

*Questions And Answers*

**J. Krishnamurti**

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## **Introduction**

At the beginning of a question and answer meeting at Brockwood Park Krishnamurti said:

To quest is to seek: Together we are going to seek, find, discover the right answer. This is not the Delphic Oracle! Together we are going to find out the meaning and significance of the question and also seek the answer. There is no authority here. I happen to sit on a platform for convenience so that everybody can see, but that little height does not give me any authority whatsoever.

## **- Brockwood Park 1979 -**

1st Question Brockwood Park 1st Question & Answer Meeting 28th  
August 1979

### **The Self**

Question: Is it possible ever to be free of self-centred activity? Is there a real self apart from the self-created image?

What do we mean by the self? If you ask somebody what the self is, he would say, "It is all my senses, my feelings, my imagination, my romantic demands, my possessions, a husband, a wife, my qualities, my struggles, my achievements, my ambitions, my aspirations, my unhappiness, my joys" - all that would be the self. You can add more words but the essence of it is the centre, the `me', my impulses - "I am impelled to go to India to find truth" and so on. From this centre all action takes place: all our aspirations, our ambitions, our quarrels, our disagreements, our opinions, judgements, experiences, are centred in this. This centre is not only the conscious self acting outwardly but also the deep inner consciousness which is not open and obvious; it is all the different levels of consciousness.

Now the questioner asks: Is it possible to be free of this centre? Why does one want to be free of it? Is it because the centre is the cause of division? That is, the `me' is the active element that is operating all the time; it is the same `me' with different names, with a different coloured skin, with a different job, with a different position in the hierarchical social structure - you are Lord so-and-so, somebody else is a servant - it is the same 'me' dividing itself into all these different categories - socially, economically and religiously.

Where there is this division there must be conflict - the Hindu as opposed to the Muslim, the Jew, the Arab, the American, the English, the French. That is

physically obvious and it has brought about tremendous wars, great agony, brutality and violence. The self identifies with an ideal - noble or ignoble - and fights for that ideal. But it is still 'the ego trip'. People go to India trying to find spirituality; they put on different fancy dress but they have only changed the garb, the clothes; essentially they are each the 'me' operating, all the time struggling, endeavouring grasping, denying, being deeply attached to their experiences, ideas, opinions and longings. And as one lives one observes that this centre, this 'me', is the essence of all trouble. Also one observes that it is the essence of all pleasure, fear and sorrow. So one asks, "How am I to get rid of this centre so as to be really free - absolutely, not relatively?" It is fairly simple to be relatively free; one can be a little unselfish, a little concerned with social welfare, with the difficulties of others, but the centre is always there biting hard, brutal.

Is it possible to be absolutely free of that centre? First of all see that the greater the effort that is made to be free of the centre, the more that very effort strengthens the centre, the self. For those who go off into meditation of various kinds, trying to impose something upon themselves, the 'me' that identifies with that effort is captured by that and says: "I have achieved", but that 'me' is still the centre.

To be free there must be no effort; which does not mean doing what one likes, for that is still the movement of the self.

So what is one to do? If you are not to make an effort, because you see the truth that the more effort you make the greater the travail of the centre, then what is one to do?

The questioner asks: Is there a real self apart from the self created by thought with its images? Many people ask that. The Hindus have said that there is a highest principle which is the self. We imagine also that there is a real self apart from the 'me'. You all, I am sure, feel there is something else beyond this 'me', which has been called the higher self, the sublime or the supreme self. The

moment we use the word `self', or use any word to describe that which is beyond the self, the `me', it is still the self.

Is it possible to be free of the self? - without becoming a vegetable, without becoming absent-minded, somewhat mad? Which means: is it possible to be totally free from attachment? - which is one of the attributes, one of the qualities, of the self. One is attached to one's reputation, to one's name, to one's experiences. One is attached to what one has said. If you really want to be free of the self it means no attachment; which does not mean you become detached, indifferent, callous, shut yourself away, which is another activity of the self. Before, it was attached; now it says, "I won't be attached. That is still the movement of the self.

When you are really, without effort, deeply, basically, not attached, then from that deep sense of no attachment comes responsibility. Not responsibility to your wife, to your children, but the deep sense of responsibility. Will you do it? That is the question. We can talk everlastingly, put it into different words, but when it comes to testing it, acting, we do not seem to want to do it; we prefer to go on as we are, with the status quo slightly modified but carrying on with our quarrels.

To be free from your own experience, from your own knowledge, from your own accumulated perception - it is possible if you go at it. And it does not take time. That is one of our excuses. We must have time to be free. When you see that one of the major factors of the self is attachment and you see what it does in the world, and what it does in your relationship with another, quarrels, separation, all the ugliness of relationship - if you see the truth of attachment, then you are free from it. Your own perception sets you free. Will you do it?

2nd Question Brockwood Park 1st Question & Answer Meeting 28th  
August 1979

## **Security**

Question: Can there be absolute security for man in this life?

This is a very serious question; we all want security, both physical and principally, psychological. If we were psychologically secure, certain, then we might not be so concerned with physical security. The search for psychological security is preventing physical security.

The questioner asks: Is there absolute security for us human beings? We must have security - like a child clinging to its mother; if the mother and the father do not pay enough attention to the baby, do not give it affection and care, then the brain and nerves of the baby are affected. The child must have physical security. Now, why do we demand psychological security? There is the psyche, demanding security; but is there psychological security at all? We want security in our relationships - my wife, my children, the family unit. In that attachment we think there is a certain security, but when we find that there is no security there we soon break away and try to find it elsewhere.

We try to find security in a group, in the tribe - that glorified tribe that is the nation. And yet that nation is against another nation. Thinking that security, psychologically, is in a person, in a country, in a belief, in your own experience, is the same as demanding physical security. In demanding psychological security we have divided ourselves: the Hindu, the Muslim, the Jew, the Arab, the believer in Jesus, the believer in something else - in all of them there is the demand for security. Psychological security has been sought in these illusions; the various illusions of being secure in Catholicism, in Buddhism, in Hinduism, in Judaism, Islam and so on which have created nothing but illusory securities because they are all fighting each other. The moment you see this you do not belong to

anything. When you see the truth that the mind, or thought, has sought security in illusions, that very perception brings intelligence.

One seeks security in one's belief in Hinduism and in being a Hindu, with all the nonsensical superstitions and gods and rituals that are involved. But that opposes another group of people who have different superstitions, different gods, different rituals. These two opposing elements may tolerate each other but they are essentially antagonistic. There is conflict between the two and one has sought security in the one or the other. And then one realizes that they are both based on illusions. To see that, is intelligence; it is like seeing a danger. A man who is blind to danger is an idiot, there is something wrong with him. But one does not see the danger of these illusions in which one seeks security. The man in whom intelligence is in operation sees the danger. In that intelligence there is absolute security. Thought has created all the various forms of illusion - nationalities, class, different gods, different beliefs, different dogmas, different rituals and the extraordinary religious superstitions that pervade the world - and in them it has sought security. And one does not see the danger of this security, of this illusion. When one sees the danger - not as an idea but as an actual fact - that seeing is intelligence, the supreme form of absolute security. So there is absolute security: it is to see the truth in the false.

3rd Question Brockwood Park 1st Question & Answer Meeting 28th  
August 1979

## Emotion

Question: Emotions are strong. Our attachments are strong. How does looking and seeing reduce the strength and power of these emotions?

Trying to control, suppress, or sublimate emotions and attachments in no way reduces the conflict, does it? Are one's emotions so extraordinarily strong that they act? First one has to be conscious, aware, to know or recognise, to see, that one's emotions are strong and also that one is attached. When one is so conscious, what takes place?

One is conscious of one's attachment, or of one's strong emotions of hate, jealousy, antagonism, like and dislike. Now, do they, being so strong, overshadow and control one's actions? One is examining, looking at the emotions and attachments which are apparently very strong and one sees that they act as barriers to clear unconfused thinking, to clear action, Is one aware of that or does one take it for granted? Does one say, "Yes I have very strong emotions, I am terribly attached, but it does not matter, it is part of life. I do not mind struggling. I do not mind having quarrels with everybody"? Now when one says one is aware, what does one mean by that - to know, to recognise? Is thought recognising the attachment? One says, "Yes, I am attached" - is it the activity of thought that says, "I am attached"?

When one says, "I am attached", is it an idea or is it a fact? The fact is not the idea. This microphone: I can create an idea of it but the microphone is a fact. I can touch it, see it. So, is my attachment a concept, a conclusion, or is it a fact? Now, when you observe the fact, not the idea, not the conclusion about the fact, but the fact itself, is the fact different from you who are observing the fact?

When you are observing the fact through an idea, or through a conclusion that you have heard from somebody, you are not looking at the fact. If you are looking at the fact you are not verbalizing the fact. So, how do you look at it? As something separate from yourself? Is attachment something different from yourself or is it part of yourself? The microphone is something apart from yourself, but attachment, the emotion, is part of yourself. Attachment is the `me'. If there is no attachment there is no 'me'. So awareness of your emotions, your attachments, is part of your nature, part of your structure. If you are looking at yourself there is no division, there is no duality as the `me' and attachment. There is only attachment, not the word but the fact, the feeling, the emotion, the possessiveness in attachment. That is a fact; that is `me'.

So, what am I to do with the `me'? When there was division between `me' and attachment I could try to do something about it; I could try to control it, I could say, "I must suppress it", - which we do all the time. But if it is `me', what can I do? I cannot do anything; I can only observe. Before, I acted upon it; now I cannot act upon it because it is `me'. All I can do is observe. Observation becomes all important, not what I do about it.

So there is observation, not, "I am observing". There is only observation. If in that observation I begin to choose and say, "I must not be attached", I have already moved away, I am no saying that it is not `me'. In observation there is no choice, there is no direction, there is just pure, absolute, observation, and then the thing that is being observed dissolves. Before, you resisted it, you controlled it, you suppressed it, you acted upon it; but now in that observation all energy is centred. It is only when there is the lack of that energy that there is attachment. When there is complete observation without any interference of thought - why should thought come in? - you are just observing as you observe the thing that you call the fly. Just observe in the same way your emotions and attachments, then there is the gathering of all energy in that observation. Therefore there is no attachment. It is only the unintelligent who are attached, it is only those who do

not see the full implications of attachment who are attached. They pervade the world, they are the stronger element in the world and we are caught in that. But when you come to examine this closely, then you are no longer caught in that and you are no longer dissipating energy in something which has no meaning. Your energy is now centred completely in observation, therefore there is total dissipation of attachment. Test it, do it and you will find out. You have to examine the thing very, very closely so that your mind is absolutely clear in the observation. It is only the unaware who jump over the cliff. The moment you are aware of danger, move. Attachment is a danger because it breeds fear, anxiety, hate and jealousy, being possessed and being not possessed - the whole of that is a tremendous danger. And when you see that danger there is action.

4th Question Brockwood Park 1st Question & Answer Meeting 28th  
August 1979

## Words

Question: Why does the mind so readily accept trivial answers to deeply felt problems?

Why does one accept a trivial explanation where a deep problem is concerned? Why does one live in words? That is the real problem. Why have words become so immensely important? One suffers, goes through great agonies and someone comes along and gives explanations and in these explanations one seeks comfort. There is god, there is reincarnation, there is this, there is that, there is something else. One accepts the word, the explanation, because it gives one comfort; the belief gives one comfort when one is in agony, in a state of anxiety. The explanations by philosophers, by psychologists, by priests, by gurus and teachers - it is on these that one lives; which means that one lives secondhand. One is a secondhand person and one is satisfied, The word `god' is a symbol. Symbols become extraordinarily important, like the flag. Why does the mind do this? One reads a great deal about what other people have thought; one sees on the television what is taking place. It is always others, somebody else out there, telling one what to do. One's mind is crippled by this and one is always living at secondhand.

One has never asked: "Can I be a light to myself - not the light of someone else, the light of Jesus or the Buddha?" Can one be a light to oneself? Which means that there is no shadow, for to be a light to oneself means it is never put out by any artificial means, by circumstances, by sorrow, by accident. Can one be that to oneself? One can be that to oneself only when one's mind has no challenge because it is so fully awake.

But most of us need challenges because most of us are asleep - asleep because we have been put to sleep by all the philosophers, by all the saints, by all the gods and priests and politicians. One has been put to sleep and one does not know that one is asleep; one thinks that is normal. A man who wants to be a light to himself has to be free of all this. One can be a light to oneself only when there is no self. Then that light is the eternal, everlasting, immeasurable light.

5th Question Brockwood Park 1st Question & Answer Meeting 28th  
August 1979

## Insight

Question: Is not insight intuition? Would you discuss this sudden clarity which some people have. What do you mean by insight and is it a momentary thing or can it be continuous?

In the various talks the speaker has given he has used the word 'insight'. That is to see into things, into the whole movement of thought, into the whole movement, for example, of jealousy. It is to perceive the nature of greed, to see the whole content of sorrow. It is not analysis, not the exercise of intellectual capacity, nor is it the result of knowledge. Knowledge is that which has been accumulated through the past from experience, stored up in the brain. There is no complete knowledge, therefore with knowledge there is always ignorance, like two horses in tandem. If observation is not based on knowledge, or on intellectual capacity or reasoning, exploring and analysing, then what is it? That is the whole question. The questioner asks: is it intuition? That word 'intuition' is rather a tricky word which many use. The actuality of intuition may be the result of desire. One may desire something and then a few days later one has an intuition about it. And one thinks that that intuition is extraordinarily important. But if one goes into it rather deeply one may find that it is based on desire, on fear, or on various forms of pleasure. So one is doubtful about that word, especially when used by those people who are rather romantic, who are rather imaginative, sentimental and seeking something. They would certainly have intuitions, but they would be based on some obvious self-deceptive desire. So for the moment put aside that word intuition.

Then what is insight? It is: to perceive something instantly, which must be true, logical, sane, rational. Insight must act instantly. It is not that one has an insight and does nothing about it. If one has an insight into the whole nature of thinking

there is instant action. Thinking is the response of memory. Memory is experience, knowledge, stored up in the brain. Memory responds: where do you live? - you answer. What is your name? - there is an immediate response. Thought is the result or the response of the accumulation of experience and knowledge, stored as memory. Thought is based upon, or is the outcome of, knowledge; thought is limited because knowledge is limited. Thought can never be all-inclusive; therefore it is everlastingly confined, limited, narrow. Now, to have an insight into that, means that there is an action which is not merely the repetition of thought. To have an insight into, say, the nature of organizations means that one is observing without remembrances, without argumentation, pro and con; it is just to see the whole movement and nature of the demand for organization. One has an insight into it, and from that insight one acts. And that action is logical, sane, healthy. it is not that one has an insight and then acts the opposite, then it is not insight.

Have an insight, for example, into the wounds and hurts that one has received from childhood. All people are hurt for various reasons, from childhood until they die. There is this wound in them, psychologically. Now, have an insight into the whole nature and structure of that hurt. You are hurt, wounded psychologically? You may go to a psychologist, analyst, psychotherapist, and he may trace why you are hurt; from childhood, your mother was this and your father was that and so on, but by merely seeking out the cause, the hurt is not going to be resolved. It is there. The consequences of that hurt are isolation, fear, resistance, so as not to be hurt more; therefore there is self-enclosure. You know all this. That is the whole movement of being hurt. The hurt is the image that you have created for yourself about yourself. So as long as that image remains you will be hurt, obviously. Now, to have an insight into all that - without analysis - to perceive it instantly, then that very perception is insight; it demands all your attention and energy; in that insight the hurt is dissolved. That insight will dissolve your hurt

completely, leaving no mark, and therefore nobody can hurt you any more. The image that you had created about yourself no longer exists.

## **- Ojai, 1st meeting 1980 -**

6th Question Ojai, California 1st Question & Answer Meeting 6th May  
1980

### **Education**

Question: What is the significance of history in the education of the young?

If one has read history it is fairly clear that man has struggled against nature, conquered it, destroyed and polluted it; man has struggled against man; there have always been wars. Man struggles to be free and yet he becomes a slave to institutions and organizations from which in turn he tries to break away, only to form another series of institutions and organizations. There is an everlasting struggle to be free. The history of mankind is the history of tribal wars, feudal and colonial wars, the wars of the kings and nations; and it is all still going on; the tribal mind has become national and sophisticated - but it is still the tribal mind. The history of man includes its culture; it is the story of the human being who has gone through all kinds of suffering, through various diseases, through wars, through religious beliefs and dogmas, persecution, inquisition, torture in the name of god, in the name of peace, in the name of ideals.

And how is all that to be taught to the young? If it is the story of mankind, the story of human beings, then both the educators and the young are the human beings; it is their story, not merely the story of kings and wars, it is a story of themselves. How can the educator help the student to understand the story of himself, which is the story of the past, of which he is the result? That is the problem. If you are the educator and I am the young student, how would you help me to understand the whole nature and structure of myself - myself being the whole of humanity, my brain the result of many million years? it is all in me, the violence, the competition, the aggressiveness, the brutality, the cruelty, the fear, the pleasure and occasional joy and that slight perfume of love. How will you help

me to understand all this? it means that the educator must also understand himself and so help me, the student, to understand myself. So it is a communication between the teacher and myself; and in that process of communication he is understanding himself and helping me to understand myself. it is not that the teacher or the educator must first understand himself and then teach - that would take the rest of his life, perhaps - but that in the relationship between the educator and the person to be educated, there is a relationship of mutual investigation. Can this be done with the young child, or with the young student? in what manner would you set about it? That is the question.

How would you as a parent go into this, how would you help your child to understand the whole nature and structure of his mind, of his desires, of his fears - the whole momentum of life? it is a great problem.

