

A high-angle, aerial photograph of a rugged mountain landscape. In the foreground, a small, dark wooden cabin with a chimney sits on a grassy slope. Below the cabin, a wide, rocky valley stretches out, filled with grey scree and patches of green vegetation. In the background, steep, rocky mountain cliffs rise sharply, with a winding road visible on the left side. A dark blue banner with a white border is superimposed over the upper part of the image, containing the text "FRIEDRICH'S NEWSLETTER 2020".

FRIEDRICH'S NEWSLETTER 2020

Cover: The Sulzhütte, across the Partnunsee valley from Schijenzahn and Schijenfluh,
near St Antönien, Switzerland

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This year's Newsletter has been edited and co-authored by
Javier Gómez Rodríguez.

DEAR FRIENDS LETTER

Dear Friends,

Here is my rough draft for the special issue of the *Journal of the Krishnamurti Schools*. I put all of my appreciation for the teachings and feeling for K into my book, *The Beauty of The Mountain – Memories of J. Krishnamurti*, and I don't know what more to say. So these are just some notes in response to Alok's and Viju's request to share "*the meaning you have found in Krishnamurti's insights, and their relevance to the enduring as well as contemporary questions of life.*" Of course, the questions that Krishnamurti raised and everything he was talking about have enormous meaning, I suppose even more nowadays, though it seems to be just a few who realise it. Still, K said, "A few people can change the world." K told us on his deathbed that he continued to watch the TV news to see if anything was changing in the world. He also told us that he saw very little evidence of change there.

A statement that touched me recently can be found on page 94 of the new book *Walking with Krishnamurti*, about Nandini Mehta's relationship with K, edited by Nandini's daughter, Devi Mangaldas. K says, "The aim of the school is to make the students self-aware and fearless." I think this is a great statement. Unfortunately, nothing like it was part of my education. Being self-aware is something of a mystery: I believe that I am so, then something I do shows others that I'm not particularly aware after all. Concerning fear, I might have been fearless climbing many high mountains in my middle years, but I don't think I've met the depths of fear. If it means being open to "that vast emptiness," and if each of us would be open to that rather than imagining that we're becoming something, it might change the world.

Another statement that resonates with me is K's answer to his question, "Do you want to know my secret? ... I don't mind what happens." It resonates because I find it easy to let go of things. Not always, but usually. This might be related to the most deeply meaningful thing I ever heard K

say: “Love has no cause.” I’ve never analyzed the statement, but it’s there, saying ... something very important.

One thing I find amazing is how ahead of his time K often appears to have been. Fifty years ago he was saying that the brain cells can mutate and regenerate themselves, and in the 1980s he claimed that scientists were only then starting to look into how the brain works. In fact, neuroscientists discovered not so long ago that new neurons can grow in the brain. K was also in the forefront of warning about two things: the huge disruptive impact that computers would have on humanity, and the disastrous consequences of human beings lacking a deeply felt relationship with nature – and these two things might be connected. It’s clear that living with such insight as K had would meet so many challenges facing the world, but is anyone really listening? Or are we just trying to invent even more technology to try to get us out of our mess?

I was privileged to have met K but even if I hadn’t my attitude toward the teachings would be the same. In fact, it was coming upon the teachings that made the bigger impression on me. I was fascinated from the first book I read and am still fascinated. Of course, my interaction with K also made a deep impression on me, because being around him allowed at least some people to glimpse what it means to live the teachings. One could see what a simple life K lived. This contact with him served as the inspiration for me to write *The Beauty of The Mountain*, which numerous people have said is a good introduction to the teachings and especially shows K’s human side. What I really wanted to convey with the book was the perfume of being around him. But it was much more than I could say.

What changed for me, in coming into contact with K, were my activities. Before attending his public talks for the first time, I had stopped eating red meat. Then K said, “We eat dead animals,” and I immediately became a vegetarian.

Earlier I had worked very hard in my family’s company and found it an interesting job. (I never saw myself as a businessman, but rather as



Benjamin Stern with his favourite photo from the 2020 K Calendar – Photo by Andre Stern

an industrialist – someone who produces things.) I had to leave the company long before I met K, but even at that earlier point I had the feeling that it was a chance to get off the treadmill of running a big family business. Then when I came across the teachings it made even more sense to have left.

Before meeting K, I also had a period of very intense mountaineering, as mentioned above. After meeting him I still did some mountaineering, but mainly ski-touring, as described in *The Beauty of The Mountain*. I always had a strong connection with nature, feeling most at home in the open air. I was also ecologically minded and had an interest in literature and philosophy but never had the time to pursue them much. After meeting K, there was more time for philosophical things. K said on a few occasions that he was a kind of philosopher in the old sense, when philosophy meant “the love of truth.”

But much more than these changes, for the first time someone could convey to me a sense of the sacred – the holiness of life –, something more than the usual esoteric stuff. He helped me to understand so many things, like the implications of conditioning, attachment, dependence, self-pity, that there is no security; all these things which I had felt somehow but couldn't express or explain.

In 1984, K suggested that I become a trustee of the English and Indian Foundations and an honorary trustee of the American Foundation. From then on, I was very engaged with the Schools, Study Centres and Foundations. Later I brought together some former Brockwood staff to help support the work of these places. And we began producing *The Link*, *Friedrich's Newsletter* and the Calendar, which combined K quotes with my photographs. We have also published other brochures, like *Krishnamurti for Educators and Learners*; *Reflecting Consciousness – An Overview of Dialogue*; and other teachings-related topics. This is a way to keep in touch with the many friends who also have been moved by what Krishnamurti was living and pointing to.

Last year we also organized a Krishnamurti exhibition at the Saanen Museum opening in the summer of 2019. It proved popular enough for the museum directors to extend it until April 2020. And because of the coronavirus it was extended again, from mid-July to mid-October 2020. We've been surprised at how many people remember the Saanen Talks, or attended them and are still interested in the teachings. Others are coming completely new to Krishnamurti, and a good many of them have watched the videos or read the quotes with seriousness. This renewed interest has even prompted the idea of creating something of a permanent K exhibit in the Museum.

