment to moment of every movement of thought, of every feeling, in relationship. And for most of us, it is that which is difficult - to be choicelessly aware of every word, of every thought, of every feeling. But to be aware does not require that you should follow anyone; you do not require a Master, you do not require a sage, you do not require a belief. To know the whole process of the mind, what you need is only the intention to watch, to be aware, without condemnation or justification. You can know yourself only when you are aware in relationship, in your relationship with your wife, with your children, with your neighbor, with society, with the knowledge which you have acquired, the experiences you have gathered. It is because we are lazy, slothful, that we turn to someone, to a leader, to a Master, who will instruct us or give us a mode of conduct. But surely, this desire to look to another for help only makes us dependent, and the more we are dependent, the further we are away from self-knowledge. It is only through self-knowledge, through understanding the complete process of oneself, that there is liberation, and in liberating oneself from one's own enclosing, narrowing, isolating process, there is happiness.

So, it is important, is it not, that one should understand oneself thoroughly, deeply, and comprehensively. If I do not know myself, if you do not know yourself, what basis have we for thought, for action? If I do not know myself, not only superficially, but also at the profound levels from which spring all the motives, the responses, the accumulated desires and impulses, how can I think, act, live, be? So, is it not important to know oneself as completely as possible? If I do not know myself, how can I go to another and search out the truth? I can go to another, I can choose a leader out of my confusion, but because I have chosen him out of my confusion, the leader, the teacher, the Master, must also be confused. So, as long as there is choice, there can be no understanding. Understanding does not come through choice; understanding does not come through comparison, nor through criticism, nor through justification. Understanding comes only when the mind has become completely aware of the whole process of itself and so has become quiet. When the mind

is completely silent, without any demand - only in that stillness is there understanding, is there a possibility of experiencing that which is beyond time.

Before I answer some of these questions, may I point out, if you don't mind, that it is important to discover the answer for oneself. That is, you and I are going to investigate the truth of each problem and discover it for ourselves, experience it for ourselves; otherwise, it will be merely on the verbal level, and therefore utterly valueless. If we can experience the truth of every question, every problem, then perhaps that problem will be resolved completely; but merely to remain on the verbal level, merely to discuss, to argue with each other through words, will not bring about the solution of the problem. So, in considering these questions, I am not merely giving an expression to words, but you and I are trying to find out the truth of the matter; and to find the truth, we must be free from our anchors, from our commitments, from the influence of ideas, and proceed step by step to inquire into the truth of the matter.

Question: As creative individuals may disrupt society according to their own particular idiosyncrasies and capacities, should not creativeness be at the command of society?

Krishnamurti: Now, what do we mean by creativeness? Is it creative to invent the atomic bomb or to discover how to kill another? Is it creative to have a capacity, a gift? Is it creative to be able to speak very cleverly, to write very intelligent books, to solve problems? Is it creative to discover the process of nature, the hidden processes of life? Is any of that a state of creativeness? Or, is creativeness something entirely different from creative expression? I may have the capacity to translate into marble a certain vision, a certain feeling, or being a scientist, I may be able to discover something, according to my tendencies and capacities. But is that creativeness? Is the expression of a feeling, the making of a discovery, the writing of a book or a poem, the painting of a picture - is any of that necessarily creative? Or, is creativeness something utterly different which is not dependent on expression? To us, expression seems to matter so enormously, does it not? To be able to say something in words, in a picture, in a poem, to be able to concentrate on the discovery of a particular scientific fact - is that a process of creation? Or, is creation something which is not of the mind at all? After all, when the mind demands, it will find an answer, but is its answer the creative answer? Or, is there creativeness only when the mind is completely silent - not asking, not demanding, not searching out?

