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*Reports of Talks and Answers to Questions by*

# Krishnamurti

NEW YORK CITY—1935

*All the talks in this book of Reports  
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have been revised by Krishnamurti.*

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## *First Talk in the Town Hall\**

March 11, 1935

Friends,

Most of us are trying to solve our many difficulties and problems within the artificial distinction which we have created between the group and the individual. Now, to me, such a distinction as the individual, opposed to the group, perverts and destroys clarity of thought, and such perversion will lead, naturally, to many repressions and exaggerations between the individual and the group.

As we search for ways and means out of this chaos, clever and complicated methods and solutions are offered, and each individual chooses the solution according to his particular idiosyncrasy, depending on his social upbringing and religious fancies.

I do not want to add, to those already existing, any new theories or explanations. To me, the real solution of our problems is through intelligence, which must be direct, simple; when there is such intelligence we can then understand life as a whole.

Now, this intelligence is not to be awakened by following any group or any system or by obeying one's own particular idiosyncrasies and fancies. To awaken true intelligence we must first inquire into the many stupidities which cripple the mind and heart, and not seek a definition of intelligence; because, when we find out what the stupidities are and free the mind from them through constant awareness, we shall then be able to know for ourselves what true intelligence is.

In finding out for ourselves the limitations environment has placed about us and in discerning its true significance and thus sloughing off the stupidities, we shall begin to realize what is true intelligence. The expression of that intelligence in action is immortality; it is the blessedness of living in the present.

You have many ideas concerning completeness of life and immortality. But, to me, this immortality, this richness, this completeness of life can only be understood and lived when the mind is wholly free from the limitations, the stupidities, that

\*This Report contains the substance of the talk given by Krishnamurti in Hollywood on March 3, and in Chicago on March 7, 1935.

environment, past and present, inherited or acquired, is continually placing about us.

So please do not, if I may suggest, look to me for new explanations during this talk, or for a set of formulas, or definitions. Such explanations and formulas offer only means of escape from conflict. Most minds desire to copy, imitate, follow, because they cannot think for themselves, or else the conflict is so intense that they would rather escape through systems, through definitions, through explanations. It is only by continually being aware of the environment and the imposition of its ever increasing stupidities, it is only by constantly questioning these, that we stop the escapes, and come face to face with conflict, which gives us the capacity to understand environment intelligently.

What I want to explain during this talk is how we create stupidities; without understanding this continual, unconscious creation, the mere inquiry into what is intelligence gives us but another escape. So, our whole inquiry should be directed towards what is stupidity and its cause, rather than towards what is intelligence.

As I said, until we try to free the mind from those stupidities which environment, past and present, has created about us, and by which it is crippling our action, until we perceive them and understand their true significance, until then our inquiry into intelligence is but futile.

The purpose of my talk is to help you to find out what are the stupidities and how you can be free of them.

Now, each expert, each authority, each sect, each party, offers a way out of this increasing conflict which we know exists. Each puts forward an idea, a theory, a method for the solution of this terrifying tangle. We can divide, I think, these theorists, or the people who give explanations, into two kinds: those who are turned outward, and those turned inward.

The man who is turned outward says that all human problems can be solved by controlling environment. That is, he says human thought can be changed, altered, controlled, through organization, whether of work or of the means of production and distribution, and so forth. He regards man as clay, to be conditioned by environment, and so by the controlling of that environment and in the perfecting of the group, the individual will have an opportunity to express himself. That is, he will no longer be antisocial because, being mere clay to be conditioned,

his environment can be controlled and so his ambitions, his outlook, his desires will never be opposed to the group and be antisocial. Man then will be conditioned according to a new set of ideas and theories so that he can never come, as an individual, into conflict with the group or with society.

If you think that man is nothing else than matter to be conditioned, to be shaped, to be controlled, then there is nothing more to be said. Then life is very simple. Let us all, then, work for the mere perfection of environment, following a certain set of theories and ideas, and be conditioned by them.

Now, I am not against or for this point of view. I want to go into it more fully. If man is merely a social entity and if altering circumstances and environment and creating in him the habit of seeking the well-being of the group alone so that he shall not be antisocial—if that is all, then, it seems to me, life becomes very shallow, a series of unfulfilled, superficial actions.

Also, you have the man turned inward, who says that life is nothing but spirit. Leave it, he says, to the highest in man and let him follow that highest, as shown by the teachers, by the various philosophical systems; let him become more religious, let him follow the great leaders, let him have discipline, enter spiritual organizations and obey spiritual authority, and be guided through fear, so that he will eventually conquer circumstances, environment.

Thus you have the exaggerations of the man who is turned outward and the exaggerations of the man who is turned inward: the person who says that man is nothing more than clay and therefore to be ever conditioned; and the other, the man turned inward, the so-called spiritual man who insists first on the change of heart.

So you have these two types. Emphasis or exaggeration of the one or the other destroys its own end. The man who says environment first and the man who says spirit first, each through his exaggerations and his false emphasis, will destroy his own ends. Whereas to me the solution, or rather the manner of thought, the true awakening of intelligence which alone can resolve the innumerable conflicts and problems, social and individual, lies in the perfect equilibrium between the two, beyond and above the two, and that equilibrium is the simple and the direct way.

To study the various systems, philosophic as well as economic,

to study them all thoroughly so as to be able to compare, requires great effort, and few have the time, the capacity, or the inclination, to penetrate through their complicated reasoning and theories. And what happens when you haven't time to inquire into the explanations of innumerable competing experts? You choose one whom you like, who you think is reasonable; and as you haven't the time to go into his system thoroughly, you merely accept his authority. Greater the expert, greater the authority, greater the following.