One of the visitors to the exhibition was professor Reinchenbach, who came with his grown daughter. He is a philosopher of education and is fascinated by the different cultural approaches to this subject. He is now very keen on reading K on education. In his message below, he shared this interest with us and the touching anecdote of working with his father, who

was the Gstaad milkman. His father met K occasionally during his deliveries to Chalet Tanneg and he conveyed to his son a great sense of respect for him as **a friendly and wise man**.

Dear Friedrich Grohe,

I am not very familiar with the work of Krishnamurti, but with some of his thoughts. I would like to know more about his ideas on education, of course. I have become more and more interested in educational ideas from a cross-cultural perspective during the last 15–20 years. I see many interesting parallels and a common concern with education as a lifelong journey. In 2020 a book will be published at Springer (Reichenbach/Kwak, Eds.) on *Confucian Perspectives on Learning and Self-Transformation*. This does not mean, of course, that I consider myself a Confucian. But Western philosophers of education could learn a lot from the East. Unfortunately, there is a lot of ignorance. Since 2010 I have been in South Korea every year. We are a couple of colleagues from different East Asian countries and universities who meet for conferences and book projects. Last year I was for the first time in India, invited by the Dalai Lama Trust. This was also an important experience for me. What I would like to express here is that I am touched by the beauty of ideas from different cultures and epochs. My colleagues in educational sciences are usually not much interested in that (they prefer numbers) – but that is normal and I do not complain about it. But to me it is personally significant to get in contact with old and new great ideas. So I am keen to read Krishnamurti on education.

There was a little misunderstanding, I guess, when I visited the exhibition in Saanen with my daughter Chloé: my father (who is still alive) did not attend any talks of Krishnamurti. As a milkman in Gstaad for many years he made deliveries to the chalet of Krishnamurti at the Oberbort in Gstaad. As a boy, my father got me and my brothers to help him with his work during our summer breaks. He always talked with great respect of Krishnamurti, whom he met accidentally from

time to time. My mother told me that Krishnamurti once gave him a pair of trousers, of grey color and, apparently, very solid – my father wore these trousers to work for about twenty years ... My parents rented a room to an American woman who attended the talks. She left a book of Krishnamurti in the room which later became my bedroom. Recently, I tried to find this book again, looked through all the books at home in Zurich and at the University and was sure to find it, but I didn't. However, I can recall how I was interested to read in this book at the age of about 13. My English was bad and I did not read very much as a boy. But I figured that this must be an important book, written by an author who was in touch with something bigger than daily life ... My father is himself a very modest and balanced person, I would say. Whenever we would deliver dairy products to the kitchen of Krishnamurti's house, Chalet Tanneg, he would say something like: "Now we go to Krishnamurti. He is a very friendly and wise man," even though he was not at all familiar with his thoughts or teachings. Feeling the respect that my father expressed had a positive effect on me. In the basement kitchen, which is the only part of the house my father and I ever visited, I would think: I am in the house of an important man ...

Anyway, these are little memories, but they have some meaning to me.

Best greetings, *Roland Reichenbach, 26 January 2020*

The brochure, which we put together after the exhibition was extended, has received a widely enthusiastic response. Printed in three languages, English, German and French, it gives a rather good overview of the exhibition and serves as a beautiful souvenir for the visitors. In view of this positive reception, I started sending the brochure around to our mailing list and we got some appreciative responses. One of them came from my friend Claude Gailloud, former professor of ophthalmology at Lausanne University, who finds that K offers **a conception of life that is right for everyone:**

Dear Friedrich,

Thank you for sending the brochure of the Saanen Museum exhibition. It is really beautiful and makes me, of course, want to visit the Museum. Thank you also for the letter that accompanied the brochure, with information about the exhibition and your touching memories, *The Beauty of the Mountain*. Another great story.

Having said that, I must confess that I read your memoir again, in both languages, this time very carefully, without losing a single word. I thus realize the extraordinary life journey that has been yours since childhood until today. You describe it so well! But also, what a commitment, what a work force and what a conviction acquired from K. What I learned from him by reading your articles or his letters to teachers, convinces me that his conception of life and human relations is the right one. It could be right for everyone and for the good of everyone. But it's not that simple. However, as far as I'm concerned, it suits me perfectly.

From *The Beauty of the Mountain*, full of strong messages from K, the one about death ('An extraordinary space in the mind,' pages 86 to 88), impressed and helped me the most.

Finally, your information about the Schools, about the impressive number of books translated into multiple languages and the commitment of thousands of people faithful to K's teaching, gives hope that his work, in which you have greatly participated, will continue to progress and will concern, little by little, an ever-increasing proportion of the vast population of our blue planet. Thank you again.

With all my friendship, *Claude*, 28 February 2020

One's life story continues and as one gets older health becomes a major concern. At my age, one can go on talking about health issues endlessly, which I am rather reluctant to do, so I will give you a short report.

Some of you may know that I am fond of walking and in the summer of doing even a bit of jogging. I also do many other exercises for flexibility,

which so far have been able to ward off my sciatica. This is thanks to David Wells of Intelligent Fitness, based in Alresford, near Brockwood. I also do some eye and neck exercises, along with the pranayama exercises that K taught me many years ago.

In mid-spring 2020, on my usual walk, which starts behind my chalet and goes 200 meters up, I started feeling out of breath, which was unusual. My blood pressure was also rising. A professor of cardiology detected a problem with the aortic valve that meant it would fail in the not-too-distant future. He highly recommended valve replacement surgery, to be done by a professor friend of his who introduced this specific non-invasive procedure in Switzerland. I was in good hands. K often criticized specialization but also agreed that it was useful in some areas!

The surgery took place in Lausanne towards the end of June. All went well for the new valve. But there was a complication with my prostate, so the next day there was a second surgery for that. I returned home a week later, where I'm being well taken care of by Claudia and others. Things are improving rapidly and I feel stronger every day, though the recovery time is usually seven weeks. We go for walks and the other exercises are slowly being reintroduced. I trust that by the time you read this all will be better than before the surgeries.

The putting together of the Newsletter is a collaborative process involving everyone who sends in their news and reflections. Sometimes somebody says something that originates a sequence of exchanges or I may find something of interest and send out a circular asking for comments. Together with Javier, who has taken on the task of helping me to work through and edit the resulting accumulation of material, we try to offer a fair and cogent representation of the scope of the contributions that are made. Naturally, we cannot possibly include every single message and article we receive, nor can we take responsibility for the opinions expressed by the various authors. We never formulated an editorial policy because the purpose was to serve as a general forum of exchange among friends around K and the teachings.