Are we prepared, as parents and teachers, to bring about a new generation of people, for that is what is implied - a totally different generation of people with totally different minds and hearts? Are we prepared for that? If you are a parent, would you give up for the sake of your child drink, cigarettes, pot, you know, the whole drug culture and see that both you and the child are good human beings?

The word `good' means well-fitting - psychologically, without any friction, like a good door - you understand? like a good motor. Also, `good' means whole, not broken up, not fragmented. So, are we prepared to bring about, through education, a good human being, a human being who is not afraid - afraid of his neighbour, afraid of the future, afraid of so many things, disease, and poverty? Also, are we prepared to help the child and ourselves to have integrity? The word `integrity' also means to be whole and to say what you mean and not say one thing and do something else. Integrity implies honesty. Can we be honest if we have illusions and romantic and speculative ideals and strong beliefs? We may be honest to a belief but that does not imply integrity. As it is, we bring children into the world, spoil them till they are two or three, and then prepare them for war.

History has not taught human beings; how many mothers must have cried, their sons having been killed in wars, yet we are incapable of stopping this monstrous killing of each other.

If we are to teach the young we must have in ourselves a sense of the demand for the good. Good is not an ideal; it is to be whole, to have integrity, to have no fear, not to be confused; these are not ideals, they are acts. Can we be factual and so bring about a good human being through education? Do we really want a different culture, a different human being, with a mind that is not confused, that has no fear, that has this quality of integrity?

7th Question Ojai, California 1st Question & Answer Meeting 6th May  
1980

## Knowledge

Question: Why is knowledge, as you have said, always incomplete? When one is observing, is one aware that one is observing, or only aware of the thing that is being observed? Does awareness lead to analysis? What is psychological knowledge?

Whom do you expect to answer these questions, the Delphic oracle, the highly elevated priest, the astrologers, the soothsayers, the readers of tea leaves? Whom do you expect to answer these questions? But since you have put these questions, we can talk them over together. Not that I, the speaker, will answer them and then you accept or deny and go away dissatisfied, saying, "I've wasted my morning". If we could seriously talk over these questions, so that we both penetrate into the problem, then it will be your own answer, not the answer of someone you have heard answer these questions. You can talk about cancer, and not have it; but if you have it, you are involved in it, in its pain, anxiety and fear.

Why is knowledge always incomplete? What is knowledge and what do we mean when we say "I know". You may say, "I know my wife or my husband or my girl or boy friend". Do you really know them? Can you ever know them? Do you not have an image about them? Is the image the fact? So, to know is very limited. Scientific knowledge is also limited; scientists are trying to find out what is beyond matter; although they have accumulated a great deal of knowledge they have not been able to find out so far. Knowledge and ignorance always go together; the unknown and the known. Scientists say: through matter we will find that which may be beyond. But we human beings are matter. Our minds are matter. Why do we not go into this, for if the mind can go through itself, the possibility of coming upon that which is the origin of all things, is much more likely?

Knowledge of oneself is also limited. If I seek to know myself I can study psychology, I can discuss with the psychologists, psychoanalysts, psychotherapists, psychobiologists. But that knowledge is always limited. But if I penetrate into this entity called myself, then there is a possibility of going infinitely beyond. This is a very important thing without which life has very little meaning other than the cycle of pleasure and pain, reward and punishment - the pattern in which we live. That psychological knowledge which we have acquired has created the patterns in which we are caught. Knowledge, whether it is physiological or psychological, must always be limited.

When one is observing, is one aware that one is observing; or only aware of the thing being observed? Does the awareness lead to analysis? What do we mean by observing? There is visual external observation - the observation of the tree - and also inward observation. There is the external hearing with the ear and also hearing inwardly.

When we observe, do we really observe or do we observe with the word? That is: I observe the thing we call a tree and I say 'tree'. I observe with the word. Now, can we find out if it is possible to observe without the word? - for the word has become more important than the seeing. The husband observes his wife, or a wife her husband, with all the memory, pictures, sensations and irritations. They never directly observe.

Can we observe a person with whom we live intimately without the image, without the picture, without the idea? Perhaps we are able to perceive the thing which we call the tree, without the word. That is fairly easy, if you have gone into it. But to observe the person with whom you live without the activation of the memory about that person is not so easy.

This observation, through the image, through the accumulated memory, is no relationship at all. It is a relationship of one picture with another picture and that is

what we call relationship. But if you examine it closely you will see that it is not relationship; it is the idea of one against the idea of another.

So can we observe without making an abstraction or idea of what we observe? This is what is meant by psychological knowledge; I build up, psychologically, a great deal of knowledge about my wife, correctly or incorrectly, depending on my sensitivity, depending on my ambition, greed, envy, depending on my self-centred activity. That knowledge is preventing the actual observation of the living person. And I never want to meet that living thing because I am afraid. It is much safer to have an image about that person than to see the living thing. My psychological knowledge prevents pure observation. Now, can one be free of that? Can the machinery that builds these images come to an end? I have these images about my wife, they are there; that is a tremendous fact, like a stone around my neck. How am I to throw it away? Is the stone, the image around my neck, different from the observer? Is that image, that weight around my neck, different from the observer who says, "I have these images".

Is the observer who says, "I have these images and, how am I to get rid of them?" different from the images he observes? Obviously not.

So the observer is the image-maker who is making these images and then separating himself from them, saying, "What am I to do about them?" That is the way we live, that is the pattern of our actions, that is our conditioning to which we are accustomed, so we naturally accept it. But we are saying something entirely different, which is that the observer is the observed.

We have to enquire into what the observer is. The observer is the result of all his experiences; he is his knowledge, his memories, his fears, his anxieties - the past. The observer is always living in the past; although modifying himself all the time to meet the present, he is still rooted in the past. There is this movement of time, the past modifying itself in the present and going on to the future. This is the psychological momentum or movement of time.

When we observe, we are observing through the image which we have created about that thing or that person, Can we observe the thing or person without that image? That means; can the observer be absent in observation? When we look at a person whom we know very intimately there arises the image; the more intimately we know them the more definite the image. Can we look at that person without the image? Which means: can we look at that person without the observer? That is pure observation.

Does this awareness lead to analysis? Obviously not. What do we mean by analysis and who is analysing? Suppose I am analysing myself; who is the analyser? Is the analyser different from me? Obviously not.

We are eliminating the very structure of conflict between human beings, the conflict that exists as long as there is division. it is the division in myself which creates the division outside. There is a division in myself if I say I am a Hindu. The identification with the image of being a Hindu gives me security. So I hold on to it, which is nonsense, for there is no security in an image. And the Muslim and the Arab and the Jew, do the same. So we are at each other's throats.

When the observer, psychologically, is the observed, there is no conflict, because there is no division. See this clearly: our minds have been trained and educated to have this division; that `I' and the thing observed are different - my anger and my jealousy are different from me; therefore I must do something about them, control them, suppress them, go beyond them, act upon them. But when anger and jealousy are `me', what has happened? There is the elimination of conflict. The pattern has been broken. The pattern, which is the conditioning of my mind, has been broken. It is the ending of something and the beginning of something else. If the pattern is broken and the struggle is ended what then takes place? A new momentum, a new movement, takes place.

You can observe a tree and the word `tree' interferes; the moment you see it you say, "There's a tree", or a butterfly, a deer, or the mountain or river; there is

immediate reaction. That reaction can be observed and perhaps put aside so that there is just observation of the tree, the beauty of the line of it, the grace of it, the quality of it. Now, do the same with a person with whom you have lived, with whom you have been intimate - observe without a single image about that person. Then relationship is something extraordinary.

Suppose a wife has no image about her husband; what then is the relationship for the husband? The husband is violent and the wife is not violent. Is there any relationship - except perhaps through the senses, sexually - is there any relationship? Obviously not, but they are living in the same house. So what will the husband do? First of all that is a most extraordinary way of living, in which there may perhaps be real, profound love. The wife has no images about her husband, but he has images, ideas all the time, piling up. They are living in the same house. What takes place? She is free, he is not. He wants her to have an image about him, for he is used to that. ~o the most destructive relationship goes on till she says, "Enough". Does she divorce him, leave him? Perhaps, since she has no images about him, a totally different atmosphere has been brought about in the house. He is beginning to be aware because she is immovable - you understand? - and he is moving all around. When he meets something that is immovable, something happens to him.

8th Question Ojai, California 1st Question & Answer Meeting 6th May  
1980

## **Pain**

Question: Does not thought originate as a defence against pain? The infant begins to think in order to separate itself from physical pain. Is thought - which is psychological knowledge - the result of pain, or is pain the result of thought? How does one go beyond the defences developed in childhood?

Put a pin into a leg and there is pain; then there is anxiety that the pain should end. That is the momentum of thinking, the nervous reaction; then comes identification with that reaction and one says: "I hope it will end and I must not have it in the future". All that is part of the momentum of thinking. Fear is part of pain; is there fear without thought?

Have you ever experimented with dissociating thought from pain? Sit in a dentist's chair for some time and watch the things going on; your mind observing without identifying. You can do this. I sat in the dentist's chair for four hours; never a single thought came into my mind.

How does one go beyond the defences cultivated in childhood? Would one go to a psychoanalyst? One may think that is the easiest way and one may think that he will cure all the problems arising from one's childhood. He cannot. He may slightly modify them. So what will one do? There is nobody one can go to. Will one face that? There is nobody. Has one ever faced that fact that there is nobody one can go to? If one has cancer one can go to a doctor, that is different from the psychological knowledge that one has developed during childhood which causes one to become neurotic; and most people are neurotic.

So, what is one to do? How is one to know, in a world that is somewhat neurotic, in which all one's friends and relations are slightly unbalanced, that one is also unbalanced? One cannot go to anybody; so what is taking place in one's

mind now that one no longer depends on others, on books, on psychologists, on authority? What has happened to one's mind if one actually realizes that one cannot possibly go to anybody? Neuroticism is the result of dependence. One depends on one's wife, on the doctor; one depends on God or on the psychologists. One has established a series of dependences around one, hoping that in those dependences one will be secure. And when one discovers that one cannot depend on anybody, what happens? One is bringing about a tremendous psychological revolution; one is usually unwilling to face it. One depends on one's wife; she encourages one to be dependent on her; and vice versa. That is part of one's neurosis. One does not throw it out, one examines it. Can one be free of it, not depending on one's wife - psychologically, of course? One will not do it because one is frightened; one wants something from her, sex or this or that. Or she encourages one with one's ideas, helps one to dominate, to be ambitious, or says one is a marvellous philosopher.

But see that the very state of dependence on another may be the cause of the deep psychological neurosis. When one breaks that pattern, what happens? One is sane! One must have such sanity to find out what truth is. Dependence has been from childhood, it has been a factor against pain and hurt, a factor for comfort, for emotional sustenance and encouragement - all that has been built into one, one is part of that. This conditioned mind can never find out what truth is. Not to depend on anything means one is alone; all one, whole - that is sanity, that sanity breeds rationality, clarity, integrity.

## – Ojai, 2nd meeting 1980 –

9th Question Ojai, California 2nd Question & Answer Meeting 8th May  
1980

### Truth

Question: There is a prevalent assumption these days that everything is relative, a matter of personal opinion, that there is no such thing as truth or fact independent of personal perception. What is an intelligent response to this belief?

Is it that we are all so personal that what I see, what you see, is the only truth? That my opinion and your opinion are the only facts we have? That is what the question implies; that everything is relative; goodness is relative, evil is relative, love is relative. If everything is relative (that is, not the whole complete, truth) then our actions, our affections, our personal relationships are relative, they can be ended whenever we like, whenever they do not please us.

Is there such a thing as truth apart from personal belief, apart from personal opinion? Is there such a thing as truth? This question was asked in the ancient days by the Greeks, by the Hindus and by the Buddhists. It is one of the strange facts in the Eastern religions that doubt was encouraged - to doubt, to question - and in religion in the West it is rather put down, it is called heresy.

One must find out for oneself, apart from personal opinions, perceptions, experiences, which are always relative, whether there is a perception, a seeing, which is absolute truth, not relative. How is one going to find out? If one says that personal opinions and perceptions are relative then there is no such thing as absolute truth, all is relative. Accordingly our behaviour, our conduct, our way of life, is relative, casual, not complete, not whole, fragmentary.

How would one find out if there is such a thing as truth which is absolute, which is complete, which is never changing in the climate of personal opinions?

How does one's mind, the intellect, thought, find out? One is enquiring into something that demands a great deal of investigation, an action in daily life, a putting aside of that which is false - that is the only way to proceed.

If one has an illusion, a fantasy, an image, a romantic concept, of truth or love, then that is the very barrier that prevents one moving further. Can one honestly investigate what is an illusion? How does illusion come into being? What is the root of it? Does it not mean playing with something which is not actual?

The actual is that which is happening, whether it is what may be called good, bad or indifferent; it is that which is actually taking place. When one is incapable of facing that which is actually taking place in oneself, one creates illusions to escape from it. If one is unwilling or afraid to face what is actually going on, that very avoidance creates illusion, a fantasy, a romantic movement, away from that which is. That word 'illusion' implies the moving away from that which is.

Can one avoid this movement, this escape, from actuality? What is the actual? The actual is that which is happening, including the responses, the ideas, the beliefs and opinions one has. To face them is not to create illusion.

Illusions can take place only when there is a movement away from the fact, from that which is happening, that which actually is. In understanding that which is, it is not one's personal opinion that judges but the actual observation. One cannot observe what is actually going on if one's belief or conditioning qualifies the observation; then it is the avoidance of the understanding of that which is.

If one could look at what is actually taking place, then there would be complete avoidance of any form of illusion. Can one do this? Can one actually observe one's dependency; either dependency on a person, on a belief, on an ideal, or on some experience which has given one a great deal of excitement? That dependence inevitably creates illusion.

So a mind that is no longer creating illusion, that has no hypotheses, that has no hallucinations, that does not want to grasp an experience of that which is called truth, has now brought order into itself. It has order. There is no confusion brought about by illusions, by delusions, hallucinations; the mind has lost its capacity to create illusions. Then what is truth? The astrophysicists, the scientists, are using thought to investigate the material world around them, they are going beyond physics, beyond, but always moving outward. But if one starts inwards one sees that the 'me' is also matter. And thought is matter. If one can go inwards, moving from fact to fact, then one begins to discover that which is beyond matter. Then there is such a thing as absolute truth, if one goes through with it.

10th Question Ojai, California 2nd Question & Answer Meeting 8th  
May 1980

## **Violence**

Question: How can we take responsibility for what is happening in the world while continuing to function in our daily life? What is right action with regard to violence and when faced with violence?

Is that which is happening in the world outside different from that which is happening inside? In the world there is violence, extraordinary turmoil, crisis after crisis. There are wars, division of nationalities, religious differences, racial and communal differences, one set of systematized concepts against another. Is that different from what is going on inside us? We are also violent, we are also full of vanity, terribly dishonest, putting on different masks for different occasions.

So it is one movement like the tide going out and the tide coming in. We human beings have created what is going on outside and that cannot possibly be changed unless we human beings change. That is the root of it. We want to do something in the world, have better institutions, better governments etc, but we never say we have created that. Unless we change that cannot change. After the millions of years we have lived, we are just the same. We have not changed fundamentally and we continue to create havoc in the world.

The fact is, one is the world; not as an idea but actually. Do you see the difference between the idea and the actuality? One has heard the statement that one is the world and one makes an idea, an abstraction of it. And then one discusses the idea, whether it is true, or false and one has lost it. But the fact is, one is the world; it is so.

So one is responsible for changing it. That means, one is responsible, completely, for the way one lives one's daily life. Not try to modify the chaos that is going on, decorate it or join this group or that group or institution, but as a

human being, who is the world, go through a radical transformation oneself; otherwise there can be no good society.

Most of us find it difficult to change, to give up smoking, for example. There are institutions that will help one not to smoke! See how one depends on institutions. So, can one find out why one does not change, why one does not, when one sees something wrong - 'wrong' in quotes - end it, immediately? Is it that one hopes that somebody else will bring order in the world and then one can just slip into it? Is it that we are indolent, psychologically lazy, ineffectual?

How many years one spends in acquiring certain techniques, going through high school, college, university, becoming a doctor, yet one will not spend a day to bring about a change in oneself.

So one's responsibility is to bring about a radical change in oneself, because one is the rest of humanity.

The next question is: What is right action with regard to violence and when faced with violence? Violence is anger, hatred, conformity, irritation, obedience. The denial of all that is the opposite of that. Is it possible to be free of the violence that is part of one's life, inherited, probably from the animal - not relatively free, but completely free? That means to be free of anger; it means, not only to be free of anger, but to have no anger in the mind. Or, to be free of conformity - not outward conformity, but conformity through comparison. One is always comparing, psychologically - I was, I will be, or I am, something. A mind which is always comparing, judging, is aggressive. If the mind is free from imitation, conformity and comparison then from that there is right action.

Can the mind be absolutely free of all violence? If it is, then when it meets violence, what is its response? If one meets violence, face to face, what is the action that takes place? Can one judge what one is going to do when one meets it? The brain when faced with violence, undergoes a rapid chemical change; it

reacts much quicker than the blow. One's whole body reacts and there is immediate response; one may not hit back, but the very presence of anger or hatred causes this response and there is action.

In the presence of a person who is angry see what takes place if one is aware of it and does not respond. The moment one is aware of the other person's anger and one does not react oneself, there is quite a different response. One's instinct is to respond to hate by hate, to anger by anger, there is the welling up chemically which creates in the system the nervous reactions; but quieten all this in the presence of anger, and a different action takes place.

11th Question Ojai, California 2nd Question & Answer Meeting 8th  
May 1980

## Hope

Question: The hope that tomorrow will solve our problems prevents our seeing the absolute urgency of change. How does one deal with this?

What do you mean by the future, what is future? If one is desperately ill, tomorrow has meaning; one may be healed by tomorrow. So one must ask, what is this sense of future? We know the past; we live in the past, which is the opposite movement; and the past, going through the present, modifying itself, moves to that which we call the future.

