

*Krishnamurti never looked back on his own work to select one talk or dialogue as embodying all that he had been communicating during the course of sixty years. Instead, he viewed every occasion that he spoke publicly as having its own unique unfoldment, and he approached his audiences without notes or preconceptions as to what he would say or what they might ask. It is therefore impossible to present any one talk or dialogue as definitive, yet this book would be incomplete without the inclusion of an uninterrupted session with Krishnamurti. **The following is a talk and dialogue held by Krishnamurti in 1971 in New York City.***

I would like to talk about relationship, about what love is, about human existence in which is involved our daily living, the problems one has, the conflicts, the pleasures and the fears, and that most extraordinary thing one calls death.

I think one has to understand, not as a theory, not as a speculative, entertaining concept, but rather as an actual fact — that we are the world and the world is us. The world is each one of us; to feel that, to be really committed to it and to nothing else, brings about a feeling of great responsibility and an action that must not be fragmentary, but whole.

I think we are apt to forget that our society, the culture in which we live, which has conditioned us, is the result of human endeavor, conflict, human misery and suffering. Each one of us is that culture; the community is each one of us — we are not separate from it. To feel this, not as an intellectual idea or a concept, but to actually feel the reality of this, one has to go into the question of what is relationship; because our life, our existence, is based on relationship. Life is a movement in relationship. If we do not understand what is implied in relationship, we inevitably not only isolate ourselves, but create a society in which human beings are divided, not only nationally, religiously, but also in themselves and therefore they project what they are into the outer world.

I do not know if you have gone into this question deeply for yourself, to find out if one can live with another in total harmony, in complete accord, so that there is no barrier, no division, but a feeling of complete unity. Because relationship means to be related — not in action, not in some project, not in an ideology — but to be totally united in the sense that the division, the fragmentation between individuals, between two human beings, does not exist at all at any level.

Unless one finds this relationship, it seems to me that when we try to bring order in the world, theoretically or technologically, we are bound to create not only deep divisions between man and man, but also we shall be unable to prevent corruption. Corruption begins in the lack of relationship; I think that is the root of corruption. Relationship as we know it now is the continuation of division between individuals. The root meaning of that word individual means "indivisible". A human being who is in himself not divided, not fragmented, is really an individual. But most of us are not individuals; we think we are, and therefore there is the opposition of the individual to the community. One has to understand not only the meaning of that word individuality in the dictionary sense, but in that deep sense in which there is no fragmentation at all. That means perfect harmony between the mind, the heart and the physical organism. Only then an individuality exists.

If we examine our present relationship with each other closely, be it intimate or superficial, deep or passing, we see it fragmented. Wife or husband, boy or girl, each lives in his own ambition, in personal and egotistic pursuits, in his own cocoon. All these contribute to the factor of bringing about an image in himself and therefore his relationship with another is through that image, therefore there is no actual relationship.

I do not know if you are aware of the structure and the nature of this image that one has built around oneself and in oneself. Each person is doing this all the time, and how can there be a relationship with another, if there is that personal drive, envy, competition, greed and all the rest

of those things which are sustained and exaggerated in modern society? How can there be relationship with another, if each one of us is pursuing his own personal achievement, his own personal success?

I do not know if one is at all aware of this. We are so conditioned that we accept it as the norm, as the pattern of life, that each one must pursue his own particular idiosyncrasy or tendency, and yet try to establish a relationship with another in spite of this. Isn't that what we are all doing? You may be married and you go to the office or to the factory; whatever you are doing during the whole of the day, you pursue that. And your wife is in her house, with her own troubles, with her own vanities, with all that happens. Where is the relationship between those two human beings? Is it in bed, in sex? Is a relationship so superficial, so limited, so circumscribed, not in itself corruption?

One may ask: how then are you to live, if you do not go to the office, pursue your own particular ambition, your own desire to achieve and to attain? If one does not do any of this, what is one to do? I think that is a wrong question altogether, don't you? Because we are concerned, are we not, in bringing about a radical change in the whole structure of the mind. The crisis is not in the outer world, but in consciousness itself. And until we understand this crisis, not superficially, not according to some philosopher, but actually deeply understand it for ourselves by looking into it and examining it, we shall not be able to bring about a change. We are concerned with psychological revolution, and this revolution can only take place when there is the right kind of relationship between human beings.