One of the biotopes at Chalet Solitude, Rougemont

It would appear that the first Newsletter dates back to November 1990. That's nearly 30 years ago. That first Newsletter was just a circular, first in German and then in English. It then became something like a pamphlet, then a booklet and kept increasing in size until it eventually metamorphosed into *The Link*. When *The Link* passed on to a better life, the Newsletter came back and it has been getting bigger every year. As a result, I thought that maybe we should try to give an idea of the contents, so I asked Javier to write an editorial note to this year's Newsletter.

K: The miracle of a new day

One wonders as one looks at the creation which seems to have no beginning and no end – a creation not by cunning thought, but the creation of a new morning. This morning it is as it has never been before, so bright, so clear. And the blue hills are looking down. It is the creation of a new day as it has never been before.

There is a squirrel with a long bushy tail, quivering and shy in the old pepper tree which has lost many branches; it is getting very old. It must have seen many storms, as the oak has in its old age, quiet, with a great dignity. It is a new morning, full of an ancient life; it has no time, no problems. It exists and that in itself is a miracle. It is a new morning without any memory. All the past days are over, gone, and the voice of the mourning dove comes across the valley, and the sun is now over the hill, covering the earth. And it too has no yesterday. The trees in the sun and the flowers have no time. It is the miracle of a new day.

Monday, April 18, 1983

Krishnamurti to Himself, pg. 65

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EDITORIAL NOTE

This year's Newsletter presents a rich tapestry of topics and approaches. Although on the face of it seemingly disparate, they are actually very much interconnected in rather a synchronous way. There are many open and subtle threads linking the various pieces that makes for an orchestral effect. It is as though we were engaged, unbeknownst to each other, in a shared exploration and with a common intent. In short, a rather touching and very human dialogue across the globe.

This time the education section includes a string of responses that were triggered by the question as to what K might have called his schools. K discarded such labels as 'alternative', 'progressive' or 'experimental'. When other such labels were tried, most just would not stick. The only one that came close – and even then with some caveats – was 'holistic', which K himself used to describe his educational aims. But what might that imply? And, taking the inquiry from the labels to the facts, to what extent do the schools live up to K's educational intent? So this section ends in a challenging note that, hopefully, might precipitate a further searching conversation among the K educators.

Next we touch on three fundamental topics, namely the relationship of individual and society, the complementarity of science and religion, and the issue of morality. All three are subjects that K treated extensively, albeit not always under such headings. The word 'morality', for example, seldom figures in a positive sense in the teachings, although it is implicit throughout in the form of right action and virtue in general. Again, the word 'virtue' might seem rather old-fashioned, but K did use it consistently to symbolize the state of ethical order and integrity. This exploration is done in the context of the current moral vacuum in our secular society and the challenges posed to its freedom from more dogmatic traditional quarters. Individual and society was the topic chosen for this year's KFA annual Explorations Conference. K made a series of statements about this

relationship, about the tidal movement of the inner and the outer, about the interdependence of consciousness and world. These statements are not always consistent, which makes for an extensive inquiry. The topics of science and religion had already been mentioned as the two pillars of a holistic education. This is in fact one of the subtle threads binding this whole edition of the Newsletter.

K had extensive interactions with psychologists. Conferences were organized specifically for them to discuss psychological issues with him. In his latest book, *Krishnamurti in America*, David Moody, who's especially interested in the psychological content of the teachings, highlighted the significance of this material which, in his view, has not been given the importance it deserves. The points of commonality between psychology and the teachings suggest that the latter could represent a potentially new approach to therapy. In this connection, a number of similarities between K and Jung are explored as well as the nature of the self.

The much-expected premiering of the documentary *Infinite Potential: The Life and Ideas of David Bohm*, by Irish filmmaker Paul Howard, this past June rekindled a worldwide interest in Bohm's life and work. This film contains a wealth of inspiring material and we could not help including it in this issue of the Newsletter. The director himself was kind enough to contribute a beautiful personal account of his transformative journey with Bohm in the making of the film. A second article touches on Bohm's seemingly troubled last days and the connection in his life between depression and insight.

This year there have been an unusual number of K-related publications. We were even able to obtain a few reviews though, unfortunately, not for all of them.

As usual, the Reader's Corner includes a small selection of acknowledgements as well as interesting personal news.

The current viral pandemic has affected and is affecting the whole world and it would have been a bit strange to ignore it. So we end this



Rhododendrons in the Grove at Brockwood Park

issue with something of a reflection on this global crisis in relation to the deeper inner challenge of change.

The Newsletter serves as a forum for all of us to share in the fundamental inquiry into our common humanity and its publication is but a way to reflect that sharing back. We trust it will serve to inspire you to pursue your investigations further in the same spirit of friendship in which it is made.

Javier Gómez Rodríguez
Lelystad, September 2020

K: The Intent of the Schools

It is becoming more and more important in a world that is destructive and degenerating that there should be a place, an oasis, where one can learn a way of living that is whole, sane and intelligent. Education in the modern world has been concerned with the cultivation, not of intelligence, but of intellect, of memory and its skills. In this process little occurs beyond passing information from the teacher to the taught, the leader to the follower, bringing about a superficial and mechanical way of life. In this there is little human relationship.

Surely a school is a place where one learns about the totality, the wholeness of life. Academic excellence is absolutely necessary, but a school includes much more than that. It is a place where both the teacher and the taught explore not only the outer world, the world of knowledge, but also their own thinking, their behaviour. From this they begin to discover their own conditioning and how it distorts their thinking. This conditioning is the self to which such tremendous and cruel importance is given. Freedom from conditioning and its misery begins with this awareness. It is only in such freedom that true learning can take place. In this school it is the responsibility of the teacher to sustain with the student a careful exploration into the implications of conditioning and thus end it.

A school is a place where one learns the importance of knowledge and its limitations. It is a place where one learns to observe the world not from any particular point of view or conclusion. One learns to look at the whole of man's endeavour, his search for beauty, his search for truth and for a way of living without conflict. Conflict is the very essence of violence. So far education has not been concerned with this, but in this school our intent is to understand actuality and its action without any

preconceived ideals, theories or belief which bring about a contradictory attitude toward existence.