First of all, are we aware that we live in the past - the past that is always modifying itself, adjusting itself, expanding and contracting itself, but still the past - past experience, past knowledge, past understanding, past delight, the pleasure which has become the past?

The future is the past, modified. So one's hope of the future is still the past moving to what one considers to be the future. The mind never moves out of the past. The future is always the mind acting, living, thinking in the past.

What is the past? It is one's racial inheritance, one's conditioning as Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Catholic, American and so on. It is the education one has received the hurts the delights, as remembrances. That is the past. That is one's consciousness. Can that consciousness, with all its content of belief, dogma, hope, fear, longing and illusion, come to an end? For example, can one end, this morning, completely, one's dependence on another? Dependence is part of one's consciousness. The moment that ends, something new begins, obviously. But one never ends anything completely and that non-ending is one's hope. Can one see and end dependence and its consequences, psychologically, inwardly? See what it means to depend and the immediate action taking place of ending it. Now

is the content of one's consciousness to be got rid of bit by bit? That is, get rid of anger, then get rid of jealousy, bit by bit. That would too long. Or, can the whole thing be done instantly, immediately? for taking the contents of one's consciousness and ending them one by one, will take many years, all one's life perhaps. Is it possible to see the whole and end it - which is fairly simple, if one does it? But one's mind is so conditioned that we allow time as a factor in change.

12th Question Ojai, California 2nd Question & Answer Meeting 8th  
May 1980

## Living

Question: What does it mean to see the totality of something? Is it ever possible to perceive the totality of something which is moving?

Can one see the totality of our consciousness completely? Of course one can. One's consciousness is made up of all its content; one's jealousy, nationality, beliefs, experiences and so on; they are the content of this thing called consciousness and the core of that is 'me', the self. Right? To see this thing entirely means giving complete attention to it. But one rarely gives complete attention to anything. If one gives complete attention at the very core, the self, one sees the whole.

The questioner also asks, which is interesting: "Is it ever possible to perceive the totality of something which is moving?" Is the self moving? Is the content of your consciousness moving? It is moving within the limits of itself.

What is moving in consciousness - attachment or the fear of what might happen if one is not attached? Consciousness is moving within its own radius, within its own limited area. That one can observe. Is one's consciousness with its content living? Are one's ideas, one's beliefs, living? What is living?

Now, is the remembrance of the experience one has had, living? The remembrance, not the fact; the fact is gone. Yet one calls the movement of remembrance living. The experience which is gone is remembered; and that remembrance is called living. That one can watch; but not that which is gone. So what one calls living is that which has happened and gone. That which has gone is dead; that is why one's mind is so dead. That is the tragedy of one's life.

13th Question Ojai, California 2nd Question & Answer Meeting 8th  
May 1980

## Facts

Question: Is there a state that has no opposite? And may we know and communicate with it?

Are there opposites, except such opposites as man, woman, darkness, light, tall, short, night and day? Is there an opposite to goodness? If it has an opposite it is not good. I wonder if you see that. Goodness, if it has an opposite must be born out of that opposite. What is an opposite? We have cultivated opposites and we say, good is the opposite of bad. Now, if they have a relationship with each other, or are the outcome of each other, then good is still rooted in bad. So, is there the opposite at all? One is violent; thought has created non-violence, its opposite, which is non-fact; but the ending of violence is quite a different state from non-violence.

Mind has created the opposite in order either to escape from action or to suppress violence. All this activity is part of violence. But if one is only concerned with facts, then facts have no opposites. One hates; one's mind, one's thought and society say one should not hate, which is the opposite. The opposites are born out of each other. So, there is only hate, not its opposite. If one observes the fact of hate and all the responses to that fact, why should one have an opposite? The opposite is created by thought which leads to a constant struggle between hate and non-hate, between fact and thought. How is one to get over one's hate? If the fact alone remains and not its opposite, then one has the energy to look at it. One has the energy not to do anything about it and the very fact is dissolved.

## **– Ojai, 3rd meeting 1980 –**

14th Question Ojai, California 3rd Question & Answer Meeting 13th  
May 1980

### **Creativity**

Question: What is true creativity and how is it different from that which is so considered in popular culture?

What is generally called creativity is man-made - painting, music, literature, romantic and factual, all the architecture and the marvels of technology. And the painters, the writers, the poets, probably consider themselves creative. We all seem to agree with that popular idea of a creative person. Many man-made things are most beautiful, the great cathedrals, temples and mosques; some of them are extraordinarily beautiful and we know nothing of the people who built them. But now, with us, anonymity is almost gone. With anonymity there is a different kind of creativity, not based on success, money - twenty-eight million books sold in ten years!

Anonymity has great importance; in it there is a different quality; the personal motive, the personal attitude and personal opinion do not exist; there is a feeling of freedom from which there is action.

But most man-made creativity, as we call it, takes place from the known. The great musicians, Beethoven, Bach and others, acted from the known. The writers and philosophers have read and accumulated; although they developed their own style they were always moving, acting or writing, from that which they had accumulated - the known. And this we generally call creativity.

Is that really creative? Or is there a different kind of creativity which is born out of the freedom from the known? Because when we paint, write, or create a marvellous structure out of stone, it is based on the accumulated knowledge

carried from the past to the present. Now, is there a creativity totally different from the activity that we generally call creativity?

Is there a living, is there a movement, which is not from the known? That is, is there a creation from a mind that is not burdened with all the turmoils of life, with all the social and economic pressures? Is there a creation out of a mind that has freed itself from the known?

Generally we start with the known and from that we create, but is there a creative impulse or movement taking place that can use the known, but not the other way round? In that state of mind, creation, as we know it, may not be necessary.

Is creativity something totally different, something which we can all have - not only the specialist, the professional, the talented and gifted? I think we can all have this extraordinary mind that is really free from the burdens which man has imposed upon himself. Out of that sane, rational, healthy mind, something totally different comes which may not necessarily be expressed as painting, literature or architecture. Why should it? If you go into this fairly deeply, you will find that there is a state of mind which actually has no experience whatsoever. Experience implies a mind that is still groping, asking, seeking and therefore struggling in darkness and wanting to go beyond itself.

There is a complete and total answer to the question if we apply our minds and our hearts to it; there is a creativity which is not man-made. If the mind is extraordinarily clear without a shadow of conflict, then it is really in a state of creation; it needs no expression, no fulfilment, no publicity and such nonsense.

15th Question Ojai, California 3rd Question & Answer Meeting 13th  
May 1980

## **Action**

Question: You have said that in the very seeing there is action. Is this action the same as the expression of action?

In the very observation there is action. Observe greed without any distortion, without motive, without saying, "I must go beyond it" - just observe the movement of greed. That very observation sees the whole movement of it, not just one particular form of greed, but the whole movement of greed.

If in observing greed, or hatred, violence or whatever it is, the observation is completely non-directive, then there is no interval between the seeing and the acting. Whereas we normally have intervals - seeing, then concluding and extracting an idea and then carrying out that idea, in which there is the interval between the arising of ideas and the acting on those ideas. It is in this time interval that all kinds of other problems arise, whereas the seeing is the very act of ending greed.

Now, the questioner asks: "Is this action the same as the expression of action?" That is, you see, a snake, a cobra. There is the instant expression of self-preservation, which is natural; the self-protective instinct is immediate, to run away or to do something about it. There the seeing has expressed itself in physical action. But we are talking of observation with the whole of our mind, not partially observing, as we normally do; to be so attentive that the whole of the mind is giving complete attention. Such attention implies that there is no centre from which you are attending. When you concentrate it is from a centre, from a point; therefore it is limited, restricted, narrow; whereas attention has no centre, everything in your mind is alive, attending. Then you will find out that there is no

point from which you are attending; in that attention there is no border, whereas concentration has a border.

16th Question Ojai, California 3rd Question & Answer Meeting 13th  
May 1980

## Images

Question: For the making of images to end, must thought also end? Is one necessarily implied in the other? Is the end of image-making really a foundation upon which one can begin to discover what love and truth are? Or is that ending the very essence of truth and love?

We live by the images created by the mind, by thought. These images are continuously added and taken away. You have your own image about yourself; if you are a writer you have an image about yourself as a writer; if you are a wife or a husband, each has created an image about himself or herself. This begins from childhood, through comparison, through suggestion, by being told you must be as good as the other chap, or you must not do, or you must; so gradually this process accumulates. And in our relationships, personal and otherwise, there is always an image. As long as the image exists, you are liable to be either wounded, bruised or hurt. And this image prevents there being any actual relationship with another.

Now the questioner asks: Can this ever end, or is it something with which we have to live everlastingly? And he also asks: In the very ending of the image, does thought end? Are they interrelated, image and thought? When the image-making machinery comes to an end, is that the very essence of love and truth?

Have you ever actually ended an image - voluntarily, easily, without any compulsion, without any motive? Not, "I must end the image I have of myself, I will not be hurt". Take one image and go into it; in going into it, you discover the whole movement of image-making. In that image you begin to discover there is fear, anxiety; there is a sense of isolation; and if you are frightened you say, "Much better keep to something I know than something I do not know". But if you

go into it fairly seriously and deeply, you enquire as to who or what is the maker of this image, not one particular image but image-making as a whole. Is it thought? Is it the natural response, natural reaction, to protect oneself physically and psychologically? One can understand the natural response to physical protection, how to have food, to have shelter, to have clothes, to avoid being run over by a bus and so on. That is a natural, healthy, intelligent response. In that there is no image. but psychologically, inwardly, we have created this image which is the outcome of a series of incidents, accidents, hurts, irritations.

Is this psychological image-making the movement of thought? We know that thought does not, perhaps to a very large degree, enter into the self-protective physical reaction. But the psychological image-making is the outcome of constant inattention which is the very essence of thought. Thought in itself is inattentive. Attention has no centre, it has no point from which to go to another point, as in concentration. When there is complete attention there is no movement of thought. It is only to the mind that is inattentive that thought arises.

Thought is matter; thought is the outcome of memory; memory is the outcome of experience and that must always be limited, partial. Memory, knowledge, can never be complete, they are always partial, therefore inattentive.

So when there is attention there is no image-making, there is no conflict; you see the fact. If when you insult me or flatter me and I am completely attentive, then it does not mean a thing. But the moment I am not paying attention, thought, which is inattentive in itself, takes over and creates the image.

Now the questioner asks: Is the ending of image-making the essence of truth and love? Not quite. Is desire love? Is pleasure love? Most of our life is directed towards pleasure in different forms, and when that movement of pleasure, sex etc, takes place we call that love. Can there be love when there is conflict, when the mind is crippled with problems, problems of heaven, problems of meditation,

problems between man and woman? When the mind is living in problems, which most of our minds are, can there be love?

Can there be love when there is great suffering, physiological as well as psychological? Is truth a matter of conclusion, a matter of opinion, of philosophers, of theologians, of those who believe so deeply in dogma and ritual, which are all man-made? Can a mind so conditioned know what truth is? Truth can only be when the mind is totally free of all this jumble. Philosophers and others never look at their own lives; they go off into some metaphysical or psychological world, about which they begin to write and publish and become famous. Truth is something that demands extraordinary clarity of mind, a mind that has no problem whatsoever, physical or psychological, a mind that does not know conflict. Even the memory of conflict must end. With the burden of memory we cannot find truth. It is impossible. Truth can only come to a mind that is astonishingly free from all that is man-made.

Those are not words to me, you understand? If it was not something actual, I would not speak, I would be dishonest to myself. If it were not a fact I would be such a terrible hypocrite. This requires tremendous integrity.

17th Question Ojai, California 3rd Question & Answer Meeting 13th  
May 1980

## Reincarnation

Question: Would you please make a definite statement about the non-existence of reincarnation since increasing 'scientific evidence' is now being accumulated to prove reincarnation is a fact. I am concerned because I see large numbers of people beginning to use this evidence to further strengthen a belief they already have, which enables them to escape problems of living and dying. Is it not your responsibility to be clear, direct and unequivocal on this matter instead of hedging round the issue?

We will be very definite. The idea of reincarnation existed long before Christianity. It is prevalent almost throughout India and probably in the whole Asiatic world. Firstly: what is it that incarnates; not only incarnates now, but reincarnates again and again? Secondly: the idea of there being scientific evidence that reincarnation is true, is causing people to escape their problems and that causes the questioner concern. Is he really concerned that people are escaping? They escape through football or going to church. Put aside all this concern about what other people do. We are concerned with the fact, with the truth of reincarnation; and you want a definite answer from the speaker.

What is it that incarnates, is reborn? What is it that is living at this moment, sitting here? What is it that is taking place now to that which is in incarnation?

And when one goes from here, what is it that is actually taking place in our daily life, which is the living movement of incarnation - one's struggles, one's appetites, greeds, envies, attachments - all that? Is it that which is going to reincarnate in the next life?

Now those who believe in reincarnation, believe they will be reborn with all that they have now - modified perhaps - and so carry on, life after life. Belief is

never alive. But suppose that belief is tremendously alive, then what you are now matters much more than what you will be in a future life.

in the Asiatic world there is the word 'karma' which means action in life now, in this period, with all its misery, confusion, anger, jealousy, hatred, violence, which may be modified, but will go on to the next life. So there is evidence of remembrance of things past, of a past life. That remembrance is the accumulated 'me', the ego, the personality. That bundle, modified, chastened, polished a little bit, goes on to the next life.

So it is not a question of whether there is reincarnation (I am very definite on this matter, please) but that there is incarnation now; what is far more important than reincarnation, is the ending of this mess, this conflict, now. Then something totally different goes on.

Being unhappy, miserable, sorrow-ridden, one says: "I hope the next life will be better". That hope for the next life is the postponement of facing the fact now. The speaker has talked a great deal to those who believe in and have lectured and written about reincarnation, endlessly. It is part of their game. I say, "All right, Sirs, you believe in it all. If you believe, what you do now matters". But they are not interested in what they do now, they are interested in the future. They do not say: "I believe and I will alter my life so completely that there is no future". Do not at the end of this say that I am evading this particular question; it is you who are evading it. I have said that the present life is all-important; if you have understood and gone into it, with all the turmoil of it, the complexity of it - end it, do not carry on with it. Then you enter into a totally different world. I think that is clear, is it not? I am not hedging. You may ask me: "Do you believe in reincarnation?" Right? I do not believe in anything. This is not an evasion I have no belief and it does not mean that I am an atheist, or that I am ungodly. Go into it, see what it means. It means that the mind is free from all the entanglements of belief.

In the literature of ancient India there is a story about death and incarnation. For a Brahmin it is one of the ancient customs and laws, that after collecting worldly wealth he must at the end of five years give up everything and begin again. A certain Brahmin had a son and the son says to him, "You are giving all this away to various people, to whom are you going to give me away; to whom are you sending me?" The father said, "Go away, I am not interested". But the boy comes back several times and the father gets angry and says, "I am going to send you to Death" - and being a Brahmin he must keep his word. So he sends him to Death. On his way to Death the boy goes to various teachers and finds that some say there is reincarnation, others say there is not. He goes on searching and eventually he comes to the house of Death. When he arrives, Death is absent. (A marvellous implication, if you go into it.) Death is absent. The boy waits for three days. On the fourth day, Death appears and apologizes. He apologizes because the boy was a Brahmin; he says, "I am sorry to have kept you waiting and in my regret I will offer you three wishes. You can be the greatest king, have the greatest wealth, or you can be immortal". The boy says, "I have been to many teachers and they all say different things. What do you say about death and what happens afterwards?" Death says: "I wish I had pupils like you; not concerned about anything except that". So he begins to tell him about truth, about the state of life in which there is no time

## **– Ojai, 4th meeting 1980 –**

18th Question Ojai, California 4th Question & Answer Meeting 15th  
May 1980

### **Fear**

Question: I am not asking how fear arises - that you have already explained but rather, what is the actual substance of fear? What is fear itself? Is it a pattern of physiological reaction and sensation, tightening of muscles, surging of adrenalin and so forth; or is it something more? What am I to look at when I look at fear itself? Can this looking take place when fear is not immediately present?

What is fear itself? We are generally afraid of something, or of a remembrance of something that has happened, or of a projection of a reaction into the future. But the questioner asks: What is the actual nature of fear?

When one is afraid, both physiologically as well as psychologically, is it not that one has a feeling of danger, a feeling of total isolation called loneliness, deep, abiding, lasting loneliness? All reactions are to something; one is afraid of the snake, or one is afraid of the return of some pain one has had. So it is either fear of an actual thing or of the remembrance of something that has happened in the past. But apart from the psychological reactions which one knows as fear is there fear in itself, not fear of something? Is there fear per se? Or does one only know fear in relation to something else? If it is not in relation to something, is it fear? One knows fear in relation to something, from something, or towards something, but if you eliminate that, is there actual fear, which you can examine?

The mind, the brain, need complete security in order to function well, healthily, sanely. Not finding security in anything, in a relationship, in an idea, in a belief - an intelligent mind rejects all that - yet it still looks for complete security. Not finding it, fear comes into being. Is there something totally and completely secure

and certain, not the certainty of beliefs, dogmas, rituals and ideas, which can all be abolished when new ideas, dogmas and theories replace them? Putting aside all that, does the mind, the brain, seeking a security that is intelligible and not finding it, feel deep-rooted fear? So, apart from the ordinary kinds of fear, is the mind creating fear itself, because there is nothing valid, nothing that is whole? Is that the substance of fear?

Can the mind in itself have no fear? Thought - which is part of the function of the mind and brain - desiring security, has created various illusions, philosophical and theological. Not finding it there, it either creates something beyond itself in which it hopes to find total security, or the mind itself is so totally complete that it has no need for fear.