So, gradually the followers became blind and merely accept dogmas, and the leaders destroy the followers and the followers in turn destroy the leaders. Gradually we create another set of stupidities based on a new set of dogmas which were originally theories and we become slaves to them.

Now, to me, theories are of very little value; because a man who is constantly in conflict with environment, both the past and the present, is continually discerning, penetrating, trying to understand, and therefore he is living completely in the present. To such a man there is no need for theories or explanations. But that requires great persistency of thought, great awareness, great penetration into the true significance of ever changing environment. As the majority of people cannot do that, they accept theories which become their masters, facts, realities.

Naturally, this also applies to religious experts whom we regard as our spiritual guides. Now take religion, that is, religion as an organized belief, and you will see that the authority of the expert is supreme. The pattern is set out and you are forced through the pressure of public opinion, through fear, and so forth, to follow. This worship of authority, this worship of the expert without knowing his limitations is, to me, the very root of exploitation.

So, the whole process of living, which should be a continual fulfillment and therefore a continual penetration into reality, into what is true, is completely destroyed through this worship of authority, of specialists, of creeds, of theories. The whole process is to make the individual subservient, to make him obey and follow. Thus he gradually becomes unconscious of everything but the pattern, and he exists as much as he can within the edicts of that pattern, and he calls that living. Environment becomes only the mould to shape him. So, then, the individual, as he is now, is nothing else than the exaggerated expression of environ-



ment, environment being the past and the present, the inherited and the acquired.

To me, this is not true individuality. Through the understanding of the significance of environment, past and present, and therefore being free from it, intelligence is awakened, and the expression of that intelligence is true individuality.

Now, you are conditioned by environment. You are the result of your past and present environment, and what you express, calling it individuality or self-expression, is nothing but the expression of that conditioning environment. To me, the true expression of individuality is that intelligence which is awakened through freeing the mind from the conditioning environment of the past and the present.

The next thing we have to find out is whether any system can help to awaken this intelligence. Or does it merely impose another set of stupidities, further limitations? Because, if we can find a perfect system, then we can give ourselves over to it and become intelligent.

To me, systems are but the crystallization of thought, and the group is but the expression of that thought. Can they, these crystallized thoughts, by your following them, awaken intelligence? Or have you to begin, not considering yourself as an individual, or as a group, to discern for yourself the stupidities created through the false division of the group and of the individual; that is, not considering yourself as an individual, or as a group, to think anew, to think from the very beginning so as to be able to grasp the true significance of each environment, each limitation? Because, if we cannot be so active emotionally and mentally, apart from a system, the mere following of a system and being active in it does not awaken intelligence.

Now, such intelligence, when it is awakened, can truly cooperate, not with stupidities but with other intelligences.

Take, for instance, what is happening with regard to war. To understand the whole question of war we must think from the very beginning, not from the nationalistic, racial, class point of view. Inherently, war is wrong. There is no excuse for war so long as there is intelligence functioning. But, as we are mostly ruled by politicians, exploiters, and by such kind, we are forced into one war after another, and many reasons are given for the unavoidability and the necessity of wars.

As long as you do not think clearly, fundamentally, from the

very beginning, with regard to this question, one day you will be for peace and the next day you will be for war, because you have not discovered for yourself fundamentally the appalling cruelties, the racial hatreds, the exploitations which create war. Only when there is an awakened intelligence, not only on your part but on the part of politicians, the rulers, will there be peace.

To discover what is true one requires great intelligence. Intelligence, to me, is not book knowledge. You may be very learned and yet be stupid. You may read many philosophies and yet not know the bliss of creative thinking, which can exist only when the mind and heart begin to free themselves through conflict, through constant awareness, from the stupidities of the past and from those that are being built up. Then only is there the ecstasy of that which is true.

Can anyone else tell you what is true? Can anyone tell you what is God? No one can: you have to discover it for yourself. So, to find out what is true, what is the significance of life, what is immortality, without which life becomes a chaotic triviality, a senseless, blind suffering, you must have intelligence; and to awaken that intelligence you must strip the mind and heart of stupidities.

The first cause of stupidity is that consciousness which clings to the particular and therefore creates the distinction between the group and itself, that consciousness whose very essence is the thought of acquisitiveness, of "mine". This limited consciousness is the very root and cause of stupidity, suffering.

One of its manifestations is the constant craving for security, security in the realm of one's entire being, physically, emotionally, and mentally. In search of that security there is bound to be conflict between what we call the individual and the group, the exaggerations of the individual as against the group, leading to constant friction, struggle, and suffering.

You can see that this search for physical security expresses itself in possessions, with all its cruelties, exploitations, and the rather terrifying stupidities such as nationalism, class wars, racial hatred.

Also, emotionally, love has become but possessiveness. It has lost its creative ecstasy. It is a series of possessive conflicts. Its tenderness, its great depths, its eternal quality, its profound ecstasy are destroyed through this desire to hold.

Then there is the mental craving for certainty. That is why

there is the worship of authority, the worship of teachers. That is why the incessant demand for the ultimate, so that your mind can cling to it. That is why your constant inquiry into truth, into God; and the man who assures you of the certainty of God, of truth, of immortality, you worship, as it gives you comfort, security.

Gradually this demand for security destroys intelligence. Mind, through experience, accumulates carefully guarded and self-defensive securities, memories, which prevent constant adjustment to the eternal movement of life.

Experience is most of the time creating securities, self-defensive memories, and with this barrier you meet life, which must inevitably bring conflict and suffering. This does not mean that you must forget the past. What I want to explain is that, as physically we seek security, so mentally we seek to move from uncertainty to certainty, which in turn becomes uncertain, in which there is never a moment of complete, inescapable aloneness.