How is such a relationship to be brought about? The problem is clear, isn't it? Please, share this problem with me, will you? It's your problem, not my problem; it's your life, not my life, it's your sorrow, your trouble, your anxiety, your guilt. This battle is one's life. If you listen merely to a description, then you will find that you are only swimming on the surface and not resolving any problem at all. It is actually your problem, and the speaker is merely describing it — knowing that the description is not the described. Let us share this problem together, which is: how can human beings, you and I, find a right relationship in all this turmoil, hatred, destruction, pollution, and among these terrible things which are going on in the world?

To find that out, it seems to me, one must examine what is taking place, see what actually "is". Not what we should like to think it should be, or try to change our relationship to a future concept, but actually observe what it is now. In observing the fact, the truth, the actuality of it, there is a possibility of changing it. As we said the other day, when there is a possibility then there is great energy. What dissipates energy is the idea that it is not possible to change.

So we must look at our relationship as it is actually now, every day; and in observing what it is, we shall discover how to bring about a change in that actuality. So we are describing what actually is, which is: each one lives in his own world, in his world of ambition, greed, fear, the desire to succeed and all the rest of it—you know what is going on. If I am married, I have responsibilities, children, and all the rest of it. I go to the office, or some place of work, and we meet each other, husband and wife, boy and a girl, in bed. And that's what we call love, leading separate lives, isolated, building a wall of resistance round ourselves, pursuing a self-centered activity; each one is seeking security psychologically, each one is depending on the other for comfort, for pleasure, for companionship; because each one is so deeply lonely, each demands to be loved, to be cherished, each one is trying to dominate the other.

You can see this for yourself, if you observe yourself. Is there any kind of relationship at all? There is no relationship between two human beings; though they may have children, a house, actually they are not related. If they have a common project, that project sustains them, holds them together, but that's not relationship.

Realizing all this, one sees that if there is no relationship between two human beings, then corruption begins — not in the outward structure of society, in the outer phenomenon of pollution, but inner pollution, corruption, destruction begins, when human beings have actually no relationship at all, as you haven't. You may hold the hand of another, kiss each other, sleep together, but actually, when you observe very closely, is there any relationship at all? To be related means not to be dependent on each other, not to escape from your loneliness through another, not to try to find comfort, companionship, through another. When you seek comfort through another, are dependent and all the rest of it, can there be any kind of relationship? Or are you then using each other?

We are not being cynical, but actually observing what is: that is not cynicism. So to find out what it actually means to be related to another, one must understand this question of loneliness, because most of us are terribly lonely; the older we grow the more lonely we become, especially in this country. Have you noticed the old people, what they are like? Have you noticed their escapes, their amusements? They have worked all their lives and they want to escape into some kind of entertainment.

Seeing this, can we find a way of living in which we don't use another? — psychologically, emotionally, not depend on another, not use another as a means of escape from our own tortures, from our own despairs, from our own loneliness. To understand this is to understand what it means to be lonely. Have you ever been lonely? Do you know what it means? — that you have no relationship with another, are completely isolated. You may be with your family, in a crowd, in the office, wherever you are, when this complete sense of utter loneliness with its despair suddenly comes upon you. Till you solve that completely, your relationship becomes a means of escape and therefore it leads to corruption, to misery. How is one to understand this loneliness, this sense of complete isolation? To understand it, one has to look at one's own life. Is not your every action a self-centered activity? You may occasionally be charitable, generous, do something without any motive — those are rare occasions. This despair can never be dissolved through escape, but by observing it.

So we have come back to this question, which is: how to observe? How to observe ourselves, so that in that observation there is no conflict at all? Because conflict is corruption, is waste of energy, it is the battle of our life, from the moment we are born till we die. Is it possible to live without a single moment of conflict? To do that, to find that out for ourselves, one has to learn how to observe our whole movement. There is observation which becomes harmonious, which is true, when the observer is not, but only observation.