The school is concerned with freedom and order. Freedom is not the expression of one's own desire, choice or self-interest. That inevitably leads to disorder. Freedom of choice is not freedom, though it may appear so; nor is order conformity or imitation. Order can only come with the insight that to choose is itself the denial of freedom.

In school one learns the importance of relationship which is not based on attachment and possession. It is here one can learn about the movement of thought, love and death, for all this is our life. From the ancient of times, man has sought something beyond the materialistic world, something immeasurable, something sacred. It is the intent of this school to inquire into this possibility.

This whole movement of inquiry into knowledge, into oneself, into the possibility of something beyond knowledge, brings about naturally a psychological revolution, and from this comes inevitably a totally different order in human relationship, which is society. The intelligent understanding of all this can bring about a profound change in the consciousness of mankind.

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A few months back we recalled an episode when someone had referred to the schools as 'alternative' and K said, "We are not an alternative school." We then asked a few friends what K might call his schools. This question inspired a long string of responses, some of which we include in this section of the Newsletter.

To begin with, it would seem that K schools are mostly called by their locations: Rishi Valley, Rajghat, Valley School, Sahyadri, The School-KFI-Chennai, Brockwood Park, Oak Grove. The schools as a whole might simply

be called what we've been calling them, namely K schools. This would be similar to Montessori or Steiner schools, which are simply named after their founders. But the question referred also to the kind of general characterisation they might come under in terms of the diversity of educational approaches available. K denied that his schools were 'experimental' or 'progressive' in the sense of being a little ahead of society. Calling them 'dynamic' or 'creative' did not quite hit the mark. He even rejected the label 'alternative', since he is concerned with what education as such should be, not with the development of an improved option. However, in the general understanding of the term, which means 'other than the mainstream', they would certainly fit the category. So they are alternative and they are not alternative. So, what are they? How might we define more specifically the kind of education they supposedly offer? What follows is part of an extended and ongoing dialogue about K schools and education.

One of the first responses came from Scott Forbes, former staff member and principal of Brockwood Park, who did a doctorate in Education at Oxford University. For him K's approach to education is **the epitome of holistic**:

Hello Friedrich,

Krishnaji's approach to education is the epitome of holistic, making any school following his Teachings a holistic school.

With regards, *Scott, 07 July 2020*

Toon Zweers is a former student, teacher and principal of Brockwood Park. He has written a Ph.D. about two kinds of learning and is currently writing a practical guide to Krishnamurti education, as well as exploring possibilities in the Netherlands for developing Krishnamurti's educational proposals. In this piece he considers the usual way schools and pedagogies are labeled and supports Scott's claim that K schools and education are 'holistic', even if that term is already in use in north American education.

The Name of Krishnamurti Education

by Toon Zweers

This is the way I look at it: traditionally, forms of education tend to be named after their founder, the place where it all started, or a key characteristic: in the first category, we find Montessori or KPM schools; in the second, Sudbury and Reggio Emilia Schools; in the third Progressive or Democratic Schools. Steiner education has all three: in the UK, it is called Steiner Education (after the founder); in Germany, its schools are called Waldorf Schools (after the place where the first school was set up, appended to the Waldorf cigarette factory); in Holland, they are called Free Schools (after a supposedly key characteristics of Steiner education).

Krishnamurti education is named after its founder. The individual Krishnamurti schools tend to be named after their location. A discussion has been started about whether it makes sense to try to identify a key characteristic, as an additional way of referring to this kind of education.

When people ask about the nature of Krishnamurti education, we can describe what Krishnamurti education is like (no comparison, contact with nature, attention to the inner, and so on), or we can say that it has characteristics in common with certain other kinds of education. The former is relatively unproblematic. In the latter case, it raises the question as to what other forms of education are similar enough to warrant comparison.

As was suggested by Scott Forbes, there are important similarities with what in the north American tradition is called holistic education, rather than, say, with Progressive or Democratic education. This is a quote from John P. Miller:

‘Holistic education attempts to nurture the development of the whole person. This includes the intellectual, emotional, physical, social,

aesthetic, and spiritual. Perhaps the defining aspect of holistic education is the spiritual. Progressive education and humanistic education dealt with the first five factors but generally ignored the spiritual dimension.'

(Holistic Learning and Spirituality in Education. Miller, John P., et al (ed.), Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press (2005), pg. 2)

As we can see, the term holistic is not a bad starting point for a discussion about Krishnamurti education, precisely because of its spiritual dimension. And it helps that Krishnamurti himself sometimes used the word:

'So, is it possible to educate our children, the students in this school, in other schools connected with this school, to bring about a holistic approach to life? ... And to have this **holistic education** implies great affection, love, and where there is love there is intelligence, not the cunning intelligence of thought'.

(First Seminar at Rishi Valley, 24 November 1983)

Importantly, he used the term in ways that resonate with the north American tradition mentioned above:

'And education also, does it not mean educating the human being – you understand? – not acquiring mere techniques, a skill, but educating a human being to live with great art? That means not only technological knowledge – right? – but also the immense, limitless field of the psyche, going beyond it, that is a **holistic education** – you understand?'

(Saanen 2nd Public Question and Answer Meeting, 24 July 1984)

There is even a discussion with teachers, using the term holistic as its focus. This talk would be a good programmatic starting point, if one wanted to frame Krishnamurti education in holistic terms. It starts with the following proposal:

‘May I raise a very complicated question? May I? How would you – if you had a son here or a daughter – want to educate them, or bring about a holistic life? You’ve got so many students here – capable, intelligent, at least some of them, and through what means, through what kind of attitude, what kind of verbal explanation, would you go through to educate them in a holistic way of living? That is what I am proposing. I mean by holistic: whole, unbroken, not splintered up, not fragmented, as most of our lives are.’

(Rishi Valley 2nd Talk with Teachers, 7 December 1985)

When using the word holistic to refer to Krishnamurti education, it is important to stress that the latter is not part of an existing tradition. More than that, it may make sense to claim the true meaning of the term holistic for oneself, setting one’s approach apart from that of others using the same name, as in saying that ‘we provide the true version of holistic education’. After all, there are good arguments in favour of saying that Krishnamurti’s approach is, as Scott wrote, ‘the epitome of holistic’. Among all the forms of holistic education I have come across, his provides the only fully coherent approach to an education that develops the whole person in a way that is genuinely spiritual.

