

1 Last Saturday and Sunday, we were discussing the importance of self-knowledge; because, as I explained, I do not see how we can have any foundation for right thinking without self-knowledge; how any action, however inclusive, however collective or individualistic, can possibly be a harmonious and true action, without fully knowing oneself. Without knowing oneself, there is no possibility of really searching out what is true, what is significant, what are the right values in life. Without self-knowledge, we cannot go beyond the self-projected illusions of the mind. Self-knowledge, as we explained, implies not only the action of relationship between one individual and another, but also the action of relationship with society; and there can be no complete, harmonious society, without this knowledge. So, it is really very important and significant that one should know oneself as completely and fully as possible. And, is this knowledge possible? Can one know integrally not partially, the total process of oneself? Because, as I said, without knowing oneself, one has no basis for thinking. One gets caught in illusions: political, religious, social illusions - they are limitless, endless. Is it possible to know oneself? And, how is it possible to know oneself - what are the means, what are the ways, what are the processes?

2 I think to find out what are the ways, one must find out first, must one not?, what are the impediments; and by studying what we consider important in life, those things which we have accepted - the values, the standards, the beliefs, the innumerable things that we hold - by

-- Page 16 --

examining them, perhaps we shall find out the ways of our own thinking, and thereby know ourselves. That is, by understanding the things that we accept, by questioning them, going into them - by that very process we shall know the ways of our own thinking, our responses, our reactions; and through them, we shall know ourselves as we are. Surely, that is the only way we can find out the manner of our thinking, our responses: by studying, by going fully into the values, the standards, the beliefs, that we have accepted for generations. And, seeing behind these values, we shall know how we respond, what our reactions are to them; and thereby, perhaps, we shall be able to uncover the ways of our own thinking. In other words, to know oneself, surely, is to study the responses, the reactions that one has in relation to something. One cannot know oneself through isolation. That is an obvious fact. You may withdraw to a mountain, into a cave, or pursue some illusion on the banks of a river; but, if one isolates oneself, there can be no relationship, and isolation is death. It is only in relationship that one can know oneself as one is. So, by studying the things that we have accepted, by going into them fully, not superficially, perhaps we shall be able to understand ourselves.

3 Now, one of the things, it seems to me, that most of us eagerly accept and take for granted, is the question of beliefs. I am not attacking beliefs. What we are trying to do this evening is to find out why we accept beliefs; and if we can understand the motives,

the causation of acceptance, then perhaps we may be able not only to understand why we do it, but also be free of it. Because, one can see how political and religious beliefs, national and various other types of beliefs, do separate people, do create conflict, confusion, and antagonism - which is an obvious fact; and yet we are unwilling to give them up. There is the Hindu belief, the Christian belief, the Buddhist - innumerable sectarian and national beliefs, various political ideologies, all contending with each other, trying to convert each other. One can see, obviously, that belief is separating people, creating intolerance; and is it possible to live without belief? One can find that out, only if one can study oneself in relationship to a belief. Is it possible to live in this world without a belief - not change beliefs, not substitute one belief for another, but be entirely free from all beliefs, so that one meets life anew each minute? This, after all, is the truth: to have the capacity of meeting everything anew, from moment to moment, without the conditioning reaction of the past, so that there is not the cumulative effect which acts as a barrier between oneself and that which is.

4 Obviously, most of us accept or take on beliefs because, first of all, there is **fear**. We feel that, without a belief, we shall be lost. Then we use belief as a means of conduct, as a pattern, according to which we direct our lives. And also we think that, through belief, there can be collective action. So, in other words, we think that belief is necessary for action. And is that so? Is belief necessary for action? That is, belief being an idea, is ideation necessary for action? Which comes first: idea, or action? Surely, first there is action, which is either pleasurable or painful, and according to that we build up various theories. Action invariably comes first, does it not? And, when there is **fear**, when there is the desire to believe in order to act, then ideation comes in.