When there is no relationship can there be love? We talk about it, and love, as we know it, is related to sex and pleasure, isn't it? Some of you say "No". When you say "No", then you must be without ambition, then there must be no competition, no division — as you and me, we and they. There must be no division of nationality, or the division brought about by belief, by knowledge. Then, only, can you say you love. But for most people love is related to sex and pleasure and all the travail that comes with it: jealousy, envy, antagonism, you know what happens between man and woman. When that relationship is not true, real, deep, completely harmonious, then how can you have peace in the world? How can there be an end to war?

So relationship is one of the most, or rather the most important thing in life. That means that one has to understand what love is. Surely, one comes upon it, strangely, without asking for it. When you find out for yourself what love is not, then you know what love is — not theoretically, not verbally — but when you realize actually what it is not, which is: not to have a mind that is competitive, ambitious, a mind that is striving, comparing, imitating; such a mind cannot possibly love.

So can you, living in this world, live completely without ambition, completely without ever comparing yourself with another? Because the moment you compare, then there is conflict, there is envy,

there is the desire to achieve, to go beyond the other. Can a mind and a heart that remembers the hurts, the insults, the things that have made it insensitive and dull — can such a mind and heart know what love is? Is love pleasure? And yet that is what we are pursuing, consciously or unconsciously. Our gods are the result of our pleasure. Our beliefs, our social structure, the morality of society — which is essentially immoral — is the result of our pleasure. And when you say, "I love somebody", is it love? That means: no separation, no domination, no self-centered activity. To find out what it is, one must deny all this — deny it in the sense of seeing the falseness of it. When you once see something as false — which you have accepted as true, as natural, as human — then you can never go back to it; when you see a dangerous snake, or a dangerous animal, you never play with it, you never come near it. Similarly, when you actually see that love is none of these things, feel it, observe it, chew it, live with it, are totally committed to it, then you will know what love is, what compassion is — which means passion for everyone.

We have no passion; we have lust, we have pleasure. The root meaning of the word passion is sorrow. We have all had sorrow of some kind or another, losing somebody, the sorrow of self-pity, the sorrow of the human race, both collective and personal. We know what sorrow is, the death of someone whom you consider you have loved. When we remain with that sorrow totally, without trying to rationalize it, without trying to escape from it in any form through words or through action, when you remain with it completely, without any movement of thought, then you will find that out of that sorrow comes passion. That passion has the quality of love, and love has no sorrow.

One has to understand this whole question of existence, the conflicts, the battles: you know the life that one leads, so empty, so meaningless. The intellectuals try to give it a meaning and we also want to find significance in life, because life has no meaning as it is lived. Has it? The constant struggle, the endless work, the misery, the suffering, the travail that one goes through in life, all that has actually no meaning — we go through it as a habit. But to find out what the significance is, one must also understand the significance of death; because living and dying go together, they are not two separate things.

So one must inquire what it means to die, because that is part of our living. Not something in the distant future, to be avoided, only to be faced when one is desperately ill, in old age or in an accident, or on a battlefield. As it is part of our daily life to live without a single breath of conflict, so it is part of our life to find out what it means to love. That is also part of our existence, and one must understand it.

How do we understand what death is? When you are dying, at the last moment, can you understand the way you have lived—the strains, the emotional struggles, the ambitions, the drive? You are probably unconscious and that makes you incapable of clear perception. Then there is the deterioration of the mind in old age and all the rest of it. So one has to understand what death is now, not tomorrow. As you observe, thought does not want to think about it. It thinks about all the things it will do tomorrow — how to make new inventions, better bathrooms, all the things that thought can think about. But it does not want to think about death, because it does not know what it means.

Is the meaning of death to be found through the process of thought? Please do share this. When we share it, then we will begin to see the beauty of all this, but if you sit there and let the speaker go on, merely listening to his words, then we don't share together. Sharing together implies a certain quality of care, attention, affection, love. Death is a tremendous problem. The young people may say: why do you bother about it? But it is part of their life, as it is part of their life to understand celibacy. Don't just say, "Why do you talk about celibacy, that's for the old fogies,

that's for the stupid monks." What it means to be celibate has also been a problem for human beings, that also is part of life.