But all this is not the same as saying that Krishnamurti education is somehow holistic education, in the way that we would say that an oak is a tree. There simply is no species called holistic education of which Krishnamurti education could be a genus. So whatever name is used will always be a matter of convenience and convention. And let us not forget that names go in and out of fashion, whereas the depth of the Teachings is certain to find new expression with every new generation. Names are things of convenience for as long as they serve their purpose. They are fingers pointing at the moon. Who knows what term future generations will use to refer to Krishnamurti education?

Toon Zweers (14 July 2020)

K: Unconditioning in education

You are conditioned and the student is conditioned; your child is conditioned and the teacher, the educator is conditioned. We have tried this, that is why I am talking about it. In the school the teacher and the student are both conditioned. For the teacher to wait till he is unconditioned he might just as well wait the rest of his life. So the question is whether he and the student in their relationship in a school can uncondition themselves. That is, in teaching or before giving certain facts about mathematics and so on, discuss this problem, talk over with the students. Say, 'I am conditioned, and you are conditioned', and explain all the complexities of conditioning, the result of that conditioning. Show them the picture, the real picture, not your fanciful, imaginative picture, but the actual picture of a human being's conditioning, as a Jew, as a Muslim, as this or that, and how they are at each other's heads. I would discuss this problem and have a dialogue, go into this with the students, every day, as part of the schoolwork. Then the teacher begins to uncondition himself and the student at the same time.

Chapter 5: Only When there is no Authority will you Learn About Yourself
Unconditioning and Education, Vol. I, pg. 63
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Our old friend Marcelo Fiorini sent us his considerations from Brazil, where he is deeply involved in ecological and educational projects. He feels that the term 'alternative' is used in opposition to the mainstream public schools, which tend to be terrible. He points out that this label is not applied to the schools inspired by the great Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, whose questioning of knowledge and dialogical approach to authentic learning and freedom bear a close resemblance to K's educational approach. However, Marcelo seems to be reaching beyond Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968) to the perhaps more radical *Deschooling Society* (1971) of Ivan Illich. Marcelo's educational project '**Krishnamurti**



View towards Giferspitz, on the upper walk from Rougemont to Saanen

Unschool' sounds like he might be combining K and Illich. (Illich met K and had a couple of dialogues with him in Rajghat in 1972. See Pupil Jayakar's *Krishnamurti: A Biography*, pp. 302–307)

Dear Friedrich,

Thank you for initiating this provocative discussion.

It is true that the term “alternative” creates an immediate dichotomy. It has also been overused. In Brazil, it is used by Montessori, Steiner, and any other schools which have a distinct methodology of education. People look for alternative schools here because the mainstream ones are terrible and stifling, whether academically excellent or not.

Curiously, “alternative” is not used for social movements or schools in Brazil inspired by the educational philosophy of Paulo Freire, whose work on education seems to me the closest to K's. Whereas K talked about freedom, for instance, Freire talked about emancipation, and that includes emancipation from one's own condition. He could even have said “conditioning”, I think, except that that word was not in his vocabulary, but the way he criticized “memorizing” and “banking knowledge”, and the way he talked about “decolonizing the mind” makes his ideas very similar to K's critique of the reliance on thought/knowledge, i.e. on conditioning. “Holistic” and “radical” seem to me very good terms to avoid an obvious dichotomy, although they are not a true remedy for it.

Now, I have been thinking for years (with other people inspired by K) of setting an educational program in Brazil and calling it simply “Krishnamurti Unschool”. I have many reasons for that, and I do not see this idea as conflicting with what K said. Indeed, we have taken a first step to create this program, and so any thoughts on this would be welcome.

Best, Marcelo, 16 July 2020

Geetha Waters contributed a long and very personal piece exploring **the impact of holistic education** as she herself experienced it while a young

student in Rishi Valley. She had several insights into the impact of labels and conditioning on the mind, which she considers central to the holistic inquiry that K initiated in his schools. Due to our limitations of space, she kindly agreed to our publishing the much shorter version below.

Dear All,

I found it interesting to read what people have to say about alternative, progressive, creative and holistic education.

For me the challenge posed by Krishnaji's inquiry was to observe the impact of labels and conditioning on the mind. He indicated that words and labels are pointers directing us where to observe. This made it evident that observation transcends words. This observation is open to the whole of life, which is fully manifest in the world and under no obligation to fit into the context of the self.

I came upon a sense of self in the movement of thought after Krishnaji asked "Who is this I?" Everyone implied that I had an authentic self, but in trying to pin it down I could find little more than a memory to hang that label on. I was just seven years old, but from this insight I realized that the movement of thought could be observed, which was fascinating.

By reflecting and thinking things through, the brain begins to appreciate the merit of being attentive. It learns to keep track of the habit of subscribing to the authority of the known in order to *make sense* of things. But why *make sense* of anything, when one can *sense* it? I can still recall the feeling of independence when I first shrugged off the demand to make sense of things. In observing the impact of labels on the mind, we may see that life is unfolding and observable from moment to moment and does not have to conform to our ideas or descriptions of it.

This kind of inquiry leads to an awareness of there being a pressure to get things right by accommodating all information within the context of what is already known. This becomes an intense preoccupation that keeps getting in the way of intelligence, of simply seeing things wholly and directly. As I understand it, this loss of the capacity to see is the impact of conditioning which Krishnaji was asking us to investigate together.

“Surely what is, far outweighs what was!” This was an insight I had at the age of nine. Consequently, knowledge and imagination became the subject of an inquisitive and tireless scrutiny. Such an orientation towards learning is based on the fact that awareness precedes interpretation. This frees the brain from the innate compulsion to uphold what is known. It sets it free to relate empathically and authentically with what is. This is the radical awakening that is facilitated by holistic education.

Holistic education points to the fact that what is can be observed. Life exists. Why recall life in order to verify existence? Why uphold truth when we can behold it? This undermines the authority of the known and liberates intelligence. The brain does not feel obligated to jump to the defense of self-centered existence and begins to perceive the great merit of acting on behalf of life as a whole. The individual falls into place and the whole community benefits.

Krishnamurti’s experiment with holistic education proves that it is up to the community to educate children to live creatively by exercising their intelligence, rather than making children subservient to the content and structures created by thought and secured by institutions. He initiated us to a process of inquiry which looks beyond labels, blasts the center and enables the brain to appreciate its capacity for intelligence as a whole!