I assure you, when there is complete nakedness, utter hopelessness, then in that moment of vital insecurity there is born the flame of supreme intelligence, the bliss of truth.

In the search for security there arises fear, which begets many illusions, false disciplines, repressions, perversions, the fear of death and the inquiry into the hereafter.

Why are so many interested in the hereafter? Because life here is so superficial, so conditioned by environment, so conflicting, chaotic, unreasonable, without joy, without ecstasy; hence they look to the future, and from this arises the inquiry into the hereafter.

Immortality is a continual becoming, not of that consciousness which we call the "I", but of that intelligence which is freed from the particular as well as from the group, from that consciousness which creates distinctions. That is, when the mind is stripped of all illusion or ignorance it is able to discern the infinite present. It is a thing which you cannot explain, you cannot reason about. It is beyond all argument. It has to be experienced. It has to be lived. It demands great persistency and constant purposefulness.

Now this seems to me to be the state of the world. The chaos caused by the conflict of many theories leads to stupid practices and divisions; and, as time passes, we are merely accumulating knowledge of theories, increasing bitter divisions, creating mass

movements for conflicting experiments, and in this conflict in which we are immersed, intelligence, which is the true expression and mode of life, is wholly forgotten.

This is the state of the world about us. What should be our action? What should be our attitude, our thought? Are you going to wait for the perfection of environment through revolution, through economic changes, through political upheaval? This waiting is but an escape, this looking to the future is but another escape through hope, it is but a postponement. Or, will you, not considering yourselves as individuals or as groups, begin to think anew, from the very beginning, thus shaking off the many stupidities that have become virtues, the many things you have taken for granted, accepted, so that in the true simplicity and directness of thought, which is supreme intelligence, there may come the fruition of action? Which are you going to do: wait for the future, hoping that environment will be perfected through some miracle, through someone else's action; or become so intensely aware, through your own conflict with environment in which there is no possibility of escape, that there is completeness of action?

For most people this is the problem: merely to wait, marking time; or to be able to discern the true significance of life with its conflicts and sorrows, and not create a new set of stupidities, a new set of illusions, and therefore to live directly and simply. The one leads to utter disorder, superficiality, boredom, to such superficial lives as most people lead, whether in the intensity of work or in the lack of work. The other, to the ecstasy of immortality.

Everywhere there is a despair, waiting for some action, waiting for governments to change conditions. And, in the meantime, your own lives are becoming more and more superficial, shallow, with all the inanities of modern society and the inanities of the so-called spiritual people.

As I said in the very beginning of my talk, intelligence is the only solution that will bring about harmony in this world of conflict, harmony between mind and heart in action. No system, the mere alteration of environment, is ever going to free man from ignorance and illusion, which are the cause of suffering. You yourself, through your own awareness, in your own completeness, can discern the true significance of these many limiting barriers. This alone will bring about lasting intelligence, which shall reveal immortality.

## *Second Talk in the Town Hall*

March 13, 1935

Friends,

Before answering some of the questions that have been sent to me, I should like to say that what I have been saying and what I am going to say is not a new intellectual toy, not a new set of theories over which we can wrangle for mere mental stimulation; nor is it meant to give a new sensation to an already jaded emotion. The true significance and depth of its meaning is to be discovered only when you experiment with it; otherwise it will have no value in a world where there is constant conflict.

To make an experiment, one has to begin with oneself. After all, you cannot begin experimenting with somebody else. You won't know either the result or the significance of that experiment if you do not test it out for yourself.

So instead of considering your neighbour, you should begin to find out how to experiment truly with yourself. To help the world one must begin with oneself. If one can truly experiment with oneself so that there is a continual adjustment, not the adjustment to a stereotyped self-discipline, not the blind following of a pattern, not the ceaseless practice of an idea, then such an experiment in living will bring about a significant change in action, in conduct, in one's whole being.

I would suggest that instead of considering superficially the ideas that I put forward, you experiment with them to see whether they have any practical value in your daily life.

Most of us are nurtured in certain prejudices, traditions, and fears, forced by environment to follow and to obey, and through that background we think and act. This background has become an unconscious part of us, and from this unconscious centre we start thinking, feeling and acting. All our actions, springing from that limitation of the mind and heart, naturally become more and more limited, more and more narrow, more and more conditioned. Thus the unconscious being, those habitual thoughts and feelings which we haven't questioned or understood, is continually perverting, interfering with and darkening the conscious actions. If we do not understand and so become free from that background with which we have grown up, naturally those preju-

dices, those fears will be continually interfering with and conditioning the conscious. Consciousness is action, is discernment. So our action is continually being limited, being conditioned through fear, through tradition. Instead of liberating us, freeing us, action but increases our conflict, our problems, and so living becomes but a series of conflicts, a series of struggles.

To escape from these struggles, we have created certain illusions, as releases, which have become realities to us. That is, we have innumerable problems and conflicts, and in order to escape from them we have established certain regular, acknowledged releases. These releases are organized religion, acquisitiveness, establishing and following a tradition, and the many escapes through sensation.

If you are aware of your actions, you will notice that this is what is happening to most of you, that you are functioning through an established background of tradition, or of fear, and therefore increasing your conflict, your struggles. Instead of freeing yourselves, through action, you establish various releases or escapes, and these become so real, so demanding, that the mind finds it immensely difficult to free itself from them.