5 Now, if you consider, you will see that one of the reasons for the desire to accept a belief, is **fear**. Because, if we had no belief, what would happen to us? Wouldn't we be very frightened of what might happen? If we had no pattern of action, based on a belief - either in God, or in Communism, or in Socialism, or in Imperialism, or in some kind of religious formula, some dogma in which we are conditioned - we would feel utterly lost, wouldn't we? And is not this acceptance of a belief, the covering up of that **fear** - the **fear** of being really nothing, of being empty? After all, a cup is useful only when it is empty; and a mind that is filled with beliefs, with dogmas, with assertions, with quotations, is really an uncreative mind, it is merely

-- Page 17 --

a repetitive mind. And, to escape from that **fear** - that **fear** of emptiness, that **fear** of loneliness, that **fear** of stagnation, of not arriving, not succeeding, not achieving, not being something, not becoming something - is surely one of the reasons, is it not?, why we accept beliefs so eagerly and greedily. And, through acceptance of belief, do we understand ourselves? On the contrary. A belief, religious or political, obviously hinders the understanding of ourselves. It acts as a screen through which we are looking at ourselves. And, can we look at ourselves without beliefs? If we remove those beliefs, the many beliefs that one has, is there anything left to look at? If we have no beliefs with which the mind has identified itself, then the mind, without identification, is capable of

looking at itself as it is - and then, surely, there is the beginning of the understanding of oneself. If one is afraid, if there is **fear** which is covered over by a belief; and if, in understanding beliefs, one comes face to face with **fear**, without the screen of beliefs - is it not possible then to be free from that reaction of **fear**? That is, to know one is afraid, and to stay there, without any escape? To be with what is, is surely much more significant, much more worthwhile, than to escape from what is, through a belief.

6 So, one begins to see that there are various forms of escape from oneself, from one's own emptiness, from one's own poverty of being - escapes such as knowledge, such as amusement, various forms of addictions and distractions, both learned and stupid, clever or not worthwhile. We are surrounded by these, we are them; and if the mind can see the significance of the things to which it is held, then, perhaps, we shall be face to face with what we are, whatever it be; and I think the moment we are capable of doing that, then there is a real transformation. Because then, there is no question of **fear**; for **fear** exists only in relationship to something. When there is you and something else to which you are related, and when you dislike that thing to which you are related and try to avoid it - then there is **fear**. But when you are that very thing, then there is no question of avoidance. A fact gives **fear** only when you bring an emotional reaction to it; but when a fact is faced as it is, there is no **fear**. And when what we call **fear** is no longer named, but only looked at, without it being given a term, then, surely, there takes place a revolution, there is no longer that sense either of avoidance or acceptance.

7 So, to understand belief, not superficially but profoundly, one must find out why the mind attaches itself to various forms of beliefs, why beliefs have become so significant in our lives: belief about death, about life, about what happens after death; beliefs asserting that there is God or there is no God; that there is reality or there is no reality; and various political beliefs. Are these beliefs not all indicative of our own sense of inward poverty, and, do they not reveal a process of escape, or act as a defence? And in studying our beliefs, do we not begin to know ourselves as we are, not only at the upper levels of our mind, of our consciousness, but deeper down? So, the more one studies oneself in relationship to something else, such as beliefs, the more the mind becomes quiet, without false regimentation, without compulsion. The more the mind knows itself, the more quiet it is, obviously. The more you know something, the more you are familiar with it, the more the mind becomes quiet. And the mind must be really quiet, not made quiet. Surely, there is a vast difference between a mind that is made quiet, and a mind that is quiet. You can compel a mind by circumstances, by various disciplines, tricks, and so on, to be quiet. But that is not quietude, that is not peace; that is death. But a mind that is quiet because it understands the various forms of **fear**, and because it understands itself - such a mind is creative, such a mind is renewing itself constantly. It is only the mind that is self-enclosed by its own **fears** and beliefs, that stagnates. But a mind that understands its relationship to the values about it - not imposing a standard of values, but understanding what is - surely, such a mind becomes quiet, is quiet.

8 It is not a question of becoming. It is only then, surely, that the mind is capable of perceiving what is real from moment to moment Reality is, surely, not something at the end, an end result of accumulative action. Reality is to be perceived only from moment to moment; and it can be perceived only when there is not the accumulative effect of the past on the moment, the now.