Now, we are the result of society, we are the depositories of society, and we either conform to society or break away from society. The breaking away from society depends upon our background, our conditioning; therefore, our breaking away from society does not indicate that we are free - it may be merely the reaction of the background to certain incidents. So, a man who is creative merely in the accepted sense of the word may be dangerous, disruptive, without transforming in any fundamental way the respectable, exploiting society which is ours; and the questioner wants to know whether society should not command his creativeness. But who is going to represent society? The leaders, the people in power, the people who are respectable and who have the means of controlling others? Or, must the problem be approached quite differently? That is, society is the outcome of our own projections, of our own intentions, and therefore we are not separate from society, and since the man who goes against society is not necessarily a revolutionary, is it not important to understand what we mean by revolution? Surely, as long as we base revolution on an idea, it is not a revolution, is it? A revolution based on a belief, on a dogma, on knowledge, is obviously no revolution at all - it is merely a modified continuation of the old. That is, a reaction of the background against the conditioning influence of society is an escape, it is obviously not a revolution.

There is real revolution, which is not dependent on idea, only when one understands the whole total process of oneself. As long as we accept the pattern of society, as long as we produce the influences which create a society based on violence, intolerance, and static progress - as long as that process exists, society will try to control the individual. And as long as the individual is attempting to be creative within the field of his conditioning, obviously he cannot be creative. There is creativeness only when the mind is completely

understood, and then the mind does not depend on mere expression - the expression is of secondary importance.

Surely, then, the important thing is to discover what it is to be creative, and creativity can be discovered and understood, the truth of it seen, only when I understand the whole total process of myself. As long as there is a projection of the mind, whether at the verbal or any other level, there cannot be a creative state. Only when every movement of thought is understood and therefore comes to an end - only then is there creativeness.

Question: I have prayed for my friend's health, and it has produced certain results. If I now pray to have peace in my heart, can I come in direct contact with God?

Krishnamurti: Obviously a demand, a supplication, a petition, brings results. You ask, and you receive - that is an obvious psychological fact which you can test out for yourselves. Psychologically you pray, you demand, you petition, and you will have a reply, but is it the reply of reality? To find reality there must be no demand, no petition, no supplication. After all, you pray only when you are confused, when you are in trouble and misery, do you not? Otherwise you do not pray. It is only when you are confused, when you are miserable, that you want somebody's help; and prayer, which is a process of demand, must necessarily have an answer. The answer may be the outcome of the deep unconscious layers of oneself, or it may be the result of the collective, but it is obviously not the reply, the response, of reality. And one can see that through prayer, through posture, through the constant repetition of certain words and phrases, the mind is made quiet. When the mind is quiet, after struggling with a problem, obviously there is an answer, but the answer is surely not from that which is beyond time. Your demand is within the field of time, and therefore the reply must also be within the field of time. So, that is one part of the question - as long as we pray, which is a petition, a demand, there must be an answer, but the answer is not the response of reality.

Now, the questioner wants to know whether through prayer it is possible to come directly into contact with reality, with God. Through making the mind still, through forcing the mind, through discipline, through the repetition of words, through taking certain postures, through constant control and subjugation - is it possible in that way to come into contact with reality? Obviously not. A mind that is shaped by circumstances, by environment, by desire, by discipline, can never be free. It is only the free mind that can discover, it is only the free mind that can come into contact with reality. But a mind that is seeking, that is demanding, a mind that is trying to be happy, to become virtuous - such a mind can never be quiet, and therefore it can never come into contact with that which is beyond all experience. After all, experience is within the field of the transient, is it not? To say, "I have experienced," is to put that experience within the net of time. And is truth something to be experienced? Is truth something to be repeated? Is truth a thing of memory, of the mind? Or, is truth something which is beyond the mind, and therefore beyond the state of experiencing? When one experiences, there is memory of that experience, and that memory, which is repetition, is obviously not true. Truth is something which is from moment to moment, not to be experienced as a thing of the experiencer.