I hope you are all in the best of health. What a year this has been!

Regards, *Geetha Waters*, 21 July 2020

K: The ending of thought

To end thought I have first to go into the mechanism of thinking. I have to understand thought completely, deep down in me. I have to examine every thought, without letting one thought escape without being fully understood, so that the brain, the mind, the whole being becomes very attentive. The moment I pursue every thought to the root, to the end completely, I will see that thought ends by itself. I do not have to do anything about it because thought is memory. Memory is the mark of experience and as long as experience is not fully, completely, totally understood, it

leaves a mark. The moment I have experienced completely, the experience leaves no mark. So, if we go into every thought and see where the mark is and remain with that mark, as a fact – then that fact will open and that fact will end that particular process of thinking, so that every thought, every feeling is understood. That requires tremendous attention, not attention only to the trees and birds but inward attention to see that every thought is understood.

On Teaching and Learning

Krishnamurti on Education, pg. 85

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Lionel Claris wrote a long but well-considered response concerning ‘alternative schools’. Lionel was a student at Brockwood and, afterwards, a very popular teacher among students and colleagues. He is currently working on his Ph.D. in Philosophy and ‘critical thought’. We miss him very much and hope he can come back to Brockwood one day. In this article Lionel deconstructs the notion of ‘holistic education’. He does so in the context of K’s educational vision and proposes that its essence lies in its concern with **an inner revolution**. We here reproduce a shortened edited version of his originally longer piece. Partly in view of the critical responses to the issue of ‘psychological revolution’, he is now working on an extended version to be published in The Journal of the Krishnamurti Schools.

Dear fellow K educators,

I would like to offer a different reading of the relationship between K and ‘alternative education’ in general, and ‘holistic education’ in particular. For before venturing to answer the question ‘what K would call his schools’, it seems that we must clarify what K might have meant by ‘holistic’. My sense is that it may be a jump to assume that K’s use of the term is the same as in ‘holistic education’, even though there is a connection between them. The point is not only to see where they overlap but, more importantly, where they do not.

Despite the fact that Krishnamurti does use the word ‘holistic’ from time to time, it seems to me critical to question what is meant by ‘wholeness’. I fear that such a notion may become all too idealistic, forgetting the quality of ‘the unknown’ that can be associated with it.

In his comprehensive study *Holistic Education*, Scott Forbes analyses six thinkers in order to present its ‘ideas and nature’. Even though he is mentioned a couple of times, Krishnamurti is not one of them.* This book is an informative read for delving into the theories of learning behind ‘holistic education’. Particularly helpful are the sections entitled ‘What needs to be learned’, which delineate what is important in terms of learning for each of these educators. Such a section on Krishnamurti could have been helpful – though it seems it would be more appropriate here to talk about what needs to be ‘unlearned’.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, none of these thinkers seem to have been interested in a ‘psychological revolution’. Of course, ‘holistic education’ is intent on what it calls ‘ultimacy’, but even in the psychological context – for example in Abraham Maslow’s notion of ‘self-actualization’ – it appears to be in many ways at odds with K’s questioning of the self. Could it be, then, that this *inner revolution* is the distinctive and central piece of a K education?

One of the questions is how this ‘revolution’ relates to the idea of ‘wholeness’. My source of inspiration in offering a possible answer is one of K’s most concise and notable statements on education: ‘The Intent of the Schools’. I was lucky to come across it when I was a student at Brockwood, and I was happy to read it again in Friedrich’s *The Beauty of the Mountain*.¹

In the last paragraph, K concludes with characteristic clarity:

“This whole movement of inquiry into knowledge, into oneself, into the possibility of something beyond knowledge, brings about naturally a

1 This text is reproduced in full at the beginning of this section of the Newsletter.

* Editor’s note: Oxford would not let Scott write about K because he was well versed in his work and a doctorate requires new scholarship.

psychological revolution, and from this comes inevitably a totally different order in human relationship, which is society. The intelligent understanding of all this can bring about a profound change in the consciousness of mankind.”

So it is not an ‘alternative’ that K wants to provide in his schools, but perhaps *the* alternative to what schools are usually assumed to be about: *knowledge*. What could be *the* alternative to knowing? That is, *the* alternative to conditioning? While K’s views seem to align with the broad definition of ‘holistic education’ as *the development of the whole person*, it appears to be a stretch to presume that such development leads to the kind of *psychological revolution* K is explicitly after.

Allow me to offer a brief reading of the five previous paragraphs of that educational statement in order to clarify what K might have meant by ‘whole’ or ‘holistic’. Let us consider the first two paragraphs:

“It is becoming more and more important in a world that is destructive and degenerating that there should be a place, an oasis, where one can learn a way of living that is whole, sane and intelligent. Education in the modern world has been concerned with the cultivation, not of intelligence, but of intellect, of memory and its skills. In this process little occurs beyond passing information from the teacher to the taught, the leader to the follower, bringing about a superficial and mechanical way of life. In this there is little human relationship.

Surely a school is a place where one learns about the totality, the wholeness of life. Academic excellence is absolutely necessary, but a school includes much more than that. It is a place where both the teacher and the taught explore not only the outer world, the world of knowledge, but also their own thinking, their behaviour. From this they begin to discover their own conditioning and how it distorts their thinking. This conditioning is the self to which such tremendous and cruel importance is given. Freedom from conditioning and its misery begins with this awareness. It is only in such freedom that true learning can take place. In this school it is the responsibility of the teacher to sustain with the student a careful exploration into the implications of conditioning and thus end it.”

What is the ‘wholeness of life’ that K is talking about here? Is it the same as ‘the whole person’? Or is the point, on the contrary, to question such a construct? It seems that K is emphasizing *the relational aspect* of the process of ‘deconditioning’ the person.

The etymology of the word ‘alternative’ means ‘offering one or the other of two.’ If most schools focus on ‘the outer’, bringing ‘the inner’ into the picture is indeed a more complete and *whole* approach to education. As such, the relationship between ‘the outer’ and ‘the inner’ becomes particularly important for the ultimate goal of *ending conditioning*. And could we say that K’s emphasis is not only on ‘the inner’ but on ending the conditioning, cultivating knowledge and at the same time bringing about freedom from the known?