9 There are many questions, and I will answer some of them.

10 Question: Why do you talk? Krishnamurti: I think this question is quite interesting - for me to answer and also for you to answer. Not only why do I talk, but why do you listen? No; seriously, if I talked for self-expression, then I would be exploiting you. If my talking is a necessity for me in order to feel myself flattered, egotistic, self-aggressive, and all the rest of it, then I must use you; then you and I have no relationship, because you are a necessity for my egotism. I need you then to bolster myself up, to feel myself rich, free, applauded, having so many people listening to me. Then I am using you; then one uses another. Then, surely, there is no relationship between you and me, because you are useful to me. When I use you, what relationship have I with you? None. And, if I speak because I have various sets of ideas which I want to convey to you, then ideas become very important; and I do not believe that ideas ever bring about a fundamental, radical change, a revolution in life. Ideas can never be new; ideas can never bring about a transformation, a creative surge; because ideas are merely the response of a continued past, modified or altered, but still of the past. If I talk because I want you to change, or I want you to accept my particular way of thinking, belong to my particular society, become my particular disciple - then you as an individual are a nonentity, because then I am only concerned with transforming you according to a particular view. Then you are not important; then the pattern is important. So, why am I talking? If it is none of these things, why am I talking? We will answer that presently. Then the question is, why are you listening? Isn't that equally important? Perhaps more. If you are listening to get some new ideas, or a new way of looking at life, then you will be disappointed, because I am not going to give you new ideas. If you are listening to experience something you think I have experienced, then you are merely imitating, hoping to capture something which you think I have. Surely, the real things of life cannot be vicariously experienced. Or, because you are in trouble, sorrow, pain, have innumerable conflicts, you come here to find out how to get out of them. Again, I am afraid I cannot help you. All that I can do is to point out your own difficulty, and we can then talk it over with each other; but it is for you yourself to see. Therefore, it is very important to find out for yourself why you come here and listen. Because, if you have one purpose, one intention, and I another, we shall never meet. Then, there is no relationship between you and me, there is no communion between you and me. You want to go north, and I am going south. We will pass each other by. But, surely, that is not the intention of these gatherings. What we are trying to do is to undertake a journey together, and experience together as we go along - not that I am teaching you, or you are listening to me, but together we are exploring, if that is possible; so that you are not only the master but also the disciple in discovering and understanding. There is not then this division of the high and the low, the one that is learned and the one that is ignorant, the one that has achieved and the one that is still on the way to achievement. Such divisions, surely,

distort relationship; and, without understanding relationship, there can be no understanding of reality.

11 I have told you why I speak. Perhaps you will think then that I need you in order to discover. Surely not. I have something to say: you can take it or leave it. And, if you take it, it is not

-- Page 19 --

that you are taking it from me. I merely act as a mirror in which you see yourself. You might not like that mirror and so discard it; but, when you do look into the mirror, look at it very clearly, unemotionally, without the blur of sentimentality. And, surely, it is important, is it not?, to find out why you come and listen. If it is merely an afternoon's amusement, if instead of going to a cinema you come here, then it is utterly valueless. If it is merely for the sake of argumentation, or to catch new sets of ideas so that you can use them when you lecture, or write a book, or discuss - again, that is valueless. But if you come really to discover yourself in relationship, which might help in your relationship with others, then it has significance; then it is worthwhile; then it will not be like so many other meetings which you attend. Surely, these gatherings are intended, not for you to listen to me, but to see yourself reflected in the mirror which I am trying to describe. You don't have to accept what you see - that would be foolish. But if you look at the mirror dispassionately, as you would listen to music, as you would sit under a tree and watch the shadows of an evening, without condemnation, without any kind of justification - merely look at it - , that very awareness of what is, does a most extraordinary thing, if there is no resistance. Surely, that is what we are trying to do in all these talks. So, real freedom comes, but not through effort; effort can never bring about freedom. Effort can only bring about substitution, suppression, or sublimation; but none of those things is freedom. Freedom comes only when there is no longer effort to be something. Then, the truth of what is, acts; and that is freedom.