We are not talking of getting rid of fear or suppressing fear; we are asking, can the mind in itself have no cause or substance or reaction which brings fear? Can the mind ever be in a state - that word 'state' implies static, it is not that - can it ever have a quality where it has no movement reaching out, where it is completely whole in itself? This implies understanding meditation. Meditation is not all the nonsense that is going on about it. It is to be free from fear, both physiological and psychological, otherwise there is no love, there is no compassion. As long as there is fear, the other cannot take place. To meditate - not to reach something - is to understand the nature of fear and go beyond it - which is to find a mind that has no remembrance of something which has caused fear, so that it is completely whole.

Then there is the other part of this question: Can this looking take place when fear is not immediately present?

One can recall fear and the recalling of that fear can be observed. One had fear in the past and one can summon it; but it is not actually the same because fear exists a moment after, not at the actual moment; it is a reaction that one calls fear. But at the actual moment of great danger, at the moment of facing

something that may cause fear, there is no fear, there is nothing. Then there is a recollection of the past, then the naming of it, and saying, "I am afraid", with all the tightening of the muscles, the secretion of adrenalin.

One can recall a past fear and look at it. The observing of that fear is important because either one puts it outside of oneself or one says, "I am that fear" - there is not oneself apart from the fear observing it; one is that reaction. When there is no division between oneself and fear, but only the state of that reaction, then something entirely new takes place.

19th Question Ojai, California 4th Question & Answer Meeting 15th  
May 1980

## **Injustice**

Question: When one sees in the world no demonstrable universal principle of justice, one feels no compelling reason to change oneself or the chaotic society outside. One sees no rational criteria by which to measure the consequences of actions and their accountability. Can you share your perception on this matter with us?

Is there justice in the world? This has been a question that all the philosophers have gone into, spinning a lot of words about it. Now, is there justice in the world, rational, sane, justice? You are clever, I am not. You have money, I have not. You have capacity and another has not. You have talent, you can enjoy and I have been born poor. One has a crippling disease and the other has not. Seeing all this, we say; there must be justice somewhere. We move from lack of justice to an idea of justice - God is just. But the fact remains that there is terrible injustice in the world.

And the questioner wants to know: "If there is no justice, why should I change? There is no point in it. Why should I change in this chaotic world where the dictators are supreme; their very life is injustice, terrorizing millions of people?" Seeing all that, there is no rational cause for me to change. I think that is not a rational question, if I may say so. Do you change because you are under pressure, or because you are rewarded - change brought about by reward and punishment?

Human beings are so irrational, right through the world and you as a human being, are as the rest of humanity. And as you are the rest of mankind, you are responsible; not because you see so much injustice in the world, how the crooks

get away with everything, or because you contrast the marvellous churches and great riches with the millions and millions who are starving.

Change is not brought about through compulsion, through reward and punishment. The mind itself sees the absurdity of all this; it sees the necessity of change, not because God or the priest or somebody tells one to change. One sees the chaos around one and that chaos has been created by human beings; I am as these human beings; I have to act, it is my responsibility and a global responsibility.

20th Question Ojai, California 4th Question & Answer Meeting 15th  
May 1980

## Fragmentation

Question: Can we die, psychologically, to the self? To find out is a process of choiceless awareness. In order to observe choicelessly, it seems we must have ended or died to the ego, 'me'. The question is: How can I observe, in my current state of fragmentation? It is like the 'I' trying to see the 'I'. This is an impossible paradox; please clarify.

Do not quote me - or anybody - for then it is not yours and you become a secondhand human being, which we all are. That is the first thing to realize, because that distorts our thinking. We are the result of millions of years of the pressure of other people's thinking and propaganda. If one is not free of all that, one can never find the origin of things.

The questioner asks: How can I observe in my current state of fragmentation? You cannot. But you can observe your fragmentation. In observing yourself you discover that you are looking with certain prejudices. And you forget to look at yourself and go into the question of prejudice. You become aware of your prejudice; can you look at it without any sense of distortion, without choice? Just observe the prejudices; let prejudice tell you the story, not you tell the story about prejudice; let prejudice unroll itself; the cause of prejudice, the image, conclusions and opinions.

So you begin to discover in looking at prejudice that you are fragmented and that that fragmentation is brought about by thought; naturally, therefore, you begin to be aware of the movement of thought.

You are confused; what is this confusion? Who has created this confusion, in you and outside of you? Observing confusion, you begin to be aware of the

movement of thought, of the contradictory nature of thought; let the whole thing unroll itself as you watch.

The story is there but you do not read the story; you are telling the book what it should say. It is not that it is the history of yourself; it is the history of mankind. You cannot have insight if it is merely the response of memory. Organized religion is not religion. All the nonsense that goes on, the rituals, dogmas, theories and the theologians spinning out new theories - that is not religion. Now what makes one say that it is not religion? Is it merely a thoughtful examination of all the religions, their dogmas, their superstitions, their rituals, their ignorance, and saying at the end of it, "This is nonsense"? Or is it that one sees immediately that any form of propaganda or pressure, is never a religion? One sees this immediately and therefore one is out of it. But if one is merely examining various religions and then coming to a conclusion, that conclusion will be limited, it can be broken down, by argument, by superior knowledge.

But if one gets an insight into the nature of the religious structures which man has invented, then the mind is immediately free of it. If one understands the tyranny of one guru - they are tyrants, because they want power, position; they know; others do not know - then one has seen the tyranny of all gurus. So one does not go from one guru to another.

## **Attention**

Question: What is the relationship of attention to thought? Is there a gap between attention and thought?

You know what concentration is - from childhood, we are trained to concentrate. Concentration is the narrowing down of all energy to a particular point and holding to that point. A boy in school looks out of the window at the birds and the trees, at the movement of the leaves, or at the squirrel climbing the tree. And the teacher says: "You are not paying attention, concentrate on the book; or, "Listen to what I am saying". This is to give far more importance to concentration than to attention. If I were the teacher I would help him to watch; I would help him to watch that squirrel completely; watch the movement of the tail, how its claws act, everything. Then if he learns to watch that attentively, he will pay attention to the book.

Attention is a state of mind in which there is no contradiction. There is no entity, or centre, or point, which says, "I must attend". It is a state in which there is no wastage of energy, whereas in concentration there is always the controlling process going on - "I want to concentrate on that page", but thought wanders off and you pull it back - a constant battle going on. Attention is something totally different from concentration.

The questioner asks: What is the relationship of attention to thought? None, obviously. I do not know if you follow that. Concentration has a relationship to thought, because thought directs, "I must learn", "I must concentrate in order to control myself". Thought gives direction from one point to another point. Whereas, in attention, thought has no place, there is simply attending. And the further part of the question: Is there a gap between attention and thought? Once you have

grasped the whole movement of thought, you do not put this question. You have to understand what thought is, see what it is and how it comes into being. There is no thought if there is total amnesia. But unfortunately, or fortunately, you are not in a state of amnesia. You want to find out what thought is, what place it has in life, so you begin to examine thinking. Thinking takes place as a reaction of memory. Memory responds to a challenge, to a question, to an action, or in relation to an idea or to a person. You may have trodden on some insect that has bitten you. That pain is registered and stored in the brain as memory; it is not actual pain, the pain is over, but the memory remains. So next time you are careful, for there has been the experience of pain, which has become knowledge, which responds as thought. Memory is thought. Knowledge, however deep, however extensive, must always be limited. There is no complete knowledge.

Thought is always particular, limited, divisive; in itself it is incomplete and can never become complete. It can think about completeness; it can think about wholeness, but thought itself is not whole. Whatever thought creates, philosophically or religiously, it is still partial, limited, fragmentary and is part of ignorance. Knowledge can never be complete, it must always go hand in hand with ignorance. If you understand the nature of thought and understand what concentration is, then you will realize that thought cannot attend because attention is the giving of all your energy without any limitation or restraint of thought.

If you are attending, what takes place? There is no `you' attending. There is no centre that says: "I am attending". You are attending because it is your life. If you are serious and giving attention, you will soon find out that all your problems have gone - at least for the moment. To resolve problems is to attend. It is not a trick.

22nd Question Ojai, California 4th Question & Answer Meeting 15th  
May 1980

## Chattering

Question: Why is my mind chattering, so restless?

Have you ever asked that question, for yourself? Why is your mind so restless, always chattering, going from one thing to another, moving from one entertainment to another? Why is your mind chattering? And what will you do about it? Your immediate impulse is to control it: "I must not chatter". The controller who says, "I must not chatter", is in itself part of chattering. Do you see the beauty of it?

So what will you do? You can examine the causes of chattering, how chattering is part of the mind being occupied. The mind, including the whole structure, the brain, must be occupied with something - with sex, with television, with cooking, with cleaning the house, with football, with going to church, always occupied. Why must it be occupied? If it is not occupied are you not rather uncertain, do you not fear being unoccupied? You feel empty, you feel lost, you begin to realize that there is tremendous loneliness inside.

So, to avoid that deep loneliness, with all its agony, the mind occupies itself with everything else except that. And then that becomes the occupation. From being occupied with all these outward things, it says, "I am lonely, that is my trouble. How am I to get over it?" And you think about how miserable you are - so back to chattering. Then ask, why is the mind chattering, with never a moment when it is quiet, never a moment when there is complete freedom from any problem? Again that mental occupation is the result of your education, of the social nature of your life. But when you realize that your mind is chattering and look at it, staying with it, then you will see what happens. Your mind is chattering. All right, watch it. You say, "All right, chatter". You are attending, which means

you are not trying not to chatter, not saying, "I must not", or suppressing it; you are just attending to chattering. If you do, you will see what happens; your mind is clear and probably that is the state of a `normal', healthy human being.

## – Saanen, 1st meeting 1980 –

23rd Question Saanen 1st Question & Answer Meeting 23rd July 1980

### Enlightenment

Question: There are so many gurus today, both in the East and in the West, each one pointing his own way to enlightenment. How is one to know if they are speaking the truth?

When a guru says he knows, he does not. When an Eastern guru or a man in the West says: "I have attained Enlightenment" - then you may be sure that he is not enlightened; enlightenment is not to be attained. It is not something that you reach step by step as if you were climbing a ladder. Enlightenment is not in the hands of time. It is not, "I am ignorant but if I do certain things I will come to enlightenment" - whatever that word may mean. What is time? Time is necessary to go from here physically to another place. Psychologically, is time necessary at all? We have accepted that it is and it is part of our tradition and training; I am this but I will be that. What I will be will never take place because I have not understood 'what is'. The understanding of 'what is' is immediate; you do not have to analyse, go through tortures.

One does not like to use the word 'enlightenment', it is so loaded with the meaning given by all these gurus. They do not know what they are talking about; not that the speaker knows, that would be silly on his part, but one sees what is involved when they talk about achieving enlightenment, step by step, practising, so that the mind becomes dull, mechanical, stupid.

Whether they are Eastern or Western gurus, doubt what they are saying, doubt also what the speaker is saying - much more so, because although he is very clear about all these matters it does not mean that he is the only person who

knows, which is equally absurd. The mind must be free from all authority - no followers, disciples and patterns.

The questioner asks: How is one to know that these gurus are speaking the truth? How do you know whether the local priests, the bishops, the archbishops and the popes are speaking the truth? Instead of going off to India accepting those gurus, consider first, how do you know whether they are speaking the truth? May be they are all engaged in some kind of guile which means money, position, authority, giving initiations and all the rest of it. Question them, ask them, "Why have you put yourself in authority?" Doubt everything they say and you will soon find that they will throw you out. It once happened that a very famous guru came to see the speaker. He said; "I am a guru with many followers. I began with one and now I have a thousand and more, both in the West and in the East, especially in the West. I cannot withdraw from them; they are part of me and I am part of them. They have built me and I have built them." The disciples build the guru, the guru builds the disciples and he cannot let them go. In this way authority in the 'spiritual' world is established. See the danger of it. Where there is authority in the field of the mind and heart there is no love - spurious love maybe, but there is no sense of that depth of affection, love and care.

To find out who is speaking the truth, do not seek but question. Truth is not something you come by. Truth comes only when the mind is totally and completely free from all this. Then you have compassion and love; not for your guru, not for your family, not for your ideals or your saviour, but love, without any motive, which acts through intelligence. And you think that truth is something you buy from another!

The Eastern and the Western gurus all quote the old saying: "You must be a light unto yourself". It is an ancient and very famous saying in India. And they repeat it, adding, "You cannot be a light unto yourself unless I give it to you". People are so gullible; that is what is wrong. They all want something - the young

and the old. For the young the world is too cruel, for them what the older generations have made of the world is too appalling. They have no place in it, they are lost, so they take to drugs and drink; all kinds of things are going on in the world with the young; communes, sexual orgies, chasing off to India, to gurus, to find somebody who will tell them what to do - somebody whom they can trust. They go there, young, fresh, not knowing; and the gurus give them the feeling that they are being protected and guided - that is all they want. They cannot get it from their parents, from their local priests, from the psychologists, because their parents, the local priests and psychologists are equally confused. They go off to this dangerous country, India, and there they are caught by the thousand. They are seeking comfort, somebody to say, "I am looking after you. I will be responsible for you. Do this. Do that", and it is a very happy, pleasant state, for they are also told, "You can do what you like, indulge in sex, in drink - go on".

Equally, the older generation are in the same position, only they express it with more sophistication. They are the same, the young and the old all over the world. But nobody can give guidance, can give light, to another. Only you yourself can do that; but you have to stand completely alone. That is what is frightening for the old and the young. If you belong to anything, follow anybody, you are already entering into corruption. Understand that very deeply, with tears in your eyes: when there is no guru, no teacher and no disciple, there is only you as a human being living in this world - the world, the society, which you have created. And if you do not do something for yourself, society is not going to help you. On the contrary, society wants you to be what you are. Do not belong to anything, not to any institution or organization; do not follow anybody, be not a disciple of anybody. You are a human being living in this terrible world; a human being who is the world and the world is you. You have to live there, understand it, and go beyond yourself.

## – Saanen, 2nd meeting 1980 –

24th Question Saanen 2nd Question & Answer Meeting 24th July  
1980

### Right Living

Question: I work as a teacher and I am in constant conflict with the system of the school and the pattern of society. Must I give up all work? What is the right way to earn a living? Is there a way of living that does not perpetuate conflict?

This is a rather complex question and we will go into it step by step.

What is a teacher? Either a teacher gives information about history, physics, biology and so on, or he himself is learning together with the pupil about himself. This is a process of understanding the whole movement of life. If I am a teacher, not of biology or physics, but of psychology, then will the pupil understand me or will my pointing out help him to understand himself?

We must be very careful and clear as to what we mean by a teacher. Is there a teacher of psychology at all? Or are there only teachers of facts. Is there a teacher who will help you to understand yourself? The questioner asks: I am a teacher. I have to struggle not only with the established system of schools and education, but also my own life is a constant battle with myself. And must I give up all this? Then what shall I do if I give up all that. He is asking not only what right teaching is but he also wants to find out what right living is.

What is right living? As society exists now, there is no right way of living. You have to earn a livelihood, you marry, you have children, you become responsible for them and so you accept the life of an engineer or a professor. As society exists can there be a right way of living? Or is the search for a right way of living merely a search for Utopia, a wish for something more? What is one to do in a society which is corrupt, which has such contradictions in itself, in which there is

so much injustice - for that is the society in which we live? And, not only as a teacher in a school, I am asking myself: what shall I do?

Is it possible to live in this society, not only to have a right means of livelihood, but also to live without conflict? Is it possible to earn a livelihood righteously and also to end all conflict within oneself? Now, are these two separate things: earning a living rightly and not having conflict in oneself? Are these two in separate, watertight compartments? Or do they go together? To live a life without any conflict requires a great deal of understanding of oneself and therefore great intelligence - not the clever intelligence of the intellect - but the capacity to observe, to see objectively what is happening, both outwardly and inwardly and to know that there is no difference between the outer and the inner. It is like a tide that goes out and comes in. To live in this society, which we have created, without any conflict in myself and at the same time to have a right livelihood - is it possible? On which shall I lay emphasis - on right livelihood or on right living, that is, on finding out how to live a life without any conflict? Which comes first? Do not just let me talk and you listen, agreeing or disagreeing, saying "It is not practical. It is not like this, it is not like that saying, "It is not practical. It is not like this, it is not like that" - because it is your problem. We are asking each other: is there a way of living which will naturally bring about a right livelihood and at the same time enable us to live without a single shadow of conflict?

People have said that you cannot live that way except in a monastery, as a monk; because you have renounced the world and all its misery and are committed to the service of God, because you have given your life over to an idea, or a person, an image or symbol, you expect to be looked after. But very few believe any more in monasteries, or in saying, "I will surrender myself". If they do surrender themselves it will be surrendering to the image they have created about another, or which they have projected.

It is possible to live a life without a single shadow of conflict only when you have understood the whole significance of living - which is, relationship and action. What is right action - under all circumstances? Is there such a thing? Is there a right action which is absolute, not relative? Life is action, movement, talking, acquiring knowledge and also relationship with another, however deep or superficial. You have to find right relationship if you want to find a right action which is absolute.

What is your present relationship with another - not the romantic, imaginative, flowery and superficial thing that disappears in a few minutes - but, actually, what is your relationship with another? What is your relationship with a particular person? - perhaps intimate, involving sex, involving dependence on each other, possessing each other and therefore arousing jealousy and antagonism. The man or the woman goes off to the office, or to do some kind of physical work, where he or she is ambitious, greedy, competitive, aggressive to succeed; he or she comes back home and becomes a tame, friendly, perhaps affectionate husband or wife. That is the actual daily relationship. Nobody can deny that. And we are asking: is that right relationship? We say no, certainly not, it would be absurd to say that that is right relationship. We say that, but continue in the same way. We say that that is wrong but we do not seem to be able to understand what right relationship is - except according to the pattern set by ourselves, by society.