Can the mind be completely chaste? Not being able to find out how to live a chaste life, one takes vows of celibacy and goes through tortures. That is not celibacy. Celibacy is something entirely different. It is to have a mind that is free from all images, from all knowledge; which means understanding the whole process of pleasure and fear.

Similarly, one has to understand this thing called death. How do you proceed to understand something of which you are terribly frightened? Aren't we frightened of death? Or we say, "Thank God I'm going to die, I've had enough of this life with all the misery of it, the confusion, the shoddiness, the brutality, the mechanical things by which one is caught, thank God all this will end!" That is not an answer; nor is it to rationalize death, or to believe in some reincarnation, as the whole Asiatic world does. To find out what reincarnation means, which is to be born in a future existence, you must find out what you are now. If you believe in reincarnation, what are you now? — a lot of words, a lot of experience, of knowledge; you are conditioned by various cultures, you are all the identifications of your life, your furniture, your house, your bank account, your experiences of pleasure and pain. That's what you are, aren't you? The remembrance of the failures, the hopes, the despairs, all that you are now, and that is going to be born in the next life — a lovely idea, isn't it!

Or you think there is a permanent soul, a permanent entity. Is there anything permanent in you? The moment you say there is a permanent soul, a permanent entity, that entity is the result of your thinking, or the result of your hopes, because there is so much insecurity, everything is transient, in a flux, in a movement. So when you say there is something permanent, that permanency is the result of your thinking. And thought is of the past, thought is never free — it can invent anything it likes!

So if you believe in a future birth, then you must know that the future is conditioned by the way you live now, what you do now, what you think, what your acts are, your ethics. So what you are now, what you do now, matters tremendously. But those people who believe in a future birth don't give a pin about what happens now, it's just a matter of belief.

So, how do you find out what death means, when you are living with vitality, with energy, full of health? Not when you are unbalanced, or ill, not at the last moment, but now, knowing the organism must inevitably wear out, like every machinery. Unfortunately we use our machinery so disrespectfully, don't we? Knowing the physical organism comes to an end, have you ever thought about what it means to die? You can't think about it. Have you ever experimented to find out what it means to die psychologically, inwardly? — not how to find immortality, because eternity, that which is timeless, is now, not in some distant future. To inquire into that, one must understand the whole problem of time: not only chronological time, by the watch, but the time that thought has invented as a gradual process of change.

How does one find out about this strange thing that we all have to meet one day or another? Can you die psychologically today, die to everything that you have known? For instance: to die to your pleasure, to your attachment, your dependence, to end it without arguing, without rationalizing, without trying to find ways and means of avoiding it. Do you know what it means to die, not physically, but psychologically, inwardly? Which means to put an end to that which has continuity; to put an end to your ambition, because that's what's going to happen when you die, isn't it? You can't carry it over and sit next to God! (Laughter) When you actually die, you have to end so many things without any argument. You can't say to death, "Let me finish my job, let me finish my book, all the things I have not done, let me heal the hurts which I have given others" — you have no time.

So can you find out how to live a life now, today, in which there is always an ending to everything that you began? Not in your office of course, but inwardly to end all the knowledge that you have

gathered — knowledge being your experiences, your memories, your hurts, the comparative way of living, comparing yourself always with somebody else. To end all that every day, so that the next day your mind is fresh and young. Such a mind can never be hurt, and that is innocence.

One has to find out for oneself what it means to die; then there is no fear, therefore every day is a new day — and I really mean this, one can do this — so that your mind and your eyes see life as something totally new. That is eternity. That is the quality of the mind that has come upon this timeless state, because it has known what it means to die every day to everything it has collected during the day. Surely, in that there is love. Love is something totally new every day, but pleasure is not, pleasure has continuity. Love is always new and therefore it is its own eternity.

Do you want to ask any questions?

Questioner: Supposing, Sir, that through complete, objective, self-observation I find that I am greedy, sensual, selfish and all that. Then how can I know whether this kind of living is good or bad, unless I have already some preconceptions of the good? If I have these preconceptions, they can only derive from self-observation.

Krishnamurti: Quite, Sir.

Questioner: I also find another difficulty. You seem to believe in sharing, but at the same time you say that two lovers, or husband and wife, cannot base their love, shouldn't base their love, on comforting each other. I don't see anything wrong in comforting each other — that is sharing.