12 Question: Is there a distinction between my intention in listening to you, and in going from one teacher to another? Krishnamurti: Surely, it is for you to find out, isn't it? Why do you go from one teacher to another, from one organization to another, from one belief to another? Or, why are you so closed in by one belief - Christian, or what you will? Why? Why do we do this? This is happening not in America only, but right through the world - this appalling restlessness, this desire to find. Why? Do you think by searching, you will find? But, before you can search, you must have the instrument for search, must you not? You must be capable of searching - not merely start out to search. To search, to have the capacity to search, you must understand yourself, surely. How can you search without first knowing yourself, without knowing what it is you are searching for, and what it is that is searching? The Hindus come over here and give their stuff - the yogis, the swamis, you know; and you go over there and preach, and convert. Why? It will be a happy world when there are neither teachers nor pupils.

13 What is it really that we are seeking? Is it that we are bored with life, bored with one set of ceremonies, one set of dogmas, church rituals, and so we go to another because

it is something new, more exciting - Sanskrit words, men with beards, togas, and all the rest of it? Is that the reason? Or, do we want to find a refuge, an escape, in Buddhism, in Hinduism, or in some other organized religious belief? Or, are we seeking gratification? It is very difficult to distinguish and be aware of what we are really seeking. Because, from period to period we vary; when we are bored, when we are tired, when we are miserable, we want something ultimate, lasting, final, absolute. It is only a very few who are consistent in their search - in their inquiry, rather. Most of us want distraction. If we are intellectual, we want intellectual distraction, and so on, and so on.

14 So, can one genuinely, authentically, for oneself, find out what it is that one wants? Not what one should have, or what one thinks one ought to have; but to find out for oneself, inwardly, what it is that one wants, what it is that one is searching after so ceaselessly. And, can one find, when one seeks? Surely, we will find that which we are seeking;

-- Page 20 --

but, when we get what we want, it soon fades away, it turns to ashes. So, before we start out searching, gathering what we want, surely it is important, isn't it?, to find out who the searcher is, and what he is seeking; because, if the seeker does not understand himself, then what he finds will be merely a self-projected illusion. And, you may live in that illusion happily for the rest of your life, but it will still be illusion.

15 So, before you seek, before you go from teacher to teacher, from organization to organization, from belief to belief, surely it is important to find out who is the person that is seeking, and what he is seeking - not just vaguely go from shop to shop, hoping to find the right dress. So, surely, the thing of primary importance is to know yourself, not to go out and search - which does not mean that you should become an introvert and avoid all action, which is impossible. You can know yourself only in relationship, not in isolation. So, what is the distinction between one's intention in coming here and listening, and in going to another teacher? Surely, there is no distinction if one merely comes here to get something - to be pacified, to be comforted, to be given new ideas, to be persuaded to join or to leave some organization, or God knows what else. Surely, here there is no refuge, no organization. Here, you and I are trying to see exactly what is, if we can, - see ourselves as we are - , which is extremely difficult, because we are so cunning; you know the innumerable tricks that we play upon ourselves. Here we are trying to strip ourselves naked and see ourselves; for, in that stripping, there comes wisdom; and it is that wisdom which gives happiness. But, if your intention is to find comfort, something which will hide you from yourself, something which will offer an escape, then, obviously, there are many ways of doing it - through religion, politics, amusement, knowledge - you know, the whole gamut of it. And, I do not see how any form of addiction, any form of distraction, any escape, however pleasant or however uncomfortable, to which one so eagerly adjusts oneself because it promises a reward at the end, can bring about that self-knowledge which is so essential, and which alone can give creative peace.

16 Question: Our mind knows only the known. What is it in us that drives us to find the unknown, reality, God? Krishnamurti: Does your mind urge towards the unknown? Is there an urge in us for the unknown, for reality, for God? Please think seriously about it. This is not a rhetorical question, but actually let us find out. Is there an inward urge in each one of us to find the unknown? Is there? How can you find the unknown? If you do not know it, how can you find it? Please, I am not being clever. Don't brush it off that way. So, is it an urge for reality? Or, is it merely a desire for the known, expanded? Do you understand what I mean? I have known many things; they have not given me happiness, satisfaction, joy. So, now I want something else that will give me greater joy, greater happiness, greater hope, greater vitality - what you will. And, can the known, which is my mind - because, my mind is the known, the result of the known, the result of the past - , can that mind seek the unknown? If I do not know reality, the unknown, how can I search for it? Surely, it must come, I cannot go after it. If I go after it, I am going after something which is the known, projected from me.