To free yourselves from the cause of increasingly limited action, that is, from the unconscious, is not to dig into the past, but to become aware in action in the present. Instead of looking to see if you are slaves to tradition, to fear, to prejudice, become fully aware in your action, and in that flame of awareness the cause of limitation, such as fear, will reveal itself. That is, if you are fully awakened, fully aware in an action which demands your complete being, then you will perceive that all these hidden, unconscious perversions spring forth and prevent your acting fully, completely. Then is the time to deal with them, and if the flame of awareness is intense, that flame consumes these limiting causes.

Instead of following a pattern, a well-laid line of action, which, again, is bound to cripple thought and emotion, if one can be fully aware in the moment of action, and this can only be when thought and feeling are intense, then the hidden and unexplored depths of one's consciousness reveal themselves; whereas if you merely examine the unconscious through self-analysis, you will find that your actions become more and more restricted, more and more superficial, therefore losing their significance, their depth, and so life becomes shallow and empty. If you begin to

be aware, to deal with a question integrally, as a whole, completely, then you will see how into your mind will creep all the various conditioning, defensive thoughts, inherited or acquired. Then you will discover—if you really experiment with it—that the mind and heart are not in conflict, do not contradict each other, but are the very fountain, the source of that which you are seeking, that creative ecstasy, truth.

Instead of seeking peace, happiness, or trying to find out what truth or immortality is, or if there is a God, if, in the flame of awareness, the mind and heart can free themselves from fear, prejudice, perversions, conditioning causes, then that consciousness is the real ecstasy of life, of truth.

*Question:* What should one do to get rid of loneliness and fear?

**Krishnamurti:** First let us discover what we now do, and then we can inquire what we should do. If we are lonely, what do we do? We try to escape from loneliness through companionship, through work, amusement, worship, prayer, all the well known and cunningly well established escapes. Why do we do that? We think that we can cover up loneliness by these escapes, through these releases. Can we ever cover up a thing that is inherently diseased? We may momentarily cover up loneliness, but it continues all the time.

So, where there is escape, there must be the continuance of loneliness. For loneliness there is no substitution. If we can understand this with all our being, completely, if we can understand that there is no possibility of escape from loneliness, from fear, then what happens? Most of you will not be able to answer, because you have never completely faced the problem. You don't know what would happen if all the avenues of escape had been completely blocked up and there were not the least possibility of escape.

I suggest that you experiment with it. When you are lonely, be fully aware and you will see that your mind wants to run away, wants to escape. When the mind is aware that it is escaping and at the same time perceives the absurdity of escape, in that understanding loneliness truly disappears.

Please, when you are confronted with a problem and there is no possibility of a way out, then the problem ceases, which does not mean an acceptance of it. Now, you are seeking a remedy for loneliness, a substitution, and therefore the problem is not the significance of loneliness but, what is the remedy for loneliness, what is the best way to escape from it or to cover it up. But when the mind is no longer seeking an escape, then loneliness or fear has a very different significance.

Now, you cannot accept my word for it: all you can say is that you do not know. You do not know whether loneliness and fear will disappear, but by experimenting you will understand the whole significance of loneliness. If we merely seek a remedy for loneliness or fear, we become very superficial, don't we? To the man who has everything he wants, or the man who wants everything, life becomes very shallow. In merely seeking remedies, life becomes meaningless, empty; whereas, if you are really confronted with a burning problem and there is no possible way of escape, then you will see that that problem does a miraculous thing to you. It is no longer merely a problem; it is intensely vital, it is to be examined, to be lived with, to be understood.

*Question: Do you think one should compromise in everyday life?*

**Krishnamurti:** Do you think there is a possibility of a compromise between war and peace? That is, if you really think that war, killing for any patriotic reason or for any other reason, is fundamentally wrong, do you think you could compromise with regard to creating or taking part in a war? In the same way, between acquisitiveness and non-acquisitiveness, do you think there can be any compromise?

There is compromise if at one moment you are acquisitive and the next moment you are non-acquisitive. If one is not acquisitive, if one is not really pursuing acquisitiveness, if one is not driven by it, then there is no compromise. But, when you are possessive and are being driven by circumstances, by ideas and ideals, to be non-acquisitive, then you begin to compromise, then you begin to search out the best and least harmful way to compromise.

If you are truly free from acquisitiveness, though you may live



in this world of possessions, there is no compromise. You have to find out whether you are acquisitive. This is very simple. To do this, do not begin to analyze your actions, which only leads to the limitation of action, but be fully aware in the moment of action itself.

Time will not give you freedom from acquisitiveness. That is, you cannot learn non-acquisitiveness through postponement into a future; you can become free from acquisitiveness only in the present, and not eventually. You can only discern its significance now, instantly. But, as we do not want to discern this immediately, we say, deceiving ourselves, that we shall learn non-acquisitiveness later on, through the years to come. In the present only can we understand the stupidity of acquisitiveness, and not in the future. The freedom from acquisitiveness is not the result of slow evolutionary growth of the mind and heart.

A friend of mine became a priest some ten years ago. He said to me the other day that it had taken him ten years to see the foolishness of his act. I wondered whether it had; or was it that he was so carried away by his desires, by his emotions, by his fears, by traditions, that he was not able to think clearly then, and he began to think clearly only when he was disillusioned? What happened was that he was emotionally carried away and influenced by fear, by authority, by tradition. Had he been fully aware at the moment of his decision, he would not have taken ten years to discover the foolishness of that act.

The question is: Should there be compromise? Naturally there is compromise when you are acquisitive and at the same time do not want to be acquisitive. In that conflict of the opposites there must be compromise. There is no solution to that, and when life becomes a continual conflict between the opposites, then it is a meaningless and a stupid struggle. But if you truly discern the whole significance of acquisitiveness, then in that freedom there is richness, the enduring beauty of life.