So, the mind must be free to come into contact with reality, but that freedom does not come through discipline, through demand, through prayer. The mind can be made quiet through desire, through various forms of compulsion, effort, but the mind that is made quiet is not a still mind - it is only a disciplined mind, a mind that is in prison, shaped, under control. He who would come into contact with reality need not pray. On the contrary, he must understand life - life being relationship. To be is to be related, and without understanding its relationship with things, with people, and with ideas, the mind will inevitably be in conflict, in a state of agitation. You may for the time being suppress that agitation, but such suppression is not freedom. Freedom comes in understanding yourself, and only then is it possible to come into contact with that which is not the projection of the mind.

Question: Is the individual the result of society or the instrument of society?

Krishnamurti: This is an important question, is it not? On this question the world is being divided by two opposing ideologies - whether the individual is the instrument of society or the result of society. The experts, the authorities on one side, say that the individual is the result of society, and those on the other maintain that he is the instrument of society. Now, is it not important for you and me to find out for ourselves what is the truth of this matter, and not depend on specialists, on authorities, whether of the left or of the right? It is the truth, and not opinion, not knowledge, that will liberate us from the false, and it is important, is it not, for each one of us to discover the truth, and not merely depend on words or on the opinion of another.

So, how are you to find the truth of it? To find the truth of it, it is obvious that there must be no dependence on the expert, on the specialist, on the leader. And to know the truth of it for yourself, you cannot depend on previous knowledge. When you depend on previous knowledge, you are lost because each authority contradicts the other, each translates history according to his particular prejudice or idiosyncrasy. So, the first obvious thing is to be free from the external influences of knowledge, of the specialist, of the power politicians, and so on.

Now, to discover the truth of this matter, you may reject outer authorities and rely on your own experience, on your own knowledge, on your own study, but will your own experience give you the truth of it? You may say that you have nothing else to go on, that to judge whether the individual is the instrument of society or the result, the product of society - to find the truth of that, you will have to rely on your own experience. Now, is the discovery of truth dependent on experience? After all, what is your experience? It is the result of accumulated beliefs, influences, memories, conditions, and so on. It is the past - experience is the accumulated knowledge of the past, and through the past you are trying to find the truth of this matter. So, can you rely on your experience? And if you cannot, then by what will you judge?

I hope I am making the problem clear. To see, to find the truth of this matter, you must know what your experience is. What is your experience? Your experience is the response of your conditioning, obviously, and your conditioning is the result of the society about you. So, you are looking for the truth of this matter according to your conditioning, are you not? You would like to think that you are only the result of society - it's easier and therefore more pleasant, but you actually think you are spiritual, that you are God incarnate, the manifestation of something ultimate, and so on, which is all a result of the conditioning influences of your society, of your religion. So, according to that, you will judge. But is that the true measure of truth? Is the measure of truth ever dependent on experience? Is not experience itself a barrier to the understanding of truth? At the present time you are both the product and the instrument of society, are you not? All education is conditioning the child to this end. If you look at it very factually, you are the product of society - you are a Frenchman, an Englishman, a Hindu, believing this or that. And also, you are the instrument of society. When society says, "Go to war," you all troop to war; when society says, "You belong to this particular religion," you repeat the formula, the phrases, the dogma. So, you are both the instrument of society and the product of society - which is an obvious fact. Whether you like it or not, that is so.

Now, to find out what is beyond, to find out if there is something more to life than merely to be shaped by society for society - to find the truth of that, all influences must come to an end, all experience, which is the measure, must cease. To discover truth, there must be no measurement because the measurement is the result of your conditioning, and that which is conditioned can see only its own projection, and therefore it can never perceive that which is real. It is important to find out for yourself the truth of this matter because only the truth can deliver you, and then you will be a real revolutionary, not a mere repeater of words.

Question: Why do you speak of the stillness of the mind, and what is this stillness?