We may want it, we may wish for it, long for it, but longing and wishing do not bring it about. We have to go into it seriously to find out.

Relationship is generally sensuous - begin with that - then from sensuality there is companionship, a sense of dependence on each other; then there is the creating of a family which increases dependence on each other. When there is uncertainty in that dependence the pot boils over. To find right relationship one has to enquire into this great dependence on each other. Psychologically why are we so dependent in our relationships with each other? Is it that we are

desperately lonely? Is it that we do not trust anybody - even our own husband or wife? On the other hand, dependence gives a sense of security; a protection against this vast world of terror. We say: "I love you." In that love there is always the sense of possessing and being possessed. And when that situation is threatened there arises all the conflict. That is our present relationship with each other, intimate or otherwise. We create an image about each other and cling to that image.

The moment you are tied to another person, or tied to an idea or concept, corruption has begun. That is the thing to realize and we do not want to realize it. So, can we live together without being tied, without being dependent on each other psychologically? Unless you find this out you will always live in conflict, because life is relationship. Now, can we objectively, without any motive, observe the consequences of attachment and let them go immediately? Attachment is not the opposite of detachment. I am attached and I struggle to be detached; which is: I create the opposite. The moment I have created the opposite conflict comes into being. But there is no opposite; there is only what I have, which is attachment. There is only the fact of attachment - in which I see all the consequences of attachment in which there is no love - not the pursuit of detachment. The brain has been conditioned, educated, trained, to observe what is and to create its opposite: "I am violent but I must not be violent" - therefore there is conflict. But when I observe only violence, the nature of it - not analyse but observe - then the conflict of the opposite is totally eliminated. If one wants to live without conflict, only deal with `what is', everything else is not. And when one lives that way - and it is possible to live that way - completely to remain with `what is' then `what is' withers away. Experiment with it.

When you really understand the nature of relationship, which only exists when there is no attachment, when there is no image about the other, then there is real communion with each other.

Right action means precise, accurate action, not based on motive; it is action which is not directed or committed. The understanding of right action, right relationship, brings about intelligence. Not the intelligence of the intellect but that profound intelligence which is not yours or mine. That intelligence will dictate what you will do to earn a livelihood; when there is that intelligence you may be a gardener, a cook, it does not matter. Without that intelligence your livelihood will be dictated by circumstance.

There is a way of living in which there is no conflict; because there is no conflict there is intelligence which will show the right way of living.

25th Question Saanen 2nd Question & Answer Meeting 24th July  
1980

## Recording

Question: Is it possible to be so completely awake at the moment of perception that the mind does not recall the event?

In the question is the answer; we are going to enquire into it. Is it possible not to record at all, one's failures, despairs, anxieties, all the things that are going on inside and outside, so that the mind is always free?

It is the function of the brain to record. Someone says to me: "You are an idiot", and the brain instantly records it. I do not like it because I have an image about myself that I am not an idiot and you call me an idiot and I am hurt. That is recording. The hurt exists as long as I have an image about myself - everybody will tread on that image. And there is hurt, the brain has recorded it. The recording is to build a wall round myself so as not to be hurt any more. I am afraid, so I shrink within myself, build a wall of resistance and I feel safe.

Now the questioner asks: Is it possible not to record that hurt at the moment when I am called an idiot? Is it possible not to record at all, not only the hurt but flattery? Is it possible not to record either? The brain has been trained to record for in that recording there is safety, security, a sense of vitality; in that recording the mind creates the image about oneself. And that image will constantly get hurt. Is it possible to live without a single image about yourself, or about your husband, wife, children, firm, or about the politicians, the priests, or about the ideal - not a single shadow of an image? It is possible, and if it is not found you will always be getting hurt, always living in a pattern in which there is no freedom. When you give complete attention there is no recording. It is only when there is inattention that you record. That is: you flatter me; I like it; the liking at that moment is

inattention therefore recording takes place. But if when you flatter me I listen to it completely without any reaction, then there is no centre which records.

You have to go into the question of what attention is. Most of us know what concentration is; from one point to another point - from one desire, one hope, to another. You concentrate on your job. You concentrate in order to control the mind, in order to achieve a certain result. In that concentration there must be conflict because as you are concentrating, thoughts come pouring in and you try to push them off. This constant struggle with intruding thought is concentration; whereas in attention there is no struggle and no point from which you are attending.

Have you ever given attention to anything? - which means there is no thought, no movement, no interpretation or motive, just attending completely. Concentration is from point to point and therefore there is resistance; attention has no centre from which you are attending; attention is all-inclusive, there is no border to it. Concentration inevitably brings about resistance, you shut yourself up, avoid noises, avoid interruptions; your whole brain is centred on a point, a point which may be excellent or not. In concentration there is the division between the controller and the controlled. The controller is the thought which says, "I must control that", therefore the controller is the controlled. Put it differently: the thinker is the thought, for there is no separation between thought and the thinker. You eliminate altogether the division when you realize that the thinker is the thought, that the controller is the controlled. When you actually see the truth of this there comes attention; in attention there may be concentration in which you concentrate on doing something, but it comes from attention.

26th Question Saanen 2nd Question & Answer Meeting 24th July  
1980

## Death

Question: In your talks you speak of death as total annihilation; also you have said that after death there is immortality, a state of timeless existence. Can one live in that state?

I did not use the word annihilation; I have said that death is an ending - like ending attachment. When something ends, like attachment, something totally new begins. When one has been accustomed to anger all one's life, or greed or aggression and one ends it, something totally new happens. One may have followed a guru, with all the gadgets he has given one; one realizes the absurdity of it, and one ends it. What happens? There is a sense of freedom from the burden which one has been uselessly carrying. Death is like ending an attachment.

What is it that has continued through life? One puts death in opposition to living. One says death is at the end of life; an end that may be ten or fifty years away - or the day after tomorrow. One hopes it will be ten years or more, but this is one's illusion, one's desire, a kind of momentum. One cannot understand how to face death without understanding or facing living, for death is not the opposite of living.

Much more important than asking the question: how to face death or, what is immortality or, whether that immortality is a state in which one can live, is the question of how to face life, how to understand this terrible thing called living? Because living as one does, is meaningless. One may try to give meaning to life, as most people do, saying life is this, or life must be that, but putting aside all these romantic, illusory, idealistic nonsenses, life is one's daily sorrow, its competition, despair, depression, agony - with the occasional flash of beauty and

love. That is one's life; can one face it and understand it so completely that one is left with no conflict in life? To do that is to die to everything that thought has built up. Thought has built one's vanity, thought has said, "I must achieve, become somebody, struggle, compete". That is what thought has put together, which is one's existence. One's gods, churches, gurus, rituals, all that is the activity of thought, a movement of memory, experience, knowledge stored up in the brain, a material process. And when thought dominates one's life, as it does, then thought denies love. Love is not a remembrance. Love is not an experience. Love is not desire or pleasure.

Living that way, dominated by thought, one has separated from life that thing called death, which is an ending, and one is frightened of it. If one denies everything in oneself which thought has created - and this requires tremendous grit - what has one? One is with death; living is dying and so renewal.

One is trained to be an individual - me as opposed to you, my ego against your ego. But the fact is that one is the entire humanity. One goes through what every other human being goes through, all one's sexual appetites, indulgences, sorrow, great hope, fear, anxiety, the immense sense of loneliness - that is what every human being has, that is one's life. One is the entire humanity, one is not individual. One likes to think one is, but one is not.

There is a life in which there is no centre as 'me', a life, therefore, walking hand in hand with death; and out of that sense of ending totally, time has come to an end. Time is movement, movement is thought, thought is time. When one asks: "Can one live in that eternity?" - one cannot understand. See what one has done. "I want to live in eternity, to understand immortality" - which means the 'I' must be part of that. But what is the 'I'? A name, a form, and all the things that thought has put together; that is what the 'I' actually is, to which one clings. And when death comes through disease, accident, old age, how scared one is.

## **- Saanen, 3rd meeting 1980 -**

27th Question Saanen 3rd Question & Answer Meeting 25th July 1980

### **Discontent**

Question: I am dissatisfied with everything. I have read and thought a great deal but my discontent with the whole universe is still there. What you talk about makes me more discontented, more disturbed, more troubled. I now feel frustrated, antagonistic to you. What is wrong with what you are saying? Or is something wrong with me?

One observes what is happening in the world, one sees the over population, the pollution, corruption and violence, in practically every country and one tries to find an answer. One may be discontented, not only with what the speaker is saying but with everything around one - with one's job, with one's wife or husband, with one's girl or boy friend and much else. One is discontented. And that is the common lot for most of us. Either that discontent becomes a consuming flame, or it is dampened down by seeking some kind of satisfaction in various activities of life. Instead of allowing discontent to become a consuming flame, most of us almost destroy it. We are so easily satisfied, so gullible, so ready to accept, that gradually our discontent withers away and we become the normal mediocre human being, without any vitality, without any energy, without any urge to do anything.

The questioner implies that he has been through all that; he has read and thought about life a great deal, he has probably been all over the world and has not found an answer to this discontent. People who are thoughtful, aware of what is happening around them and in themselves, are aware that politics, science and religion have not answered any of our deep human problems. We have technologically evolved and developed but inwardly we are discontented. The questioner, listening to the speaker, is even more disturbed, more discontented

and antagonistic and asks what is wrong with what the speaker is saying - or is there something wrong with himself? Instead of accepting and sitting quietly and saying yes, he is antagonistic to the speaker; he does not accept. One must be very clear as to whether this discontent has a cause, because if it has a cause then it is seeking contentment, satisfaction, gratification. The discontent creates the opposite, the wish to be contented, to be satisfied, to be completely bourgeois. If what one wants, when one is discontented, is to find something with which one can be completely contented, so that one is never disturbed, then one will find a way to obtain contentment and discontent will wither and be gone.

Perhaps that is what most of us are doing. You have been to this or to that talk, you come here wanting some kind of satisfaction, some kind of certainty and assurance, some gratifying truth. Most of us find satisfaction very easily; in the kitchen, in some aspect of religion, or in politics. So gradually and inevitably the mind is narrowed down, made small when its capacity is so immense.

If one is not satisfied with anything, discontented with the whole universe - as the questioner puts it - not just dissatisfied at the level of having no house or money, then that discontent has no cause; it is discontent in itself, not because of something. Such people are rare who have this flame of discontent. Perhaps such a person comes here, listens, and that discontent increases, it becomes all-consuming. So what shall he do when he is totally dissatisfied with the whole structure of thought? He is in an immovable state. He is not seeking, he is not wanting, he is not pursuing something or other; he is aflame with this thing. And the speaker is also immovable. What he says is so; not because he is dogmatic, superstitious, romantic or self-assertive. He says that if you comprehend consciousness with its content and the freeing of that consciousness of its content there is a totally different dimension. He has said this for fifty years, not because he has invented it, but because it is so.

There are these two entities, one is completely discontented, nothing satisfies him, words, books, ideas, leaders, politics, nothing and so he is in an immovable state, and the other is equally immovable, he will not budge, he will not yield. What happens? Two human beings, one from the depth of his mind and heart is totally dissatisfied and the other also from the depth of his mind and heart says, "It is so; then these two entities meet. This is not something romantic, invented out of imagination. This is so. But if one feels antagonistic to the other, then he has already moved. He has not remained completely dissatisfied. The moment he says, "I am antagonistic to you and to that of which you speak", he has moved away from what is burning. He has already softened. Still the other has no antagonism; he says, "It is so". When the first person meets the speaker without antagonism, without wanting something from him, he is alight. Then both are the same. Fire is fire. It is not your fire, my fire, it is fire. When the fire is dampened, they are different.

## Inattention

Question: One realizes deeply the importance of awareness of one's inner and outer actions, yet one slips into inattention so easily. Must there be a Krishnamurti, the books, the cassettes, to keep one alert? Why? Why this gap between understanding and immediate action?

Why is inattention so easy, so common? It is taking place all the time. To be aware of what is happening inside the skin and what is happening outside the skin - must there be somebody to remind you of it?

Clothes do not make a man; by putting on robes a monk does not become a saint. Either the clothes remind you that one must be constantly aware - then you depend on the clothes - or without these outward garments can you be aware and not slip into inattention?

Is awareness, whatever it is, to be cultivated, developed through practice, through saying: "I must be aware", and meditating on that awareness or having some kind of thing to remind one of it constantly - whether a picture or a hair shirt which is so uncomfortable that one is constantly reminded to be aware? Let us find out what it means to be aware. One cannot know everything that is happening in the world; what the politicians are doing, what the Secret Service is doing, what the army or the scientists are doing; one does not know what one's neighbour is doing, nor what one's wife or husband is doing inwardly. One cannot know everything. But one can know, or become aware, of one's own life inwardly. Now, is that inner movement different from the outer movement? Is that which is outside - the pollution, the corruption, the chicanery, the deception, the hypocrisy, the violence - is that very different from oneself inwardly? Or is it a constant movement, like the tide going in and out? Can one be aware of this movement - see and observe it? Can one in the process of observing this flow this unitary

movement, make any choice? In this movement is awareness based on choice? Can one observe this movement - which is oneself and the world, for the world is oneself - without any choice? That observation is awareness, which one does not have to cultivate, about which one does not have to have somebody to remind one, neither books, nor tapes. Once one sees for oneself the truth that this movement out there and the movement in here are essentially similar one does not need any reminders. It is this same movement that has created the world, the society, the army, the navy, the scientist, the politician, and that movement is oneself. Can one seriously, not deceiving oneself, go very very deeply into this awareness without choice; observing it without any direction? One has to be extremely watchful.

Naturally, that awareness cannot be constant. But to be aware that it is not constant, is to be aware of inattention. To be aware of inattention is attention. One cannot reasonably, sanely, say: "I am going to be alert from the moment I wake up until the moment I go to sleep" - one cannot, unless one is neurotic and practises saying: "I am going to be aware, I am going to be aware" - then it becomes words and has no meaning. But if one sees that attention, awareness, cannot be maintained all the time - which is a fact - then inattention, not being attentive, has its value, has its meaning; because in inattention you discover that you are not attentive.

The questioner asks: Why is there a gap between understanding and immediate action? What does one mean by understanding? Somebody explains the nature and the structure of the atom, one listens carefully and says, "Yes, I understand what you are saying". Or one listens to a philosopher and says, "Yes, I understand the basis of your theories". All that is intellectual discernment, understanding. That is the function of the intellect - to discern, to evaluate, to analyse. At that level one says, "I understand". The questioner asks: Why is there a gap between understanding of that kind and immediate action? One has deeply to understand that the word never is the thing, the explanation is never the

actuality. Now, understanding takes place when the mind is quiet, not merely at the intellectual level. You are telling me something, something serious, philosophic. if my mind is chattering, wandering away, I cannot fully comprehend what you are saying. So I must listen to you, not translate what you are saying, or interpret what you are saying, or listen partially because I am frightened of what you might say, for then the mind is disturbed, moving, changing, volatile. Whereas, if I really want to listen to what you are saying, the mind must be quiet. Then there is a depth of understanding which is not merely intellectual or verbal. When there is profound perception of what is being said, false or true - and one can discover the truth in the false - then in that state of silent understanding action is naturally immediate, there is no gap between the two. When one is standing on the edge of a precipice, one does not argue, the intellect does not say let us discuss, think about it; one jumps away from the danger. There is immediate action of self-protection, which is healthy, natural, normal. One does not stand in front of a bus which is running one down, or stand looking at a dangerous snake, or animal. It is a natural, instinctive, response to save oneself. If perception is complete - which can only take place when the mind is quietly listening, not accepting, not denying but listening - then that perception and action are the same.

## Understanding

Question: I have understood the things we have talked over during these meetings, even if only intellectually. I feel they are true in a deep sense. Now when I go back to my country shall I talk about your teachings with friends? Or since I am still a fragmented human being will I only produce more confusion and mischief by talking about them?

All the religious preachings of the priests, the gurus, are promulgated by fragmented human beings. Though they say, "We are high up", they are still fragmented human beings. And the questioner says: I have understood what you have said somewhat, partially, not completely; I am not a transformed human being. I understand, and I want to tell others what I have understood. I do not say I have understood the whole, I have understood a part. I know it is fragmented, I know it is not complete, I am not interpreting the teachings, I am just informing you what I have understood. Well, what is wrong with that? But if you say: "I have grasped the whole completely and I am telling you" - then you become an authority, the interpreter; such a person is a danger, he corrupts other people. But if I have seen something which is true I am not deceived by it; it is true and in that there is a certain affection, love, compassion; I feel that very strongly - then naturally I cannot help but go out to others; it would be silly to say I will not. But I warn my friends, I say, "Look, be careful, do not put me on a pedestal". The speaker is not on a pedestal. This pedestal, this platform, is only for convenience; it does not give him any authority whatever. But as the world is, human beings are tied to something or other - to a belief, to a person, to an idea, to an illusion, to a dogma - so they are corrupt; and the corrupt speak and we, being also somewhat corrupt, join the crowd.

Seeing the beauty of these hills, the river, the extraordinary tranquillity of a fresh morning, the shape of the mountains, the valleys, the shadow how

everything is in proportion, seeing all that, will you not write to your friend, saying, "Come over here, look at this?" You are not concerned about yourself but only about the beauty of the mountain.

## **Sex**

Question: Why does sex play such an important part in each one's life in the world?

There is a particular philosophy, especially in India, called Tantra, part of which encourages sex. They say through sex you reach Nirvana. It is encouraged, so that you go beyond it - and you never do.

Why has sex become so important in our life? It has been so, not only in the present period, but always. Why has sex been so deeply embedded in man? - apart from producing children, I am not talking of that. Why? Probably it is the greatest pleasure a human being has. Demanding that pleasure, all kinds of complications arise; volumes have been written with explanations of the psychological complications. But the authors have never asked the question as to why human beings have made this thing so extremely important in their lives.