I understand that ‘holistic education’ includes the cultivation of ‘inner’ traits, but as far as I can see, they are not explicitly about *ending the self* – often enough, quite the opposite. It seems to me that by appealing to *the pedagogical relationship* between the teacher and the student K is trying to address the difference between ‘the one who knows’ and ‘the one who doesn’t’ as a way to end conditioning. Inasmuch as “truth is a pathless land”, it seems nevertheless that it is via a relationship that values *the unknown* that they might access it.

“A school is a place where one learns the importance of knowledge and its limitations. It is a place where one learns to observe the world not from any particular point of view or conclusion. One learns to look at the whole of man’s endeavour, his search for beauty, his search for truth and for a way of living without conflict. Conflict is the very essence of violence. So far education has not been concerned with this, but in this school our intent is to understand actuality and its action without any preconceived ideals, theories or belief which bring about a contradictory attitude toward existence.”

What seems to be meant by ‘whole’ here is the profound questioning of the separation between *the observer and the observed*. So it is the observer, the thinker, the person who thinks he or she knows that is being questioned. Most ‘alternative’ education gives credence to some

version of ‘experiential knowledge’. However, K’s endeavour is to challenge the notions both of an ‘experiencer’ and of knowledge. K points out that “So far education has not been concerned with this”. Is he wrong? I see no evidence that outside the K schools there are other educational institutions explicitly dedicated to this same mission. Some educationists, like Eleanor Duckworth (Harvard University), do speak of “the virtues of not knowing”. She differentiates such a virtue from the automatic acquisition of information and knowing the right answer. Yet even here we don’t find an explicit goal to be free of conditioning. If K is wrong and there are other schools that have this vision, then they should join forces, for the world needs it.

“The school is concerned with freedom and order. Freedom is not the expression of one’s own desire, choice or self-interest. That inevitably leads to disorder. Freedom of choice is not freedom, though it may appear so; nor is order conformity or imitation. Order can only come with the insight that to choose is itself the denial of freedom.”

Here we find what is perhaps the most counterintuitive and controversial, but also the most significant affirmation in this statement, namely “*that to choose is the denial of freedom.*” This gets to the core of the ‘psychological revolution’ K is after. Choosing takes place from knowledge, whereas the freedom K is talking about is from that very same knowledge. And what kind of order comes out of this freedom? I would say that such order is not the ‘whole’ in ‘holistic education’ because such ‘wholeness’ cannot be known; it is a true creation.

“In school one learns the importance of relationship which is not based on attachment and possession. It is here one can learn about the movement of thought, love and death, for all this is our life. From the ancient of times, man has sought something beyond the materialistic world, something immeasurable, something sacred. It is the intent of this school to inquire into this possibility.”

Finally, we are back to the affirmation of something beyond knowledge. This reminds me of a conversation I had with Mary Zimbalist in the West Wing when I was a student at Brockwood. (She and I used to have tea on a weekly basis as she practiced her French with me, and I practiced my English with her!) I remember her telling me something K had told her about the responsibility of the educators: “The responsibility of the teachers is not to the students but to the Other.” My sense is that ‘the Other’ is ‘the unknown.’

Is this ‘Other’ also the ‘whole’? Just like for David Bohm ‘the whole’ was *not*, as David Peat put it in his biography, “*that monolithic authoritarian wholeness of universal law and ultimate theory, but a wholeness that was subtle and moving,*” (p. 303) can we emphasize in our pedagogy the unknowability of the ‘whole’ rather than indulge in the ideal of it?

The word ‘holism’ – sometimes spelled ‘wholism’ – has come to mean that *the whole is greater than the sum of its parts*. I would say this is because ‘wholeness’ here stands for something unknowable. To the extent that ‘holistic’ refers to an ideal collection of mind, body, spirit, etc., it indicates a desire to capture ‘wholeness’ within the *already* ‘known’. We are then back into the dangerous business of the self. But to the extent that ‘holistic’ – ‘w(hole)istic’! – means *poking holes* in knowledge and questioning the self, then I think we are closer to the ‘Other’ that K had been after for his schools.

In concluding, it seems that more important than what name Krishnamurti might have called his schools, is the extent to which the ‘psychological revolution’ is taking place. I personally do not believe a single name will do – except perhaps for ‘K Schools’ – and, as K himself put it:

“The point of all this is to keep the teachings fundamentally and vitally in the schools. If the schools don’t vitally reflect the teachings, they are better cut loose.” (In the Presence of Krishnamurti: Mary Zimbalist’s Unfinished Book, in the entry for 1 October 1972)

Most sincerely, most respectfully, and stay healthy!

Lionel, 5 August 2020



View from Chalet Solitude towards Videmanette, Rougemont

Steve waxed rather enthusiastic on reading Lionel's careful inquiry into the essence of K's holistic education. He felt that Lionel had hit the nail on the head with his identification of 'revolution' as the key to understand what K education is about. He feels that, fundamentally, it is **a religious question**:

Salut, Lionel!

And thank you for your lengthy, but not long-winded, analysis of "the story so far". I have been watching it spin out over the past few weeks, appreciating the quality, and the intensity, of the input but feeling that something was missing. Then, voila! you hit the nail on the head.

The word *revolution* was the clincher. As you point out, the intention of the schools – not to mention the teachings, not to mention the teacher – cannot be understood without this dimension. It was always the basis of K's work and it remains so. Terms like *holistic*, *radical*, even *alternative*, though they contextualise and define to a certain extent, do not go quite to the very end. It was, is, and remains K's intention to bring about a "new mind", a mind not rooted in personal history, nor even in the consciousness of mankind "as we know it", but in "something else", which you characterise as "the Other". I agree with this assessment one hundred per cent. Those of us who have been touched by K, however vaguely, apprehend that knowledge *in itself* is limited and that thought, however brilliant and refined, is always *about* – not "the thing" itself. It is *being*, not *knowing*, which is of supreme importance. For it is only in *being* that wholeness can be found.

Fundamentally, it is **a religious question**. This K enunciated directly in a conversation with G. Narayan, sometime Principal of Rishi Valley School, when the latter asked him what were the aims of these schools, to which he replied:

To foster and develop global awareness.

To care for the land and for each other in relationship.