*Question:* You say that memory is a barrier. Why?

**Krishnamurti:** Anything that we perceive directly, understand completely, leaves no scar on the mind. If you live in an experience wholly, although you may recall the incident, it will not produce those reactions which you use for your self-defense. If I have an

experience whose significance I do not completely understand, then mind but becomes a centre of conflict and this conflict continues till I understand that experience wholly. As long as the mind is burdened with these conflicts, it is but a storehouse of defensive reactions, called memories, and with such protective memories we approach life, thus creating a barrier between life and ourselves, from which ensues all conflict, fear and suffering. This is what we are doing most of the time. Instead of being in that state of creative emptiness, mind becomes merely a storehouse of defensive memories. This bundle of defensive reactions we call the "I", that limited consciousness.

With that limited consciousness, which is but a series of self-protective, invulnerable layers of memories, you approach life and all its experiences. Experiences, instead of dissipating these many layers and so releasing the creative force of life, merely create and add further defensive memories, and so life becomes a continued conflict, confusion and suffering. Instead of being completely vulnerable to life, being completely empty—not in the negative sense of the word—being wholly without self-defense, mind has become a machine of warning, of guiding, to protect and defend itself. To me, such self-protective, defensive memories are fundamental barriers, for they prevent the complete fruition of life, which alone is truth.

Consider for yourself how your mind is not vulnerable. Complete vulnerability is wisdom. When you have an experience, observe what happens. All your prejudices, your memories, your defensive responses come forward and tell you how to act, how to conduct yourself. So already you have made up your mind how to deal with the new, the fresh.

After all, to understand truth, God, the unknown, or whatever name you care to give to it, mind and heart must come unprepared, insecure. In the vitality of insecurity, there is the eternal.

In protecting yourselves, you have built up cunning securities, certainties, subtle memories, and it requires great intelligence to free yourselves from them. You cannot brush them aside or try to forget them. You can discover these barriers only in the full awareness of action itself.

Your listening to me must also be an experience. If you are at all interested and alive to what I am saying, you will see that you are meeting it with all kinds of objections. You do not approach openly, with a desire to find out, to experiment. It is only when

the mind and heart are pliable, alert, and are not slaves to theories, certainties, assurances, that you begin to discover the barriers of memories as self-protective, defensive reaction. These scars which we call memories continually come between the movement of life, which is eternal, and ourselves, causing conflict, suffering.

*Question: How can I awaken intelligence?*

Krishnamurti: Why do you want to awaken intelligence? Can you really awaken intelligence, or does the mind strip itself of the many stupidities and thus find itself to be intelligence? Please see the significance of the question. The questioner wants to know what he should do to awaken intelligence. He wants to know the method, the manner, the technique. When the mind desires to know how, it is really seeking a definite system, and then it becomes a slave to that system. Whereas, if you begin to discover for yourself what are stupidities, then the mind becomes exquisitely, delicately alert. It is in discovering and understanding what are the stupidities and in eschewing them that there is the awakening of true intelligence.

When you ask, how is one to awaken intelligence, you are really demanding rules and regulations, so that you can force your mind along a particular groove. This you would call a positive way of dealing with life, to tell you exactly what to do. It is really a negation of thought, making you a slave to a certain system. Whereas, if you truly were beginning to be aware of your environment, past and present, of your own thought, your own actions, then in discovering what is stupid, you would awaken true intelligence. Definitions of intelligence tend to enslave the mind and heart.

We can find out for ourselves what are stupidities. One need not give a whole list of them. We must discover for ourselves the true cause of stupidity. If we can do that, then we need not take an inventory of stupidities.

What is the cause of stupidity? All thought, emotion and action springing from the limited consciousness, the "I", gives rise to stupidity. So long as mind is merely a self-defensive, acquisitive entity, any action springing from that must lead to confusion and suffering.

*Question:* What exactly do you mean by environment?

**Krishnamurti:** There is an outer environment, as the country, the place, the class and so on; then there is the inward environment of tradition, of ideas inherited and acquired. So we can divide environment as external and inward, but there is not really such a definite division, as the two are closely interwoven.

Take for example a person born in India. He is brought up in a certain religious system, with many beliefs, with caste prejudices, with social and economic advantages and disabilities, and so on. With this inherited background, he develops further conditioning of mind and heart. He not only has inherited from his parents, from his religion, from his country and from his race, a certain conditioning, but also he is adding to that his own reactions, his own memories, prejudices, based on his inherited background.

There is with him all the time the background of prejudices, inherited and acquired, thoughts, inherited and acquired, fears, desires, cravings, hopes, memories. All that constitutes environment. With that background, with that conditioned mind, he approaches life, he tries to understand this constant movement of life. That is, from a fixed point he attempts to meet life, that is eternally beckoning. Naturally then there must be conflict between that fixed point and that thing which is ever living, moving. Where there is conflict, there is the desire for release, escape; and religion becomes but one of the defensive reactions against intelligence. Religions, class consciousness, acquisitiveness, all these but become the avenues of escape, the shelters from the conflict which ensues between that fixed point of prejudice, memories, fears, the limited consciousness, the "I", and the movement of life.

There can be true understanding, real joy of living, only when there is complete unity, or when there is no longer the fixed point, that is, when mind and heart can follow freely and swiftly the wanderings of life, of truth. In that there is ecstasy. That is immortality.

As long as one has not discerned the true significance of environment, mind and heart are held to that fixed point of limited consciousness. From this there arises conflict and sorrow, the constant battle between that fixed point and the eternal movement of life. From this there is born a defensive reaction against life, against intelligence.