Our life is in a turmoil, it is a constant struggle, with nothing original, nothing creative - I am using the word 'creative' very carefully. The painter, the architect, the wood-carver, he may say he is creative. The woman who bakes bread in the kitchen is said to be creative. And sex, they say, is also creative. So what is it to be creative? The painters, the musicians and the Indian singers with their devotion, say that theirs is the act of creation. Is it? You have accepted Picasso as a great painter, a great creator, putting one nose on three faces, or whatever he does. I am not denying it or being derogatory, I am just pointing it out. That is what is called creation. But is all that creativeness? Or is creativeness something totally different? You are seeing the expression of creativeness in a painting, in a poem, in prose, in a statue, in music. It is expressed according to a man's talent, his capacity great or small; it may be modern Rock or Bach - I am sorry to compare the two! - they are quite incomparable. We human beings have

accepted all that as creative because it brings fame, money, position. But I am asking: is that creativity? Can there be creation, in the most profound sense of that word, so long as there is egotism, so long as there is the demand for success, money and recognition - supplying the market? Do not agree with me please. I am just pointing out. I am not saying I know creativity and you do not; I am not saying that. I am saying we never question these things. I say there is a state where there is creation in which there is no shadow of self. That is real creation; it does not need expression, it does not need self-fulfilment; it is creation. Perhaps sex is felt to be creative and has become important because everything around us is circumscribed, the job, the office, going to the church, following some philosopher, some guru. All that has deprived us of freedom and, further, we are not free from our own knowledge; it is always with us, the past.

So we are deprived of freedom outwardly and inwardly; for generation upon generation we have been told what to do. And the reaction to that is: I'll do what I want, which is also limited, based on pleasure, on desire, on capacity. So where there is no freedom, either outwardly or inwardly, specially inwardly, we have only one thing left and that is called sex. Why do we give it importance? Do you give equal importance to being free from fear? No. Do you give equal energy, vitality and thought to end sorrow? No. Why? Why only to sex? Because that is the easiest thing to hand; the other demands all your energy, which can only come when you are free. So naturally human beings throughout the world have given this thing tremendous importance in life. And when you give something, which is only one part of life, tremendous importance, you are destroying yourself. Life is whole, not just one part. If you give importance to the whole then sex becomes more or less unimportant. The monks and all those who have denied sex have turned their energy to god but the thing is boiling in them, nature cannot be suppressed. But when you give that thing all-importance, then you are corrupt.

## Authority

Question: What do you mean when you ask us to think together? Do you intend that everybody who listens to you should think with you at the same time? Don't you think that this is acting as a guru, leading people to follow your ideas, thoughts and conclusions?

The word 'guru' is a discredited word. I believe that the true meaning is one who dispels ignorance, not one who adds his ignorance to yours. It has other meanings also. There have always been Western gurus from ancient times; the priests, acting between you and what they call god or the saviour. This has also existed in India. The questioner says: When the speaker asks us to think together, is he not setting himself as a guru? So let us examine what it means when the speaker says 'think together'.

Thinking together is not accepting what the speaker is saying. It is not agreeing with or accepting the ideas, the conclusions which he may have. The speaker, in fact, has no conclusions. But he says 'think together' in the sense that both of us observe together. Observe, and let us find out what it means to observe. That does not give him any authority. You can make him into an authority, which would be unfortunate, but he does not have any authority and he denies any kind of following. If he were laying down any conclusions, ideals and so on and was accepting disciples, then he would be in a state of corruption. For the last fifty years he has been saying this.

So there is no sense of authority in this. It is very simple: if he were prejudiced, if he had all kinds of nauseating, compulsive, neurotic conclusions, it would mean that he wanted to force them on you. But he constantly says let us share together what we are observing, out there and in here. That is all.

Apparently you seem to be incapable of standing alone: that word 'alone' means all one. When you are really alone, not contaminated, when you are really free, you are the whole human entity, the human world. But we are frightened to be alone; we always want to be with somebody or with an idea or an image. To be alone is not solitude, solitude has its own beauty, to walk alone in the woods, alone along the river not hand in hand with somebody or other - but alone in solitude, which is different from aloneness. If you are walking by yourself, you are watching the sky, the trees, the birds, the flowers and all the beauty of the earth, and also, perhaps, you are watching yourself - not having a dialogue with yourself, not carrying your burdens with you; you have left those behind. Solitude reveals your loneliness, your vanity, your sense of depression. When you have finished with solitude there is the other, aloneness, which is not a conclusion or a belief - it is not propaganda, telling you what it means to look. Aloneness is not pushing you in any direction; when you are directed or when you are guided, you become a slave and therefore you lose freedom, totally, from the very beginning. Freedom is not at the end, it is at the beginning.

## – Saanen, 4th meeting 1980 –

32nd Question Saanen 4th Question & Answer Meeting 26th July  
1980

### **To Be Quiet**

Question: You seem to object even to our sitting quietly everyday to observe the movement of thought. Is this, by your definition, a practice, a method and therefore without value?

Now the questioner asks: What is wrong with sitting quietly every morning for twenty minutes, in the afternoon another twenty minutes and perhaps another twenty minutes in the evening or longer - what is wrong with it? By sitting quietly you can relax, you can observe your thinking, your reactions, your responses and your reflexes. What is the motive of those who sit quietly by themselves, or together in a group? What is the motive behind the desire to sit quietly for half an hour every day? Is it not important to find out why you want to do this? Is it because somebody has told you that if you sit quietly you will have parapsychological experiences, that you will attain some kind of peace, some kind of understanding, some kind of enlightenment, or some kind of power? And, being rather gullible, you pay thousands of dollars to receive instructions and a mantra which you can repeat. Some people have paid thousands of dollars to a man who will give them something in return - specially a Sanskrit word - and they repeat it. You pay something and you receive something in return; what is the motive behind it? Why are you doing this? Is it for a psychological reward? Is it that by sitting quietly you attain some kind of super-consciousness? Or is it that you want that which has been promised by your instructor?

So it is important - before we plunge into all this - to find out what is your motive, what it is that you want. But you do not do that. You are so eager and gullible; somebody promises something and you want it. If you examine the

motive, you see that it is a desire to achieve something - like a businessman's desire to earn a lot of money. That is his urge. Here the psychological urge is to have something that a guru, or an instructor, promises. You do not question what he promises, you do not doubt what he promises. But if you ask the man who is offering you something: Is it worthwhile? Is it true? Who are you to tell me what to do? then you will find that sitting quietly, without understanding your motive, leads to all kinds of illusory psychological trouble. If that is the intention of sitting quietly, it is not worth it. But if while sitting quietly without any motive, or walking quietly by yourself or with somebody, you watch the trees, the birds, the rivers and the sunshine on the leaves, in that very watching you are also watching yourself. You are not striving, not making tremendous efforts to achieve something. Those who are committed to a certain kind of meditation find it very hard to throw that off because the mind is already conditioned; they have practised this thing for several years and there they are stuck. And if somebody comes along and says: "What nonsense all this is" they may, at a rare moment, become rational and say: "Yes, perhaps this is wrong; then begins the trouble, the conflict, between what they have found rationally for themselves and that which they have been practising for the last ten years - a struggle that is called progress, spiritual progress!

The mind is always chattering, always pursuing one thought or another, one set of sensory responses after another set of responses. In order to stop that chattering you try to learn concentration, forcing the mind to stop chattering and so the conflict begins again. This is what you are doing; chattering, chattering, talking endlessly about nothing. Now, if you want to observe something, a tree, a flower, the lines of the mountains, you have to look, you have to be quiet. But you are not interested in the mountains, or the beauty of the hills and the valleys and the waters; you want to get somewhere, achieve something, spiritually.

Is it not possible to be quiet, naturally - to look at a person, or to listen to a song, or to listen to what somebody is saying quietly, without resistance, without

saying, "I must change, I must do this, I must do that", just to be quiet? Apparently that is most difficult. So you practise systems to be quiet. Do you see the fallacy of it? To practise a method, a system, a regular everyday routine, as a result of which you think the mind will at last be quiet; but it will never be quiet; it is mechanical, it has become set in a pattern, dull and insensitive. You do not see all that; you want to get something - an initiation! Oh, it is all so childish.

If you listen quietly, not saying the speaker is right or wrong, or saying, "I am committed to this, I have promised not to give it up; I am this, that, the other thing", but listen to what is being said without resistance, then what you are doing is your own discovery, then your mind in the very process of investigation becomes quiet.

So can we, ordinary people, with all our troubles and turmoils, be quiet and listen to all the prattlings of our own movements of thought? Is it possible to sit, or stand, or walk quietly, without any promptings from another, without any reward or desire for extraordinary super-physical sensory experiences? Begin at the most rational level; then one can go very far.

## **ILLumination**

Question: What is enlightenment?

To be enlightened about what? Please let us be rational. For instance, one is enlightened about one's relationship with another. That is, one has understood that one's relationship with another is based on one's image about the other, however intimate. That image has been put together through many years of constant reaction, indifference, comfort, nagging, all that goes on between man and woman. So the relationship is between the two images. That is what one calls relationship. Now, if one perceives the truth of this, one says one is enlightened about it. Or, one is enlightened about violence; one sees clearly, without distortion, the whole movement of violence. Or one sees how sorrow arises, and the ending of sorrow is that one is enlightened about it. But we do not mean that. We mean something else: "I am enlightened, I will tell you about it, come to me".

If we really go into what enlightenment, illumination, the voice of truth, is, then we must go carefully into the question of time. The so-called enlightened people have said that you come to it through time, gradually, life after life - if you believe in reincarnation - until you come to the point when you are enlightened - about everything. They say it is a gradual process of experience, knowledge, a constant movement from the past to the present and the future, a cycle. Now, is enlightenment, the ultimate thing, a matter of time? Is it? Is it a gradual process, which means a process in time, the process of evolution, the gradual becoming? We must understand the nature of time, not chronological time, but the psychological structure which has accepted time: "I hope ultimately to get there". The desire, which is part of hope, says, "I will ultimately get there". The so-called enlightened people are not enlightened, for the moment they say, "I am enlightened", they are not. That is their vanity. It is like a man saying, "I am really

humble" - when a man says that you know what he is. Real humility is not the opposite of vanity. When vanity ends the other is. Those who have said they are enlightened, say you must attain it, step by step, practise this, do that, don't do this; become my pupil, I'll tell you what to do, I'll give you an Indian name, or a new Christian name, and so on. And you, an irrational human being, accept this nonsense. So you ask, what is that supreme enlightenment? A mind that has no conflict, no sense of striving, of going, moving and achieving.

One must understand this question of psychological time, the constant becoming, or not becoming - which are the same. When that becoming is rooted in the mind it conditions all your thinking, all your activity; then it is a matter of using time as a means of achieving. But, is there such a thing as becoming? "I am violent, I will be non-violent". That means that becoming is an idea. I am violent and I project the idea of not being violent, so I create duality; the violent and non-violent, and so there is conflict. Or I say, "I must control myself, I must suppress, I must analyse, I must go to a psychologist, I must have a psycho-therapist".

Without creating the opposite the fact is violence. The fact. The non-violence is non-fact. If you see the truth that if I am violent, the concept of non-violence brings about this conflict between the opposites, the non-fact has no value. Now to observe the whole movement of violence, anger, jealousy, hatred, competition, imitation, conformity, do so without any direction, without any motive. If you do that, there is the end of violence, which is immediate perception and action.

So, one can see that illumination, the sense of ultimate reality, is not of time. This goes against the whole psychology of the religious world, the Christians with their souls, with their saviours, with their ultimate.

Perception is action, not perception, interval, then action. In the interval there arises the idea. The mind, the brain, the whole human nervous and psychological structure, can be free of this burden of a million years of time so that you see

something clearly and therefore that action is invariably immediate. That action will be rational, not irrational. That action can be explained logically, sanely.

That ultimate thing, which is truth, is not to be achieved through time. It can never be achieved; it is there; or it is not there.

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## **Extra-Sensory Experiences**

Question: People talk of experiences beyond the senses. There seems to be a fascination in such experiences but the lives of those who claim to have had them seem to be as mediocre as before. What are these experiences? Are these experiences part of enlightenment, or a step towards it? And if so, what is enlightenment?

It is strange, is it not, that you are always talking about enlightenment, about what the speaker has said, or what somebody else has said? You never say: "Look, it is my life. I am in great pain, sorrow; how am I to resolve all this?". Everywhere the speaker has been, there has always been this kind of question. You do not question how you will live in this world which is so corrupt, where there is no justice; and you are part of all that. Why do we not ask a really deep fundamental question about ourselves? Why is it we never ask: "I don't seem to have loved; I know all the descriptions of love; I know when I say to my girl friend or my wife, 'I love you' - I know it is not love, it is sex, sensory pleasure, desire, companionship; I know that all that is not that bloom that flowers, that has beauty, that has creativeness"? But you ask about enlightenment - why? Is it that you are frightened, that you cannot bear to see what you are - the shoddiness, the ugliness, the pettiness, the vulgarity, the mediocrity of it all? And, if you discover what you actually are, you say please help me, tell me what to do. The father figure comes into being then.

Apparently we never face ourselves. We avoid it at any cost. That is why we become so irrational and why we are exploited by all these people. It is really a tragedy: grown up people - at least we think we are grown up - playing with all this, and not coming to the root of things, which is ourselves. We have to be forced, urged, compelled to face ourselves, by somebody. We never, never under any circumstance face this thing; that is why there is no change in us. Life, the

living of everyday, is a vast, tremendous, experience, with its joys, pleasures, anxieties, its burden of sorrow and injustice all around us; and the poverty, overpopulation, pollution; and the lack of energy in ourselves. Life is such a complex experience. Yet we are bored with it. We cannot face it. We do not feel responsible for it. We separate ourselves from all this. That separation is fallacious, unreal, irrational, because we are that, we have created that, each one of us. We are part of all that and we do not want to face it. So being bored, being exhausted by the trivialities of life, we go and ask somebody, pay him, to initiate us, to give us a new name, in the hope of having new experiences.

So, we must understand the nature of our daily living, the daily irritations, the daily angers, boredom, loneliness and despair. Yet, instead of facing all that, understanding it, cleaning it up, we want super-extra-sensory experiences, when we have not even understood the activity of the daily response of the senses.

When one has really understood and lived so that the life of everyday boredom, loneliness, the ache for something better, is cleansed away; when one is free of all that and the depths are cleared, when the foundation is laid,

then when one goes beyond it one will see that a mind that is asking for extrasensory experiences is still in the state of being conditioned by the senses. Then there is a mind that has no experience whatsoever.

## Insight

Question: Insight is a word now used to describe anything newly seen, or any change of perspective. This insight we all know. But the insight you speak of seems a very different one. What is the nature of the insight of which you speak?

If you have understood with insight, your whole daily life will be affected. The first part of the question refers to the sort of experiments carried out on monkeys. Hang up a bunch of bananas and a monkey takes a stick and beats it and the bananas drop; the monkey is said to have insight. There is the other monkey who piles furniture together, one piece on top of another; by that means he reaches the bananas. That is also called insight. There are also experiments with rats; they have to do all kinds of tricks, press this button or that button in order to get at food. That is also called insight. Through experiment, through trial and error, through constantly trying this button and the other button the right button is ultimately pressed and the door of the trap is opened. This process of so-called insight is essentially based on knowledge and that is what we are all doing. You may not call it insight, but it is the actual process of our activity. Try this; if it does not suit, try that. Medically, physically, sexually and so-called spiritually we are doing this all the time. Trying, experimenting and achieving, which becomes acquired knowledge, and from that knowledge we act. This is called insight.

We are referring to an insight which is something entirely different. When the monkey pushes that button and achieves a result, his brain has recorded, memorized, that button as giving that result; it becomes automatic. Then the experimenter changes the button. The monkey presses the original button but it does not work so he gets disturbed. This is what happens to you. Through experiment, through trial, you find a way of living, which suits you. That then is called insight. That insight is based on the repetition of knowledge. Knowledge is

acquired or discarded. That insight is always based on knowledge, and knowledge is the past. There is no knowledge of the now or of the future.

The brain is accustomed to one button, to one pattern; it will not accept basic change, it does not know where it is, like the monkey; if the buttons are constantly changed it gives up; it will not move; it is paralysed and does not know what to do. You can see all this in your own self; not knowing what to do, you rush off asking somebody what buttons to press.

We are talking about something very serious. This constant change, happening throughout the world, brings about a sense of paralytic inaction. One cannot do anything. One can go into a monastery, but that is too immature, too childish when you are facing something tremendous. So, unless there is a change in the brain cells themselves, the mere pressing of buttons is the same process repeated. Unless the brain - which is composed of a million, a trillion, or whatever number of cells - undergoes a radical change it will be repeating the old pattern, modifying itself, uncertain, insecure, in a paralysing state of inaction, and, being paralysed it will go off to ask somebody else for help. This is what we are doing.

Can those brain cells change - not by being operated upon, not by being given new drugs, not as a result of entering into new modes of scientific investigation? If not we will keep on endlessly repeating this pattern of certainty, uncertainty, certainty, uncertainty.

I say they can be changed. This movement from certainty to uncertainty and vice versa, is a pattern of time. The brain is used to that - that is why there are all these questions about enlightenment, systems and so on. The speaker says they can be changed, rationally, not in some illusory, fanciful, romantic manner. The brain, the mind and so the nerves, the whole, can observe itself. Which means no direction, no motive. When there is no motive or direction, the movement has already changed. The brain is accustomed to function with motives and when

there is no motive in observation one has changed the whole momentum of the past. When there is no motive, no direction, the mind becomes absolutely quiet. There is inward observation and that observation is insight. Therefore the pattern to which the brain cells have been accustomed has been broken.