Krishnamurti: The gentleman says, "One must have a concept of the good, otherwise, why should one give up all this ambition, greed, envy and all the rest of it?" You can have a formula or a concept of what is better, but can you have a concept of what is good?

Questioner: Yes, I think so.

Krishnamurti: Can thought produce what is good?

Questioner: No, I meant the conception of such good.

Krishnamurti: Yes Sir. The conception of good is the product of thought; otherwise how can you conceive what is good?

Questioner: The conceptions can only be derived from our self-observation.

Krishnamurti: I'm just pointing that out, Sir. Why should you have a concept of the good at all?

Questioner: Otherwise how do I know whether my life is good or bad?

Krishnamurti: Just listen to the question. Don't we know what conflict is? Do I have to have a concept of non-conflict before I am aware of conflict? I know what conflict is — the struggle, the pain. Don't I know that, without knowing a state when there is no conflict? When I formulate what is good, I will formulate it according to my conditioning, according to my way of thinking, feeling, my particular idiosyncrasy and all the rest of my cultural conditioning. Is the good to be projected by thought? — and will thought then tell me what is good and bad in my life? Or has goodness nothing whatsoever to do with thought, or with a formula? Where does goodness flower? — do tell me. In a concept? In some idea, in some ideal that lies in the future? A concept means a future, a tomorrow. It may be very far away, or very close, but it is still in time. And when you have a concept, projected by thought — thought being the response of memory, the response of accumulated knowledge depending on the culture in which you have lived — do you find that goodness in the future, created by thought? Or do you find it when you begin to understand conflict, pain and sorrow? So in the understanding of "what is" — not by comparing "what is" with "what should be" — in that understanding flowers goodness. Surely, goodness has nothing whatsoever to do with thought — has it? Has love got anything to do with thought? Can you cultivate love by formulating it and saying "My ideal of love is that"? Do you know what happens when you cultivate love? You are not loving. You think you will have love at some future date; in the meantime you are violent. So is

goodness the product of thought? Is love the product of experience, of knowledge? What was the second question, Sir?

Questioner: The second question was about sharing.

Krishnamurti: What do you share? What are we sharing now? We talked about death, we talked about love, about the necessity of total revolution, about complete psychological change, not to live in the old pattern of formulas, of struggle, pain, imitation, conformity and all the rest of those things man has lived for through millennia and has produced this marvellous, messy world! We have talked about death. How do we share that together? — share the understanding of it, not the verbal statement, not the description, not the explanations of it? What does sharing mean? — to share the understanding, to share the truth which comes with the understanding. And what does understanding mean? You tell me something which is serious, which is vital, which is relevant, important, and I listen to it completely, because it is vital to me. To listen vitally, my mind must be quiet, mustn't it? If I am chattering, if I am looking somewhere else, if I am comparing what you are saying with what I know, my mind is not quiet. It is only when my mind is quiet and listens completely, that there is understanding of the truth of the thing, that we share together. Otherwise we can't share; we can't share the words — we can only share the truth of something. You and I can only see the truth of something when the mind is totally committed to the observation. To see the beauty of a sunset, the lovely hills, the shadows and the moonlight — how do you share it with a friend? By telling him, "Do look at that marvelous hill"? You may say it, but is that sharing? When you actually share something with another, it means you must both have the same intensity, at the same time, at the same level. Otherwise you can't share, can you? You must both have a common interest, at the same level, with the same passion — otherwise how can you share something? You can share a piece of bread — but that's not what we are talking about. To see together — which is sharing together — we must both of us see; not agree or disagree, but see together what actually is; not interpret it according to my conditioning or your conditioning, but see together what it is. And to see together one must be free to observe, one must be free to listen. That means to have no prejudice. Then only, with that quality of love, is there sharing.

Questioner: How can one quieten, or free the mind, from interruptions by the past?