Life becomes a series of conflicts and releases; you have so com-

pletely surrounded yourself with these illusions, with these escapes, that to you they have become realities from which you hope to have happiness and peace, but they can never give this. Through continual awareness, through penetration, through constant alertness of mind, questioning, doubting, the walls of that fixed point of consciousness, that centre with its illusions, must be worn down. Then only is there immortality.

To understand immortality, life, requires great intelligence, not some stupid mysticism. It requires ceaseless discernment, which can exist only when there is constant penetration, wearing away the walls of tradition, acquisitiveness, self-protective reactions. You may escape into some illusion which you call peace, immortality, God, but it will have no reality, for there will still be doubt, suffering. But what will free the mind and heart from sorrow, from illusions, is the full awareness of that eternal movement of life. This is to be discerned only when the mind is free from that centre, from that fixed centre of limited consciousness.

## *Third Talk in the Town Hall*

March 15, 1935

Friends,

I want to give a brief talk before answering the questions, to explain something which perhaps may be difficult to understand. I will try to make it as simple and clear as possible.

I think most of us are trying to find out what is true happiness, for without being intelligently happy, life becomes very superficial, futile, and rather dreary. And so, in search of what we call happiness, we go from one experience to another, from one belief to another, from one theory to another, until we find such beliefs, such ideas, as give us satisfaction. Now these satisfactions are but escapes. The very search for happiness must result in a series of escapes; it may be, as I said, through authority, through sensation, through the mere multiplication of experiences, and the increase of power. These escapes become standards or values by which we cover up conflict.

After all, when you are conscious of conflict, there is disturbance which creates unhappiness; and to escape from that unhappiness you seek various experiences and develop certain values, standards, measures, which become your escape. So gradually you become unconscious of all except those standards, those patterns, and your life is nothing else than a living imitation of these values which you have established in your search for happiness.

If you examine, you will see that your mind and heart are held in a series of standards or values. Being so bound, mind is always giving further values, establishing further standards, and is ever sitting in judgment. Until the mind frees itself from this continual process of attributing values, it is never fresh, new; never creatively empty, if I may use that word without being misunderstood. For in creative emptiness alone is there the birth of truth.

Conflict, suffering, is the process of breaking up this habit of attributing values. You have a set of values established through experience, through tradition, and these values have become your guides; with these past standards and values you approach a fresh experience, which must naturally create a conflict. This suffering

is nothing else than the breaking up of old values to which the mind clings.

Now it is the very essence of stupidity to escape from conflict through a series of established values, or through forming a new set of values. The very essence of intelligence is to understand life or experience with an unburdened mind and heart, anew, afresh.

Instead of meeting life without any preconceived demands, you come to it with a mind and heart already prejudiced, almost incapable of swift adjustment, quick pliability. The lack of this instantaneous discernment of the movement of life creates sorrow. Conflict is the indication of bondage, which cannot be conquered, but whose significance must be understood. All conquering of obstacles through a new set of values is but another form of escape.

You might say that a mind which does not give values is really the mind of a primitive. It is true in one sense; the primitive meets life unconsciously, incompletely, without understanding its significance fully. But to meet life completely and to understand its significance fully, requires a mind that is unconditioned by the past, and this can come about only through intense awareness, through discernment. This demands, unlike the mind of the primitive, integrate action in the present without the urge of fear or the search for a reward. It is the intelligence of complete aloneness.

It is only when the unburdened and vulnerable mind and heart meet life, the unknown, the immeasurable, that there is the ecstasy of truth. When the mind is not burdened with values, with memories, with preconceived beliefs, and is able to meet the unknown, in that meeting there is born wisdom, the bliss of the present.

So conflict is the very process of awakening man to full consciousness; and if we are not continually aware, we create a series of escapes which we call values, though they may be changing, and through those values we try to find happiness.

Values become the medium of escape. A mind that is in conflict and meets it without trying to interpret that conflict according to certain values becomes fully, completely aware. Then that mind and that heart shall awaken to the reality of life, the bliss of the present.

*Question: Do you advocate renunciation and self-abnegation as a means of finding personal happiness?*

Krishnamurti: Personal happiness does not exist. So there are no means to it. There is only the creative ecstasy of life, whose expressions are many. This idea of sacrifice, renunciation, self-abnegation, is false. You think that happiness is to be found through giving up certain things, following certain actions. So you are really trading in, exchanging your sacrifice, your abnegation, for happiness. There is no abnegation or renunciation, but only understanding; and in that there is creative happiness which is not personal, individualistic.

Let me put it differently. I begin to accumulate because I think happiness lies through accumulation, but I find at the end of a certain time that possession does not bring me happiness. Therefore I begin to renounce possessions and try to possess and pursue abnegation; which is only another form of acquisitiveness. But if I discern the inherent significance of possessiveness, then in that there is creative happiness.

*Question: Isn't it true that the essential can be found in all the phases of life, in everything?*

Krishnamurti: I do not think that there is the essential or the unessential. What is the essential? What is the unessential? One day I want a thing and that becomes the most essential, the most important, and in the very possession of it, it has become the unessential. Then I want some other thing; and so I go on, moving from one essential which becomes the unessential, to another essential which in its turn becomes the unessential.

In other words, where there is a craving there can never be lasting discernment. As most people are slaves to craving, they are in constant conflict of the essential and the unessential. From possessiveness merely of things, which no longer gives satisfaction, you move to mental and emotional possession of virtues, of truth, of God. From things, which were once essential, you have moved "forward" to abstraction. This abstraction becomes the essential.