17 So, our problem is not what it is in us that drives us to find the unknown - that is clear enough. It is our own desire to be more secure, more permanent, more established, more happy, to escape from turmoil, from pain, confusion. Surely, that is our obvious drive. And, when there is that drive, that urge, you will find a marvellous escape, a marvellous refuge - in the Buddha, in the Christ, or in political slogans, and all the rest of it. But, surely, that is not reality; that is not the unknowable, the unknown. Therefore, the urge for the unknown must come to an end, the search for the unknown must stop; which means, there must be the under-

-- Page 21 --

standing of the cumulative known, which is the mind. The mind must understand itself as the known, because that is all it knows. You cannot think about something that you do not know. You can only think about something that you know.

18 Our difficulty is for the mind not to proceed in the known; and that can only happen when the mind understands itself and how all its movement is from the past, projecting itself through the present, to the future. It is one continuous movement of the known; and, can that movement come to an end? It can come to an end only when the mechanism of its own process is understood, only when the mind understands itself and its workings, its ways, its purposes, its pursuits, its demands - not only the superficial demands, but the deep inward urges and motives. This is quite an arduous task; it isn't just in a meeting, or at a lecture, or by reading a book, that you are going to find out. On the contrary, it needs constant watchfulness, constant awareness of every movement of thought - not only when you are waking, but also when you are asleep. It must be a total process, not a sporadic, partial process.

19 And also, the intention must be right. That is, there must be a cessation of the superstition that inwardly we all want the unknown. It is an illusion to think that we are all seeking God - we are not. We don't have to search for light. There will be light when there is no darkness; and through darkness, we cannot find the light. All that we can do is

to remove those barriers that create darkness; and the removal depends on the intention. If you are removing them in order to see light, then you are not removing anything, you are only substituting the word light for darkness. Even to look beyond the darkness, is an escape from darkness.

20 So, we have to consider, not what it is that is driving us, but why there is in us such confusion, such turmoil, such strife and antagonism - all the stupid things of our existence. When these are not, then there is light, we don't have to look for it. When stupidity is gone there is intelligence. But the man who is stupid and tries to become intelligent, is still stupid. Surely, stupidity can never be made wisdom; only when stupidity ceases, is there wisdom, intelligence. But the man who is stupid and tries to become intelligent, wise, obviously can never be. To know what is stupidity, one must go into it, not superficially, but fully, completely, deeply, profoundly, one must go into all the different layers of stupidity; and when there is the cessation of that stupidity, there is wisdom.

21 So, it is important to find out, not if there is something more, something greater than the known, which is urging us to the unknown; but to see what it is in us that is creating confusion, the wars, the class differences, the snobbishness, the pursuit of the famous, the accumulation of knowledge, the escape through music, through art, through so many ways. It is important, surely, to see them as they are, and to come back to ourselves as we are. And, from there we can proceed. Then the throwing off of the known is comparatively easy. When the mind is silent, when it is no longer projecting itself into the future, into the tomorrow, wishing for something; when the mind is really quiet, profoundly peaceful, the unknown comes into being. You don't have to search for it. You cannot invite it. That which you can invite is only that which you know. You cannot invite an unknown guest. You can only invite one whom you know. But you do not know the unknown, God, reality, or what you will. It must come. It can come only when the field is right, when the soil is tilled. But, if you till in order for it to come, then you will not have it.

22 So, our problem is not to seek the unknowable, but to understand the accumulative processes of the mind, which is ever with the known. And that is an arduous task: that demands attention, that demands a constant awareness in which there is no sense of distraction, of identification, of condemnation; it is being with what is. Then only can the mind be still. No amount of meditation, discipline, can make the mind still, in the

-- Page 22 --

real sense of that word. Only when the breezes stop does the lake become quiet. You cannot make the lake quiet. So our job is not to pursue the unknowable, but to understand the confusion, the turmoil the misery, in ourselves; and then that thing darkly comes into being, in which there is joy.

23 July 23, 1949