We are brought up on ideals - the greater, the nobler, the better. The ideal has become more important than `what is'. `What is' and the ideal are opposed and must breed conflict. Look what you are doing: the ideal is the creation of thought in order to overcome `what is', or to use the future as a lever to change `what is'. You are using non-fact to deal with fact. Therefore there is no result; that way there can never be change. It is so simple once you see it. Discard the ideal because it is valueless and observe only the fact. The discarding of the ideal has changed the pattern of the brain cells; the brain has lived in that pattern and now the pattern is broken. One has lived in the hope that one will gradually change; then one sees that gradualness is really the same thing repeated, modified, repeated, modified, repeated - therefore there is no basic change. When you see that, the whole structure of the brain has changed: that is insight.

## – Saanen, 5th meeting 1980 –

36th Question Saanen 5th Question & Answer Meeting 27th July 1980

### **Beyond Measure**

Question: I think I can solve my problems. I do not need any help. I have the energy to do it, but beyond this I come to receive - and if you do not like that word, to share something measureless to man, something that has great depth and beauty. Can you share that with me?

One's problems can be solved without the help of others; they are created by oneself in relationship to another; and however subtle, however superficial or great they can be solved if one applies one's mind and heart to resolving them - that is if one is not slack and lazy.

But the questioner wants to go much further. He comes here to share something he calls 'measureless to man' (in Coleridge's words), something beyond all measure, something that is not given in churches. The first thing is to be clear as to what we mean by measure - because he uses the word 'measureless'. Distance can be measured. So-called progressive evolution can be measured. One was this yesterday; through meeting the present yesterday is modified and gives the movement to the future. That can be measured. Thought is a material process which can be measured - the superficiality of one's thinking, the deeper and the deepest thoughts. The more and the less can always be measured. Comparison is a process of measurement. Imitation and conformity can be measured.

As long as there is measurement the mind can only function in that measurement. The mind, the brain, through training and custom have fallen into the habit of measurement. Is there something which is not measurable? Is there

such a thing? Can the mind, the brain, and the heart, they are all one, can that whole structure be free of measurement?

The brain - which has evolved through time, millions and millions of years - is the common brain of humanity. We may not like to realize this because we are accustomed to the idea that our brains are individual. That concept of individuality has been the tradition through millennia. That brain is constantly measuring - the more, the less, the better and the best - it is constantly functioning in that pattern. But the questioner comes to share something measureless to man.

How then are we going to find out if there is something beyond all measure, that is beyond all time - because time is measurement? Time is movement. Thought is movement. Time is thought. Thought is born out of memory, experience, knowledge. This is a material process because in the very cells of the brain memories are stored. Everything that the brain creates is a material process.

Insight is total perception of the whole complex movement of measurement. You can only have that insight when you perceive without previous knowledge, for if you are using knowledge then it is comparative, it is measurable. Insight is not measurable. When there is measureless insight the unfolding of the whole movement of comparison is not only seen but ends immediately. You can test it; you do not have to accept the speaker's word for it.

So: what is beyond measure? To find out there must be freedom from fear, the deep-rooted, conscious or unconscious fears. Fear is something that can be observed and resolved, because the root of fear - not the various branches and the leaves of that tree - is time. One is afraid of tomorrow. One is afraid of what has happened. The physical pain which one has had is gone but the fear that it might occur again remains. Psychologically one has done something wrong, dishonourable and there is fear. Psychologically, fear is time: "I am afraid of dying. I am living now but I dread what might happen; that is the measurement of

time. The root of fear is time and thought. To have an insight into that is the ending of fear totally.

The ending of fear means the understanding of time and the ending of sorrow. If the mind and the brain, are cleared of sorrow and fear then there may be something other. But we want to be assured of it, we want it guaranteed, like a good watch: that is the commercial mentality. There is no guarantee and that is the beauty of it. This one has to do for itself, not for a reward. And that is very difficult for most people. If one is given something in exchange it is an act of measurement. So, can the mind be free of all measurement - especially in your relationship to another, which is more difficult? When one is free of all measurement then something totally different takes place. When that which has taken place beyond measure is described, it is no longer measureless. You can describe the mountain, the shape of it, the line of it, the shadows; you can paint it, make a poem about it, but all that is not the mountain. We sit in the valley and say, "Please tell us about the mountain." We do not walk there. We want to be comfortable. There is something beyond all measure.

## Consciousness

Question: What is our consciousness? Are there different levels of consciousness? Is there a consciousness beyond the one of which we are normally aware? Is it possible to empty the content of consciousness?

One may use words and give descriptions, but what is named and described is not the fact; so do not be caught in the description.

What is our consciousness? It is to be conscious of, to be aware of, what is going on, not only outside but inside; it is the same movement. Our consciousness is the product of our education, our culture, racial inheritance and the result of our own striving. All our beliefs, our dogmas, rituals, concepts, jealousies, anxieties, pleasures, our so-called love - all that is our consciousness. It is the structure which has evolved through millennia after millennia - through wars, tears, sorrow, depression and elation: all that makes up our consciousness. Some people say you cannot change consciousness. You can modify it, you can polish it, but you have to accept it, make the best of it; it is there. Without the content, consciousness, as we know it, does not exist.

The questioner asks: Is it possible to empty consciousness of all content - the sorrow, the strife, the struggle, the terrible human relationships, the quarrels, anxieties, jealousies, the affection, the sensuality? Can that content be emptied? If it is emptied, is there a different kind of consciousness? Has consciousness different layers, different levels?

In India the Ancient people divided consciousness into lower, higher and yet higher. And these divisions are measured, for the moment there is division there must be measurement, and where there is measurement there must be effort. Whatever level consciousness may have, it is still within consciousness. The division of consciousness is measurement, therefore it is thought. Whatever

thought has put together is part of consciousness, however you choose to divide it.

It is possible to empty the content of consciousness completely, The essence of this content is thought, which has put together the `me' - the `me' who is ambitious, greedy, aggressive. That `me' is the essence of the content of consciousness. Can that `me' with all this structure of selfishness be totally ended? The speaker can say, "Yes, it can be ended, completely". It means that there is no centre from which you are acting, no centre from which you are thinking. The centre is the essence of measurement, which is the effort of becoming. Can that becoming end? You may say: "Probably it can, but what is at the end of it, if one ends this becoming?"

First of all find out for yourself if this becoming can end. Can you drop, end, something which you like, that gives you some deep pleasure, without a motive, without saying, "I can do it if there is something at the end of it"? Can you immediately end something that gives you great pleasure? You see how difficult this is. It is like a man who smokes, his body has been poisoned by nicotine and when he stops smoking the body craves for it and so he takes something else to satisfy the body. So can you end something, rationally, clearly, without any motive of reward or punishment?

Selfishness hides in many ways, in seeking truth, in social service, in selling oneself to a person, to an idea, to a concept. One must be astonishingly aware of all this, and that requires energy, all the energy that is now being wasted in conflict, in fear, in sorrow, in all the travails of life. That energy is also being wasted in so-called meditation. It requires enormous energy, not physical energy, but the energy that has never been wasted. Then consciousness can be emptied and when it is emptied one may or may not find there is something more, it is up to oneself. One may like something more to be guaranteed but there is no guarantee.



## **Mediocrity**

Question: Why is it that almost all human beings, apart from their talents and capacities, are mediocre? I know I am mediocre. I do not seem to be able to break through this mediocrity.

Are you aware that you are mediocre? Answer it for yourself. Mediocre means neither high nor low, just hovering in between. The great painters, the great musicians, the great architects, have extraordinary capacities and talents but in their daily life they are like you and me, like everybody else. If you are aware that you are mediocre, what does it mean? You may have great talent as a writer, a painter, sculptor, musician, teacher, but that is all outward dress, outward show hiding inward poverty. Being poor inwardly we are always striving to be something nobler. Trying to fill that insufficiency with the latest gossip of politics, with the latest rituals, the latest meditations, the latest this and that, is all an act of mediocrity. This sense of mediocrity shows itself in outward respectability. And there is the other revolt against mediocrity, the hippies, the long haired, the unshaved, the latest fallouts; it is the same movement. Or you join a community, because inwardly there is nothing in you; by joining you become important, and there is action. When you are aware of this mediocrity, this utter sense of insufficiency, this sense of deep frustrating loneliness, you see it is covered over by all kinds of activities. If you are aware of that, then what is this loneliness, this insufficiency? How do you measure this insufficiency? - for this measurement is limitless; you go on measuring, measuring, measuring; it is unending. Now, can that comparative observation end? If so, is there insufficiency?

This mediocrity, that all of us seem to have, can be broken through when there is no sense of comparison, of measurement. That gives you an immense freedom. Where there is complete psychological freedom there is no sense of

mediocrity. You are out of that class altogether - a totally different state of mind exists.

## **Attachment**

Question: Attachment brings about a kind of emotional exchange, a human warmth, which seems a fundamental need. Detachment produces coldness, lack of affection, a break in relationship; it can also deeply hurt others. Something seems to be wrong with this approach. What do you say?

The word `attach' means to cling, to hold, to have the feeling that you belong to somebody and that somebody belongs to you. Cultivating detachment breeds lack of affection, a coldness, a break in relationship; it is the cultivation of the opposite. Naturally it will. If detachment is the opposite of attachment, then that detachment is an idea, a concept, a conclusion that thought has brought about as a result of realizing that attachment produces a lot of trouble, a lot of conflict, jealousy and anxiety. So thought says, "It is much better to be detached." Detachment is a non-fact, whereas attachment is a fact. When there is attachment, to cultivate detachment is a movement towards illusion and in that illusion you become cold, hard, bitter, isolated without any sense of affection. That is what we are all doing: living in non-fact.

Can you face the fact that you are attached - not only to a person, to an idea, to a belief, but to your own experiences, which is much more dangerous? Your own experiences give you a sense of excitement, a sense of being alive.

If one is aware that one is attached one sees all the consequences of that attachment - anxiety, lack of freedom, jealousy, anger, hatred. In attachment there is also a sense of safety, a sense of stability, a sense of being guarded, protected. And so there is the possessor and the possessed and hence there must be jealousy, anxiety, fear and all the rest. Now, do you see the consequences of all that - not the description of it but the actuality of it? I am attached to you out of my loneliness and that attachment, arising from loneliness,

says, "I love you". I feel a communication because you are also in the same position. Two people cling to each other out of their loneliness, out of their depression, out of their unhappiness. So what happens? I am clinging not to you, but to the idea, to something which will help me to escape from myself.

You may be attached to an experience, to an incident, which has given you great excitement, a great sense of elation, a sense of power, a sense of safety and you are clinging to that. That experience, which you have had, what is it? That experience is registered in the mind and you hold it. That something you are holding on to is dead and you also are becoming dead. If you see all this, without any direction, without any motive, just observe it, then you will see that insight shows the whole thing as on a map. When once there is that insight the thing disappears completely, you are not attached.

## **- Brockwood Park, 1st meeting 1980 -**

40th Question Brockwood Park 1st Question & Answer Meeting 2nd  
September 1980

### **Schools And Foundations**

Question: You have spoken so much against organizations, so why do you have schools and foundations? And why do you speak?

A group of us saw the necessity of having a school. 'School' comes from the Greek word for leisure - leisure in which to learn, a place where students and teachers can flower, a place where a future generation can be prepared, because schools are meant for that, not just merely to turn out human beings as mechanical, technological instruments - though jobs and careers are necessary - but also flower as human beings, without fear, without confusion, with great integrity. And how to bring about such a 'good' human being? - I am using the word 'good' in its proper sense, not in the respectable sense, but in the sense of a whole human being, not fragmented, not broken up. Although it is very difficult to find teachers who are 'whole', we are trying in India (where there are five or six schools), in California, in Canada and here, to see that these schools are real centres of understanding, of comprehension of life. Such places are necessary; that is why we have these schools. We may not always succeed but perhaps after ten years one or two people may come out of them as total human beings.

The Foundations in America, Canada, India and here exist merely to publish books, to organize these gatherings, to help the schools - not as centres of 'enlightenment' and all that business. And nobody is making a profit out of them.

Now why do I speak? This has often been asked. "Why do you go on wasting your energy after fifty years when nobody seems to change? Why do you bother about it? Is it a form of self-fulfilment? Do you get energy talking about these

things, and so depend on the audience?" We have been through all that several times.

First of all, I do not depend on you as a group who come to listen to the speaker. The speaker is not attached to a particular group nor is it necessary for him to have a gathering. Then what is the motive? I think when one sees something true and beautiful, one wants to tell people about it, out of affection, out of compassion, out of love. And if there are those who are not interested, that is all right, but those who are interested can perhaps gather together. Can you ask the flower why it grows, why it has perfume? It is for the same reason the speaker talks.

41st Question Brockwood Park 1st Question & Answer Meeting 2nd  
September 1980

## **Responsibility**

Question: You say that fundamentally my mind works in exactly the same way as everyone else's. Why does this make me responsible for the whole world?

What the speaker said was, that wherever you go, throughout the world, human beings suffer, are in conflict, they feel anxiety and uncertainty. Both psychologically and physically there is very little security; there is fear, there is loneliness, despair and depression. This is the common lot of human beings whether they live in China, Japan, India, America, Russia or here - everybody goes through this. It is their life. And as a human being you are the whole world psychologically. You are not separate from the man who is suffering, anxious and lonely, in India or in America. You are the world and the world is you. This is a fact which very few people realize, not a philosophical concept, an idea, but a fact - as when you have a headache. And when one realizes that profoundly, then the question arises: what is my responsibility? We are asking each other this question, please. When you realize that, not verbally but in your blood, that you are no longer an individual - which is a great shock for most people, we think our minds, our problems, our anxieties are all ours, personally - when one sees the truth of this matter, then what is our responsibility? What is our responsibility globally - not only for our family, wife and children - but for the whole of mankind, because we are mankind? We have our illusions, our images of God, our images of heaven, our rituals, exactly like the rest of the world, only with different names, but the pattern is the same.

What is your reaction when you feel that you are humanity? How do you respond to the challenge? How do you meet any challenge? If you meet it from your old individual conditioning, your response will naturally be totally inadequate and fragmentary, it will be rather shoddy. So you have to find out what your

response is to this great challenge. Does your mind meet it greatly, or with your fears, your anxieties, the little concerns about yourself?

The responsibility depends upon the response to the challenge. Is it just a flutter, a romantic appeal, or something profound that will transform your whole way of looking at life? Then you are no longer British, American, French. Will you give up all that? Or merely play with the idea that it is a marvellous Utopian concept?

42nd Question Brockwood Park 1st Question & Answer Meeting 2nd  
September 1980

## **Urgency To Change**

Question: When I listen to you there is an urgency to change. When I return home it fades. What am I to do?

What are you to do? Is the urgency to change due to, or influenced by, the speaker? While you are here you are driven into a corner but when you leave that is so no longer. It means that you are being challenged, influenced, driven, persuaded, and when that is gone you are where you were.

Now, what is one to do? Please let us think out the right answer to this. What is one to do? I come to this gathering from a distant place. It is a lovely day. I have put up a tent and I am really interested. I have read, not only what the speaker has said, but a great deal besides. I know the Christian and Buddhist concepts, the Hindu mythology, and I have also done different forms of meditation, the T.M., the Tibetan, Hindu and Buddhist. But I am dissatisfied with all those, so I come here and I listen. Now am I prepared to listen completely? I cannot listen completely if I bring all my knowledge here with me. I cannot listen or learn, or comprehend, completely if I belong to some sect, if I am attached to one particular concept and if I also want to add to that what is said here. I must come, if I am serious, with a free mind, with a mind that says, "Let's find out, for God's sake", not, "I want to add what you are saying to what I already know".

So what is one's attitude going to be? The speaker has been saying constantly: freedom is absolutely necessary. Psychological freedom first, not the physical freedom which you have in the democratic, if not in the totalitarian, countries. Inward freedom can only come about when one understands one's conditioning, the conditioning which is both social and cultural, religious, economic and physical. Can one be free of that - of the psychological

conditioning? Me first, everybody else second! What is difficult in all this is that we cling to something so deeply that we are unwilling to let go. One has studied various things and one is attracted to a particular psychological school. One has gone into it, studied it and found out that there is a great deal in it and one sticks to it. And then one comes here and listens and adds what one has heard to that. So it all becomes a melange, a mixture of everything. Are we not doing that? Our minds become very confused. And for the time being when you are here that confusion is somewhat pushed away or diminished, but when you leave, it is back again. Can one be aware of this confusion, not only while you are here but when you are at home - that is much more important?

So what does it all indicate? We have the intelligence to solve technological problems: the problem-solving mind. We all have that, but it is not intelligence. The capacity to think clearly, objectively, and to be aware of the limitation of thinking, that is the beginning of intelligence. We worship thinking; the more cleverly we can think, the greater we see ourselves as being. Whereas if we could observe our own confusion, our own individual narrow way of looking at life, if we could be aware of all that, we would see how thought is perpetually creating problems. Thought creates the image and that image divides - to see that requires intelligence. To see psychological dangers is intelligence. But apparently we do not see those things. That means somebody has to goad you all the time, push you, drive you, ask you, persuade you, beg you to make you aware of yourself; and then to move from there, not just stay there. And I am afraid nobody is going to do that for you, not even the most enlightened human being, because then you become his slave.

Vitality, physical and psychological energy, is, as you are now, being dissipated in conflict, in worry, in chattering, in endless gossip not only with others but with oneself. This endless chattering! It all dissipates the psychological energy that is needed to observe ourselves in the mirror of relationship - we are all related to somebody or other - and so discover our illusions, images,

absurdities and idiocies. Then out of that observation comes freedom and the intelligence which will show the way of life.