Can't we look at life, not from this point of view of the essential and the unessential, but from that which is intelligent, compre-



hensive? Why have we this division of the essential and the unessential, the important and the unimportant? Because we are always thinking in terms of acquisition, gain; but if we look at it from the point of view of understanding, then this division ceases, then we are meeting life continually as a whole. This is one of the most difficult things to do, because we have been and are being trained in religious and economic systems which impose certain sets of values. To a mind that is really not attributing values but is trying to live completely, without the desire of gain, to such a mind there are no degrees of changing values, and therefore there is no conflict between the impermanent and the permanent, between the stationary, and the constant movement of life.

*Question: It is all right for you to talk about fundamental things of life, but what about the ordinary man?*

**Krishnamurti:** What are we discussing? We are discussing, as far as I am concerned, how to live intelligently, and therefore divinely, humanly; not with this competitive, ruthless brutality of acquisitiveness, of exploitation, whether by a class or by a teacher, economic or religious. All this applies, naturally, to us all, that is to the ordinary man. I do not segregate myself from the average, from the ordinary man. People who are concerned about the ordinary man have separated themselves from him. They are concerned about the average man. Why? They say, "I can give up tradition, but what about the man in the street? If he gives it up, there will be chaos." So he must have a tradition, while the people who are concerned about him need not.

Now if you are not thinking in terms of distinctions, either of class or of needs, if you discern the significance of a thing in itself, then you will help that man in the street to free himself without imposition from, let us say, tradition. That is, if you are convinced of the futility of tradition, if you see the significance of it, then you will naturally help the other without imposition, without exploitation. In understanding the fundamental things of life intelligently, you will help the other to extricate himself from this cruel chaos.

If we, all of us here, really felt deeply about these things, really understood, we should act with intelligence. First, surely, one

must begin with oneself. One must deal with the fundamental things because they are the simplest; and in a civilization that is becoming more and more complex, if we don't understand for ourselves these simple and fundamental things, we shall but add to the confusion, exploitation and ignorance.

So what we are discussing applies to everyone, and as you have the opportunity, which, unfortunately, not everyone has, if you become conscious, aware, and begin to understand and therefore act, such action will help to dispel ignorance, the cause of suffering.

*Question: How can one cope with memory and the obsession of its pictures?*

**Krishnamurti:** First of all, by understanding how memory is formed, how it is created. Now, as I tried to explain the other day, memory is nothing else than incompleting action. I am not including in that the capacity to recall incidents. But memory is the residue, the scar of action which has not been completely lived or completely understood. Till that action is wholly understood, the memory of it or scar on the mind continues. The mind is mostly the residue or the scars of many incompleting, unfulfilled actions. If one is class conscious or if one is religiously prejudiced, naturally one cannot meet experience wholly, completely; one approaches it with this bias, which creates inevitably a conflict. As long as one does not understand the cause and the significance of that conflict, completely, wholly, there must be further scars or barriers as memories. In that conflict, if one merely escapes or seeks substitutions, then memory as a barrier must be continually perverting the completeness of understanding, which alone is the fulfillment of action. I hope I am not explaining it in very complicated language.

For instance, suppose a man born in India has certain religious prejudices. With these perversions of thought, he approaches life. Naturally he does not discern its full significance, because he is always looking at life through these perversions, and therefore there must be conflict. From this he develops a series of self-defensive memories, barriers, which he calls values. Such defensive reactions must further pervert the comprehension of experience or of life.

When one fully realizes that prejudice or any other perversion

is continually corrupting, twisting, the fullness of understanding, then one begins to be aware; in that awareness one discovers the hindrances. It is only through the flame of awareness, through full consciousness, not through self-analysis, that one can discern the prejudices, the escapes, the self-defensive values which are continually twisting experience. In the very fullness of experience itself are the barriers against discernment to be discovered and understood, and not through intellectual self-analysis or self-dissection. If you are intensely aware in the fullness of experience, then you will see how the perversions, impediments, limitations, spring forth.

If the mind and heart can free themselves from these values, which are but memories stored up for self-defensive purposes, that you have inherited or acquired, then life is an eternal becoming. But that requires, as I said, great purposefulness, an incessant inquiry into the cause and significance of suffering, conflict. If you are sitting at ease with life, or merely seeking satisfaction, the bliss of the eternal present is not for you. It is only in moments of great crisis, great conflict, that the mind frees itself from all these self-protective accumulations and accretions. Then only is there the ecstasy of life, truth.

*Question: If everyone gave up all possessions, as you suggest, what would happen to all business and the ordinary pursuits of life? Are not business and possessions necessary if we are to live in the world?*

**Krishnamurti:** I have never said give up. I have said that acquisitiveness is the cause of competition, of exploitation, of class distinctions, of wars and so on. Now if one discerns the real significance of possessiveness, whether of things or of people or of ideas, which is ultimately the craving for power in different forms, if the mind can free itself from that, then there can be intelligent happiness and well-being in the world. We have through many centuries built up a system of acquisitiveness, of possessiveness, seeking personal power and authority. Now as long as that exists in our hearts and minds, we may change the system momentarily through revolution, through crisis, through wars, but as long as that craving exists, it will inevitably lead, in another form, to the old system. And, as I said, the freedom from acquisitiveness is not

to be learned eventually, through postponement; it must be discerned immediately, and that is where the difficulty lies. If we cannot see the falseness of possessiveness immediately, we shall then not be able individually, and therefore collectively, to have a different civilization, a different way of living.

So my whole attack, if I may use that word, is not on any system, but on that desire for possessiveness, acquisitiveness, leading finally to power.

