

Questioner: "What objective proof is there of the experiencing of reality?"

Krishnamurti: What do you mean by objective proof? A demonstration? An argument capable of convincing another? A system of philosophy, carefully devised and sharply defined, so that others can see it? Do you want the authority of another to support your own experience? Is truth, reality, something to be proved, either to another or to yourself? As long as we want proof, which means that we want to be made certain in our own experience, whatever we experience is not truth. Most of us want assurance, we want to be assured that we are experiencing what we call truth. We want to be sure that we are not caught in the net of illusion, of myths, and so on, and that what we experience is real. We want not only objective proof, but also subjective proof.

Now, as long as the mind clings to any form of experience, it is bound to be caught in illusion, because then it is the residue or memory of the experience that becomes all-significant to the mind. What is remembered is the sensation of the experience. If the sensation is painful, it is avoided; if pleasurable, it is retained. So, as long as the mind clings to any so-called spiritual experience, living around the sensation of it and building that into its own existence, it is bound to be caught in the net of illusion.

Reality is not cumulative, it is not to be gathered, it does not give you any assurance, any gratification. It comes when the mind is quiet, tranquil, not demanding; and it is to be understood from moment to moment. And there is no accumulation, no urge for more, as a result of that experience. The moment you want an assurance of the truth of your experience, you may be sure that the experience is an illusion. A mind that craves to be certain, that seeks certainty as an end, is conditioning itself; and therefore, whatever experience it has will only further condition it, bringing about more struggle and misery.

You may have an experience, and because it is pleasurable, you cling to it; the mind goes back to that pleasure over and over again. So, the past becomes extraordinarily significant, and your memories of it then prevent the experiencing of the new. There is a possibility of experiencing the new only when the mind is not anchored to any particular pleasure or experience.

So, there is no proof of reality, objective or subjective; but what is important is the conduct of life, for behaviour is not different from righteousness. Merely to seek proof of subjective experience in no way transforms the conduct of life. On the contrary, it prevents righteous behaviour, because the past experience then becomes all-important, and the mind is made incapable of understanding its own responses in the present. Do not let us be caught in proof and disproof, in assertions and denials, but let us understand confusion, struggle, misery, ill will, enmity, greed, and ambition. When the mind is free from all that, from all the worldly things which it creates and clings to, then there is a real possibility of stillness; and in that stillness, in that tranquillity, reality comes into being. But to ask for proof of reality is to ask the impossible; because, if you want assurance, you do not want truth. For truth or reality to be, the state of uncertainty is essential, because only then is there no accumulation, no centre around which the mind can dwell.

What is important, then, is not to seek proof of reality, but to look to one's conduct in everyday life, to be choicelessly aware of what we do, what we think, what we say. In the freedom of that understanding, the mind is quiet, not demanding, not projecting; and in that stillness, there is the real.