Krishnamurti: Is it not necessary, if we would understand anything, that the mind should be still? If we have

a problem, we worry over it, don't we? We go into it, we analyze it, we tear it to pieces in the hope of understanding it. Now, do we understand through effort, through analysis, through comparison, through any form of mental struggle? Surely, understanding comes only when the mind is very quiet. I do not know if you have experimented with it, but if you will, you can easily find out for yourself. We say that the more we struggle with the question of starvation, of war, or any other human problem, the more we come into conflict with it, the better we shall understand it. Now, is that true? Wars have been going on for centuries, the conflict between individuals, between societies; war, inward and outward, is constantly there. Do we resolve that war, that conflict, by further conflict, by further struggle, by cunning endeavor? Or, do we understand the problem only when we are directly in front of it, when we are faced with the fact? And we can face the fact only when there is no interfering agitation between the mind and the fact. So, is it not important, if we are to understand, that the mind be quiet?

But you will invariably ask, "How can the mind be made still?" That is the immediate response, is it not? You say, "My mind is agitated, and how can I keep it quiet?" Now, can any system make the mind quiet? Can a formula, a discipline, make the mind still? It can, but when the mind is made still, is that quietness, is that stillness? Or, is the mind only enclosed within an idea, within a formula, within a phrase? And such a mind is dead, is it not? That is why most people who try to be spiritual, so-called spiritual, are dead - because they have trained their minds to be quiet, they have enclosed themselves within a formula for being quiet. Obviously, such a mind is never quiet; it is only suppressed, held down.

Now, the mind is quiet when it sees the truth that understanding comes only when it is quiet; that if I would understand you, I must be quiet, I cannot have reactions against you, I must not be prejudiced, I must put away all my conclusions, my experiences, and meet you face to face. Only then, when the mind is free from my conditioning, do I understand. When I see the truth of that, the mind is quiet - and then there is no question of how to make the mind quiet. Only the truth can liberate the mind from its own ideation, and to see the truth, the mind must realize the fact that as long as it is agitated, it can have no understanding. So, quietness of mind, tranquillity of mind, is not a thing to be produced by willpower, by any action of desire; if it is, then such a mind is enclosed, isolated, it is a dead mind, and therefore it is incapable of adaptability, of pliability, of swiftness. Such a mind is not creative.

Our question, then, is not how to make the mind still, but to see the truth of every problem as it presents itself to us. It is like the pool that becomes quiet when the wind stops. Our mind is agitated because we have problems, and to avoid the problems, we make the mind still. Now, the mind has projected these problems, and there are no problems apart from the mind, and as long as the mind projects any conception of sensitivity, practices any form of stillness, it can never be still. But when the mind realizes that only by being still is there understanding, then it becomes very quiet. That quietness is not imposed, not disciplined; it is a quietness that cannot be understood by an agitated mind.

Many who seek quietness of mind withdraw from active life to a village, to a monastery, to the mountains. Or, they withdraw into ideas, enclose themselves in a belief, or avoid people who give them trouble. But such isolation is not stillness of mind. The enclosure of the mind in an idea or the avoidance of people who make life complicated does not bring about stillness of mind. Stillness of mind comes only when there is no process of isolation through accumulation, but complete understanding of the whole process of relationship. Accumulation makes the mind old, and only when the mind is new, when the mind is fresh, without the process of accumulation - only then is there a possibility of having tranquillity of mind. Such a mind is not dead, it is most active. The still mind is the most active mind, but if you will experiment with it, go into it deeply, you will see that in that stillness there is no projection of thought. Thought, at all levels, is obviously the reaction of memory, and thought can never be in a state of creation. It may express creativeness, but thought in itself can never be creative. But when there is silence - that tranquillity of mind which is not a result - then we shall see that in that quietness there is extraordinary activity, an extraordinary action which a mind agitated by thought can never know. In that stillness, there is no formulation, there is no idea, there

is no memory, and that stillness is a state of creation that can be experienced only when there is complete understanding of the whole process of the 'me'. Otherwise, stillness has no meaning. Only in that stillness which is not a result is the eternal discovered which is beyond time.