You think now possessiveness gives happiness. But if you think about it deeply, you will see that this craving for power has no end. It is a continual struggle in which there is no cessation of conflict, suffering. But it is one of the most difficult things, to free the mind and heart from acquisitiveness.

You know, in India we have certain people called *sannyasi*, who leave the world in search of truth. They have generally two loin cloths, the one they put on, and one for the next day. A *sannyasi* in search of truth, sought various teachers. In his wanderings he was told that a certain king was enlightened, that he was teaching wisdom. So this *sannyasi* went to the king. You can see the contrast between the king and the *sannyasi*: the king who had everything, palaces, jewels, courtiers, power; and the *sannyasi* who had only two loin cloths. The king instructed him concerning truth. One day, while the king was teaching him, the palace caught fire. Serenely the king continued with his teaching, while the *sannyasi*, that holy man, was greatly disturbed because his other loin cloth was burning.

You know, you are all in that position. You may not be possessive with regard to clothes, houses, friends, but there is some hidden pursuit of gain to which you are attached, to which you cling, which is eating your hearts and minds away. As long as these unexplored, hidden poisons exist, there must be continual conflict, suffering.

*Question:* You say that you are affiliated with no organization, yet obviously you are trying to make people think along certain lines. Can the world thought be changed without an organization whose purpose it is to bring your ideas constantly before the public?

**Krishnamurti:** I wonder if I am making you think along a

certain definite line. I hope not. I am trying to show that thinking is necessary, being in love is necessary; and to think deeply and to be greatly in love, you cannot have a storehouse of self-defensive reactions or memories. Surely when you are in love, you are vulnerable. If I am only making you think along certain lines, then please beware of me, because then I will force you and thus exploit you, and you will exploit me for your own various ends.

What I am saying is that to live greatly, to think creatively, one must be completely open to life, without any self-protective reaction, as you are when you are in love. So you must be in love with life. This requires great intelligence, not information or knowledge, but that great intelligence which is awakened when you meet life openly, completely, when the mind and heart are utterly vulnerable to life.

You ask, "Can the world thought be changed without an organization whose purpose it is to bring your ideas constantly before the public?" Naturally not, you must have an organization; that is obvious. So we need not discuss it. But when you talk about organization, I think you mean quite a different thing. To convert people to certain beliefs, to force them, to urge them through opinion, through pressure, to adopt a certain method, certain ideas—for that purpose most organizations are formed, not merely for printing books and distributing them. That is how all religions are formed. That is how the followers destroy the teachers, by making their teachings into absolute dogmas which become the authority for exploitation. For that purpose, organization of the wrong kind is necessary. Whereas, if you are interested in these ideas which I am explaining, you will naturally help to print and to distribute books, but without the desire to convert, to exploit.

*Question:* Even after they have passed beyond the need of organized authority, most people are troubled with the inner conflict of choice between desire and fear. Can you explain how to distinguish, or what you consider true desire?

**Krishnamurti:** Is there such a thing as true desire? The essential desire and the unessential desire? One day you want a hat, another day a car, and so on, satisfying your cravings. Yet another day you want to attain the highest truth or God. You pass through a whole

series of desires. What is the essential in all this? Things are essential; love is essential; the understanding of truth is essential. So why separate desire into false and true, important and unimportant? Can't you look at it differently, meet desire intelligently? Your minds are so crippled with contradictory values that you cannot discern truly.

I wonder if I am explaining this. Suppose you are possessive. Don't say to yourself, "Well, I have heard this afternoon that I mustn't be possessive, so I will get rid of that desire." Don't develop a contradictory resistance. If you are possessive, be completely and wholly aware of it; then you will see what happens. The mind must free itself from this contradictory desire, the comparative desire which is really a self-protective reaction against suffering; then you will discern the whole significance of acquisitiveness. You can only understand acquisitiveness, or any other problem, in its isolation, not by bringing it into comparison, into opposition. When there is no contradictory or opposite desire, then only is there the discernment of the true significance of desire. The continual contradiction in desire creates fear, and where there is fear, there must be escape. And so there ensues a ceaseless battle between desire, reason, the urge for fulfillment, and their opposites.

In this battle, intelligence, true fulfillment, is wholly lost. As long as mind is caught up in the conflict of opposites, there can be only an escape, a substitution as the essential and the unessential, the false and the true. In this there is no creative happiness.

*Question: Are there not times when one needs to separate oneself from outward confusion to aid in the realization of true self?*

**Krishnamurti:** If you put needs first, then they become your masters and intelligence is destroyed. To find out your needs requires intelligence, for needs are constantly changing, constantly renewing themselves. But if you set out to find exactly what your needs are, and having discovered them you limit yourself to those needs, then your life will become very superficial, narrow, small.

So in the same way, if you are seeking solitude merely in order to find out what truth is, then solitude becomes only a means of escape. But in your search during your active life there come naturally periods of solitude. These moments of solitude then are not false; they are natural, spontaneous.

*Question: You said on Monday that to have true intelligence, one must have passed through a state of great aloneness. Is this the only way of arriving at true intelligence?*

Krishnamurti: Let us consider what we do now. We are seeking security, constantly hedging ourselves in with certainties. Whenever there comes a state of utter uncertainty, doubt, we take immediate flight from it. So we have established comforting securities, certainties. Please think it over and you will see that this is so. And it is only when you are stripped of all hope, in the sense of security, certainty, only when you are completely naked, stripped of all protective measures and reactions, that there is the ecstasy of truth. In those moments of complete aloneness, which only comes when all escapes and their significance have been truly discerned, is there the blessedness of the present.

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