Krishnamurti: You cannot quieten the mind: full stop! Those are tricks. You can take a pill and make the mind quiet—you absolutely cannot make the mind quiet, because you are the mind. You can't say, "I will make my mind quiet". Therefore one has to understand what meditation is—actually, not what other people say it is. One has to find out whether the mind can ever be quiet; not: how to make the mind quiet. So one has to go into this whole question of knowledge, and whether the mind, the brain cells, which are loaded with all the past memories, can be absolutely quiet and come into function when necessary; and when it is not necessary, be completely and wholly quiet.

Questioner: Sir, when you speak of relationships, you speak always of a man and a woman or a girl and a boy. Will the same things you say about relationships also apply to a man and a man, or a woman and a woman?

Krishnamurti: Homosexuality?

Questioner: If you wish to give it that name, Sir, yes.

Krishnamurti: You see, when we are talking of love, whether it is of man and man, woman and woman, or man and woman, we are not talking of a particular kind of relationship, we are talking about the whole movement, the whole sense of relationship, not a relationship of two. Don't you know what it means to be related to the world? — when you feel you are the world. Not as an idea — that's appalling — but actually to feel that you are responsible, that you are committed to this responsibility. That is the only commitment; not to be committed through bombs, or committed to a

particular activity, but to feel that you are the world and the world is you. Unless you change completely, radically, and bring about a total mutation in yourself, do what you will outwardly, there will be no peace for man. If you feel that in your blood, then your questions will be related entirely to the present and to bringing about a change in the present, not to some speculative ideals.

Questioner: The last time we were together, you were telling us that if someone has a painful experience and it is not fully faced, is avoided, it goes into the unconscious as a fragment. How are we to free ourselves from these fragments of painful and fearful experiences, so that the past won't have a grip on us?

Krishnamurti: Yes, Sir, that is conditioning. How does one free oneself from this conditioning? How do I free myself from my conditioning of the culture in which I was born? First, I must be aware that I am conditioned — not somebody telling me that I am conditioned. You understand the difference? If somebody tells me I am hungry, that's something different from actually being hungry. So I must be aware of my conditioning, which means, I must be aware of it not only superficially, but at the deeper levels. That is, I must be aware totally. To be so aware, means that I am not trying to go beyond the conditioning, not trying to be free of the conditioning. I must see it as it actually is, not bring in another element, such as wanting to be free of it, because that is an escape from actuality. I must be aware. What does that mean? To be aware of my conditioning totally, not partially, means my mind must be highly sensitive, mustn't it? Otherwise I can't be aware. To be sensitive means to observe everything very, very closely — the colors, the quality of people, all the things around me. I must also be aware of what actually is without any choice. Can you do that? — not trying to interpret it, not trying to change it, not trying to go beyond it or trying to be free of it — just to be totally aware of it.

When you observe a tree, between you and the tree there is time and space, isn't there? And there is also the botanical knowledge about it, the distance between you and the tree — which is time — and the separation which comes through knowledge of the tree. To look at that tree without knowledge, without the time-quality, does not mean identifying yourself with the tree, but to observe the tree so attentively, that the boundaries of time don't come into it at all; the boundaries of time come in only when you have knowledge about the tree. Can you look at your wife, or your friend, or whatever it is without the image? The image is the past, which has been put together by thought, as nagging, bullying, dominating, as pleasure, companionship and all that. It is the image that separates; it is the image that creates distance and time. Look at that tree, or the flower, the cloud, or the wife or the husband, without the image!

If you can do that, then you can observe your conditioning totally; then you can look at it with a mind that is not spotted by the past, and therefore the mind itself is free of conditioning.

To look at myself — as we generally do — I look as an observer looking at the observed: myself as the observed and the observer looking at it. The observer is the knowledge, is the past, is time, the accumulated experiences — he separates himself from the thing observed.

Now, to look without the observer! You do this when you are completely attentive. Do you know what it means to be attentive? Don't go to school to learn to be attentive! To be attentive means to listen without any interpretation, without any judgment — just to listen. When you are so listening there is no boundary, there is no "you" listening. There is only a state of listening. So when you observe your conditioning, the conditioning exists only in the observer, not in the observed. When you look without the observer, without the "me" — his fears, his anxieties and all the rest of it — then you will see, you enter into a totally different dimension.

April 24, 1971, New York.

Reprinted from The Awakening of Intelligence

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