43rd Question Brockwood Park 1st Question & Answer Meeting 2nd  
September 1980

## **Symbols**

Question: I derive strength from concentrating on a symbol. I belong to a group that encourages this. Is this an illusion?

Do not belong to anything! Sir, see the reason of this: we cannot stand alone, we want support, we want the strength of others, we want to be identified with a group, with an organization. The Krishnamurti Foundation is not such an organization, it merely exists to publish books and so on. But there is this idea that we must be part of something, for belonging to something gives one strength.

The questioner says that he derives strength from concentrating on a symbol. We all have symbols. The Christian world is filled with symbols and images, with concepts, beliefs, ideals, dogmas, rituals, and it is the same in India. Now when one belongs to a large group which adores the same symbol, one derives enormous strength from it; it creates a feeling that at last one is understanding something beyond the symbol.

First, we invent the symbol - see how our minds work - the image in the church or in the temple, or the letters in the mosque, and in worshipping that which we have created out of our thought, we derive strength. See what is happening. The symbol is not the actuality. The actuality may never exist, but the symbol satisfies and gives us vitality by looking at it, thinking about it, being with it. Surely that which has been created by thought must be illusion. If you create me as being your guru - I refuse to be a guru, it is too absurd, because I see how the followers destroy the guru and the guru destroys the followers - but if you create an image about me, about the speaker, then the whole business begins; to me it is an abomination.

Thought is the mischief maker in this. All the images it has created in the churches, in the temples, in the mosques, are not truth, are not actual. They have been invented by us and by the priests, out of our fear, out of our anxiety and uncertainty of the future. We have created a symbol and we are caught in it. So first realize that thought will always create the things which give satisfaction, psychologically, which give comfort. The reassuring image is a great comfort; it may be a total illusion - and it is - but it gives comfort and therefore we will never look beyond the illusion.

## Thought And Consciousness

Question: What is the relationship between thought and consciousness? why do we seem unable to go beyond thought?

What is thought and what is consciousness? Are the two different? When you say what is the relationship between thought and consciousness, it implies, does it not, that there are two different entities, or two different movements? First we have to consider together what thought is, for it is upon this whole question of thinking that all our conduct, our activities, are based. Thought is part of our emotions, sentiments, reactions and the recognition of those reactions. And what is consciousness? To be conscious of something, to be aware of, to be able to recognise, to understand, that is the whole field in which the mind is in operation, and that is more or less what we mean by consciousness.

The questioner asks: What is the relationship between the two? All our activities are based on thought, with its images, past remembrances or future projections and the enormous activity in every direction, technological, psychological, physical. And our relationship with each other is based on thought, the thought which has created your image about another and the other's image about you. That thought surely is based on knowledge, experience, memory. The reaction of that memory is thinking. And experience, knowledge, memory and the movement of thought is a material process. So thought is always limited because knowledge is always limited. There is no complete knowledge about anything - except the ending of knowledge, which is a different matter. So where there is the operation of knowledge and the movement of memory, thought is limited, finite, definite.

And what part does thought play in consciousness? All the knowledge which we have accumulated, all the experiences, not only the personal but the collective memories, genetic responses, the accumulated experience of generation after generation, all the travail, anxiety, fear and the pleasures, the dogmas, the beliefs, the attachments, the pain of sorrow - all that is our consciousness. You can add to or take away from it but it is still the movement of thought as consciousness. One can say there is a super consciousness but it would still be part of thought. Consciousness is in constant movement, breaking up the 'you' and the 'me'. Our consciousness is made up of its content; without that content what is our consciousness? Is there a consciousness totally differing from that which is made up of the various activities of thought which we call consciousness? To come to that point one has to find out if thought can end, not temporarily, not between two thoughts as a gap, or a period of silence or unconscious movement. Can thought ever end? This has been the problem of those serious people who have gone into it very deeply through meditation. Can thought, which is so enormously powerful, which has got such a volume of energy behind it, energy created through millennia - in the scientific field, the economic, religious, social and personal fields - can all that activity come to an end? Which means: can those things that thought has built into our consciousness, of which we are made up, which are the content of consciousness, end?

Why do we want to end it? What is the motive behind this desire to end thought? Is it that we have discovered for ourselves how thought creates such great travail, great anxiety for the future, from the past, in the present, and brings about such a sense of utter isolation and loneliness?

When you ask that question: "Can thought come to an end?" are you seeking a method to end it, a system which you practise day after day so as to end thought? If you practise day after day, that very practise intensifies thought - naturally. So what is one to do? One realizes the nature of thought, its superficiality, the intellectual games it plays. One knows how thought divides,

divides into nationalities, into religious beliefs and so on; and the perpetual conflict it produces from the moment we are born until we die. Is that the reason why you want to end thought? One has to be very clear about the motive for wanting to end thought - if that is possible - because the motive will dictate and direct. One can live in the illusion that thought has come to an end. Many people do, but that illusion is merely another projection of thought which desires to end itself.

Thought and the things that thought has built as consciousness with its content, can all that come to an end? If the speaker says it can, what value has that? None whatever. But can one realize the nature of consciousness and the movement of thought as a material process and observe it - can one do this? Can one observe the movement of thought, not as an observer looking at thought, but thought itself becoming aware of its own movement; the awakening of thought and thought itself observing its movement? Take a very simple example, greed: observe it as it arises in one and then ask oneself, "Is the observer, is the thinker, different from thought?" To observe thinking is fairly easy. I separate myself as an observer and watch my thinking, which most of us do. But this division is illusory, is fallacious, because the thinker is thought. So can the observer be absent in his observation? The observer, the thinker is the past - the remembrances, images, knowledge, experiences, all the things that he has accumulated in time is the observer. The observer names a reaction as greed and in naming it he is already caught in the past. By the very naming of the reaction we call greed, we have established it in the past. Whereas if there is no naming but pure observation - in which there is no division as the observer and the observed, the thinker and the thought, the experiencer and the experience - then what takes place? Our conditioning is to make this division between the observer and the observed and that is why we take such enormous trouble to control the thing that is observed. I am greedy, that is the reaction. But we say, "I am different from greed and therefore I can control it, I can operate on it, I can suppress it, I can enjoy it, I can

do something about it". The fact is, the thinker is the thought. There is no thinker without thought.

So observe without past memories and reactions projecting themselves immediately in observation; observe purely, without any direction, without any motive; then one will find, if one has gone into it deeply, that thought does come to an end. Thought is a movement and time is a movement, so time is thought. This is real meditation: for thought to see its own movement, how it arises, how it creates the image and pursues that image; it is to observe so that there is no recognition of what is being observed. To make it very simple: observe a tree without naming it, without wondering to what use it can be put, just observe it. Then the division between the tree and you comes to an end - but you do not become the tree, I hope not! The word with the neurological responses creates the division. That is, can one observe one's wife or another, without the word and so without the image and all the remembrances of that relationship? - which is, to observe purely? Then, in that observation, which is complete attention, has not thought come to an end? This requires a great deal of attention, step by step watching, like a good scientist who watches very, very carefully. When one does that, thought does come to an end and therefore time has a stop.

## **– Brockwood Park, 2nd meeting 1980 –**

45th Question Brockwood Park 2nd Question & Answer Meeting 4th  
September 1980

### **Compassion**

Question: Does compassion spring from observation, or thought? Is not compassion an emotional feeling?

I do not know how to answer this. What is compassion? Is it emotion, something romantic? Does it expend itself in some kind of social work? One has to find out what compassion is, what love is. Is love desire? Is love pleasure? And can there be love where there is ambition? Can there be love when one is trying to become something - not only in the outward world but also psychologically where there is this constant struggle to be or to become something? Can there be love when there is jealousy and violence; when there is division between you and me? Can there be love when you are nationalistic? In this nationalistic division and the division of beliefs, images, can there be love? Of course there can be no love when there is such division. But all of us are so heavily conditioned, and we accept that conditioning as normal.

What is the relationship of love to sorrow? Can suffering and love go together - not only personal suffering but the enormous suffering of mankind, the suffering that wars have brought about and are still bringing about, the suffering of people living in totalitarian states - can there be love when there is suffering? Or is it only with the ending of suffering that there is passionate compassion?

After stating all this, where are we? Is love just an ideal - something which we do not know and therefore want to have: that extraordinary sense of great compassion? But we will not pay the price for it. We would like to have this marvellous jewel but are unwilling to make a gesture, do something that will bring

it about. If you want peace you must live peacefully, not be divided into nations with wars and all the hideousness that is going on. So what price do we pay for this, not coins and paper, but inwardly? How deeply, profoundly, do I see that nationalism, that all division, must end in myself as a human being? Because one human being - whether you or I - is like the rest of the world, psychologically. We all suffer, we all go through agonies, we all go through great fears, uncertainties, confusion, we are all caught in absurd religious nonsense. We are that. Can we see the totality, not as an idea, not as something longed for, but as a fact, as a burning, actual, daily fact? Then out of that perception the responsibility of compassion comes. Compassion goes with great intelligence. That intelligence is not the operation of knowledge. Knowledge can solve many problems, intellectual and technical, but intelligence is something entirely different. Please do not accept what I am saying, just look at it. You may have read a great deal, be capable of great arguments and of solving problems, but the problem-solving mind is not the intelligent mind. Intelligence comes with compassion, with love. And when that intelligence is an action of compassion it is global, not a particular action.

46th Question Brockwood Park 2nd Question & Answer Meeting 4th  
September 1980

## **Corruption**

Question: Why do you say attachment is corruption? Are we not attached to those we love?

Does this need explanation? When you are attached to an idea, to a concept, to an ideal as the Communists are, or the Catholics, is there not the beginning of corruption? When I am tied to a belief, to a god, to an image or to a person, is there not the beginning of corruption? Please Sirs, it is not what I say - just look at it for yourselves. Is attachment love? If I were attached to you as an audience (God forbid!) I would be exploiting you, deriving great comfort from you, fulfilling myself. Is that not corruption? When I am attached to my wife, to my friend, to a piece of furniture or whatever it is, corruption begins: I have to guard it, I have to protect it, and so comes fear. Fear begins with attachment. I may derive pleasure in that attachment, comfort, encouragement, but there is always the shadow of fear in it, anxiety, jealousy and possessiveness; people like to be possessed and to possess. Is that not corruption because in that there is a sense of fear, anxiety, that I might lose it?

So can one live in this world without any sense of attachment to anything? - to one's beliefs, dogmas, gods, to all the various symbols, ideologies and images and to the furniture, house, experiences? Which does not mean that one becomes detached. When there is an attempt to be detached then detachment is part of attachment, because the opposite has its roots in its own opposite. Is that clear? So when one understands the nature of attachment, the consequences of it, sees the whole movement of it, not just one particular attachment to a person, to an idea, or to a piece of furniture, but comprehend and have insight into this whole movement of attachment - then attachment drops away immediately

without any conflict. Then perhaps one has love - because love, fear and jealousy cannot go together.

47th Question Brockwood Park 2nd Question & Answer Meeting 4th  
September 1980

## **A Minority**

Question: You say, "We are the world", but the majority of the world seem to be heading for mass destruction. Can a minority of integrated people outweigh the majority?

Are you, are we, that minority? Is there one among us who is totally free of all this? Or are we partially contributing to the hatred of each other, psychologically? You may not be able to stop one country attacking another, but psychologically, are you free of your common inheritance, which is your tribal glorified nationalism? Are we free from violence? Violence exists where there is a wall around ourselves. Do please understand all this. And we have built ourselves walls, fifteen feet high and ten feet thick. All of us have these walls around us. From that arises violence and this sense of immense loneliness. So the minority and the majority are you. If a group of us have psychologically transformed ourselves fundamentally we will never ask this question, because we are then something entirely different.

## **Faith And Prayer**

Question: Christian mystics describe certain forms of mental prayer in which they speak to God, or what they call God. They say that in such prayer something tremendous happens which they call union with God. They are convinced that this is not an illusion. Are they deceiving themselves? Then what is faith? It appears to give people the power to do extraordinary things.

When you are a nationalist it gives you extraordinary power to kill others. Look what they are doing! So can an illusion give you enormous vitality and strength to do extraordinary things? Apparently it does. Look what the Christian missionaries have done in the world because they believe in something. That belief may be totally unreal, an image that the mind has created, but they believe in it and are attached to it and they want to convert all the others in the world to the same belief. They put up with extraordinary discomforts, with disease and every kind of hardship. And those mystics who talk to God through prayer - I don't know what God is, nobody knows - they have an image that there is a supreme entity and that through prayer, through faith, through dedication, through devotion, you can move mountains. Look at what America, Russia, India and all the other countries are doing. They have tremendous faith in their country, in their nationalism, and they are building a vast technological world to destroy the others, who are doing exactly the same thing. To go to the moon, what enormous energy it needed, what technological capacity, faith; the Americans first on the moon with their flag!

In the Christian world faith has taken the place of doubt. Doubt is very cleansing, it purifies the mind. If you doubt your experiences, your opinions, you are free to observe clearly. In the Eastern world, in Buddhism and Hinduism, doubt is one of the major factors, it is demanded that you doubt, question, you must not accept: be a light unto yourself, a light that cannot be given to you by

anyone. (Of course, now, in India and Asia it has all gone to pieces, they are just like anybody else, they are becoming merchants.) Great strength does not come through prayer, it does not come through illusion, faith; it comes through clarity, through the mind that can see clearly; and that clarity does not come and go. When you see something clearly - for instance that nationalism is the most destructive thing in the world - then you are finished with it. And the ending of that burden gives you vitality, energy, strength. Similarly if you are totally free of all attachments it gives you the strength of love, and that can do much more than all the other experiences and prayers.

To escape through an illusion, through a symbol, through an ideal is an easy way out. But to see exactly what we are and go beyond demands a great deal of energy, perception and action; it is much more arduous. It means that we have to become astonishingly aware in all our activities and feelings. But we are unwilling to do all that. We think that through some easy prayer we can talk to God. God is, after all, put together by thought: the Christian God, the Hindu gods; the Buddhists have no gods but they have their own images.

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## Helping Others

Question: I have been a member of a Gurdjieff group. I find it has given me a background to better understanding of what you are saying. Should I continue with such a group in order possibly to help others, as I was helped? Or does a group make for fragmentation?

This is an extraordinary idea, this idea of helping others, as though you have comprehension, beauty, love and truth, the whole world of order, and that great immense sense of wholeness. If you have that you do not talk about helping others.

Why do we want to belong to something? - belong to some sect, some group, some religious body? Is it because it gives us strength? Is it that we cannot stand alone? The word 'alone' means all one. Is it that we need encouragement, need somebody to tell us this is the right way? The questioner says: As I belong to a certain group, it has helped me to understand you. Understand what? Me? Do please look at it. Understand what we are talking about? Do we need interpreters to understand what we are talking about? - to be kind, to love, to have no sense of nationality? Does it need anybody to tell us that? Why do we depend on others, whether the other be an image in a church, in a temple or mosque, or the preacher, the psychologists? Why do we depend on others? If we do depend on others psychologically we become secondhand people, which we are. The whole history of mankind is in us - the story of mankind is not in books except for outward things; the whole history is here. And we do not know how to read it. You understand what I am saying? You are the book. But when you read the book as a reader it has no meaning. But if you are the book and the book is showing you, telling you the story, then you will not depend on a single person, you will be a light unto yourself. But we are all waiting for a match, the fire of another, to kindle

the light. Perhaps that is why you are all here. And that is where the tragedy lies, because we cannot see clearly for ourselves. Before we help others we have to see clearly, for God's sake! It is like the blind leading the blind.

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## Freedom

Question: What is freedom?

Many philosophers have written about freedom. We talk of freedom - freedom to do what we like, to have any job we like, freedom to choose a woman or a man, freedom to read any book, or freedom not to read at all. We are free, and what do we do with that freedom? We use that freedom to express ourselves, to do whatever we like. More and more life is becoming permissive - you can have sex in the open park or garden.

We have every kind of freedom and what have we done with it. We think that where there is choice we have freedom. I can go to Italy or France: a choice. But does choice give freedom? Why do we have to choose? If you are very clear, perceive purely, there is no choice. Out of that comes right action. It is only when there is doubt and uncertainty that we begin to choose. So choice, if you will forgive my saying so, prevents freedom.

The totalitarian states have no freedom at all, because they have the idea that freedom brings about the degeneration of man. Therefore they control, suppress - you know what is happening.

So what is freedom? Is it based on choice? Is it to do exactly what we like? Some psychologists say, if you feel something, do not suppress, restrain or control it, but express it immediately. And we are doing that very well, too well. And this is also called freedom. Is throwing bombs freedom? - just look what we have reduced our freedom to!

Does freedom lie out there, or here? Where do you begin to search for freedom? In the outward world, where you express whatever you like, the so-

called individual freedom, or does freedom begin inwardly, which then expresses itself intelligently outwardly? You understand my question? freedom exists only when there is no confusion inside me, when I am psychologically and religiously not to be caught in any trap - you understand? There are innumerable traps: gurus, saviours, preachers, excellent books, psychologists and psychiatrists; they are all traps. And if I am confused and there is disorder, must I not first be free of that disorder before I talk of freedom? If I have no relationship with my wife, my husband or another - because our relationships are based on images - there is conflict which is inevitable where there is division. So should I not begin here, inside me, in my mind, in my heart, to be totally free of all fears, anxieties, despairs and the hurts and wounds that one has received through some psychic disorder? Watch all that for oneself and be free of it!

But apparently we have not the energy. We go to another to give us energy. By talking to a psychiatrist we feel relieved - confession and all the rest of it. Always depending on somebody else. And that dependence inevitably brings conflict and disorder. So one has to begin to understand the depth and the greatness of freedom; one must begin with that which is nearest, oneself. The greatness of freedom, real freedom, the dignity, the beauty of it, is in oneself when there is complete order. And that order comes only when we are a light to ourselves.