To cultivate the religious mind.

In the time since this conversation took place (about forty years ago) there has been a growing awareness of the need to be aware, at least as far as “the outer” is concerned. No other schools, as far as I know, even talk about, let alone cultivate, the religious mind. With all their faults and failings, the K schools are unique.

K never wanted to be associated with other teachers or educators. In comparison with the mainstream, these schools are “alternative” (Latin *alter* = *other, different from*) but when K said they were neither “alternative” nor “progressive”, it was in the context of the late 60s, early 70s when there was an upsurge of interest in living and educating differently and great interest in starting “free schools”. Many of them referred to Summerhill for inspiration and there is no doubt A.S. Neill was an inspired educator. His school, started in 1921, offered immense freedom to the child – the freedom **not** to go to classes, for instance – but his understanding of freedom is different from K’s and does not stretch to the religious dimension.

We are left, I’m afraid, with “the beauty of the mountain” – peerless, inaccessible ... Or is it?

With fondest Good wishes to y’all, Steve, 8 August 2020

K: Science and religion in the cultivation of the whole human being

Though one has repeated this often, education is the cultivation of the whole brain, not one part of it; it is a holistic cultivation of the human being. A high school or secondary school should teach both science and religion. Science really means the cultivation of knowledge, doesn’t it? Science is what has brought about the present state of tension in the world for it has put together through knowledge the most destructive instrument that man has ever found. It can wipe out whole cities at one blow, millions can be destroyed in a second. A million human beings can be vaporized. And science has also given us a great many beneficial things – communication, medicine, surgery and innumerable small

things for the comfort of man, for an easy way of life in which human beings need not struggle endlessly to gather food, cook and so on. And it has given us the modern deity, the computer. One can enumerate the many, many things that science has brought about to help man and also to destroy man, destroy the entire world of humanity and the vast beauty of nature. Governments are using the scientists, and scientists like to be used by governments for then they have a position, money, recognition and so on. Human beings also look to science to bring about peace in the world, but it has failed, just as politics and the politicians have failed to give them total security, peace to live and cultivate not only the fields but their brain, their heart, their way of living, which is the highest art.

And religions – the accepted, traditional, superficial religions, creeds and dogmas – have brought about great damage in the world. They have been responsible for wars in history dividing man against man – one whole continent with very strong beliefs, rituals, dogmas against another continent which does not believe the same things, does not have the same symbols, the same rituals. This is not religion, it is just repetition of a tradition, of endless rituals that have lost meaning except that they give some kind of stimulus; it has become a vast entertainment. Religion is something entirely different. We have often spoken about religion. The essence of religion is freedom, not to do what you like, that is too childish, too immature and too contradictory, bringing great conflict, misery and confusion. Freedom again is something entirely different. Freedom means to have no conflict, psychologically, inwardly. And with freedom the brain becomes holistic, not fragmented in itself. Freedom also means love, compassion, and there is no freedom if there is not intelligence. Intelligence is inherent in compassion and love. We can go into this endlessly, not verbally or intellectually, but inwardly live a life of such a nature.

[...]

Religion is a form of science. That is, to know and to go beyond all knowledge, to comprehend the nature and immensity of the universe, not through a telescope, but the immensity of the mind and the heart.

Ojai, California, Tuesday 27 March 1984

Krishnamurti to Himself, pp. 125–127

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Since Steve referred to G. Narayan's memoir, where K had enumerated the aims of his schools, we thought it would be of interest to include this particular text in this conversation, as it offers one of the simplest outlines of the fundamental intents at the core of K's approach to education.

K's Educational Aims

In 1982 many members of the Foundation were visiting Rishi Valley, and some of us took our dinner at the guest house. We talked rather softly and finished our dinner by eight-thirty so that we did not disturb Krishnaji, who was staying in his room adjacent to the discussion hall.

One evening as we were dining, Krishnaji entered the room around seven-thirty and asked for his dinner to be brought into the dining room, and he sat with us to eat. All of us were feeling cheerful after the evening walk with Krishnaji.

One of us asked Krishnamurti what his educational objectives were. We were not sure whether he would answer us, as he did not think in terms of aims and goals.

To our great surprise, he enumerated the following as his educational aims.

1. Global outlook: Krishnamurti explained that this meant a vision of the whole as distinct from the part, and that it should never be a sectarian outlook but always a holistic outlook free from all prejudice. He said that only a global approach could solve our problems, placed as we were at the end of the twentieth century, with unknown dangers from nuclear energy and hazardous wastes, population growth, environmental pollution, and wars. He said that a sectarian outlook would invariably lead to bigotry and violence.
2. Concern for man and the environment: Krishnamurti said that man was part of nature, and if nature was not cared for, it would boomerang on man. There was need for afforestation and conservation of soil. Ecologists were pointing out that the destructive nature of man had led to the disappearance of many species in the biosphere. Man was suffering and was confused. There were conflicts of all kinds, leading to violence and wars. He said that only right education and deep affection between people, which was needed everywhere, would resolve many human problems.
3. Religious spirit, which included the scientific temper: Krishnamurti told us that the religious mind is alone, not lonely. It is in communion with people and nature. He said that the religious spirit is young and innocent and can explore into the present with creative zeal. While the scientific mind goes from fact to fact and observes, the religious mind alone could comprehend the fact and go beyond it from the known to the unknown. He said that only the non-sectarian and nondenominational religious spirit would bring about a new culture.

There was a radiance in the dining room as he spoke to us till 9:00 p.m. When we dispersed at 9:30 p.m., we felt that it had been a rare evening, as Krishnaji usually never came out of his room after his dinner. We felt that Krishnamurti was giving a new holistic direction to those of us involved in education.

As the River Joins the Ocean: Reflections About J. Krishnamurti
Edwin House Publishing, Inc., Ojai, Ca., 1998, pp. 64– 65
© 1998 by Natasha Narayan Rutman

Mary-Ann Ridgway, former Head of Inwoods Small School at Brockwood, was keen to point out **the danger of labels**, as they can become an ideal, something we must live up to and against which what is an ongoing learning process is to be constantly measured. In the 2018 issue of this Newsletter we published a beautiful article by Mary-Ann entitled 'Holistic Education', where she mapped out the fundamental pedagogical areas and curricular implications of such an approach. We recommend this article of hers to all the educators.

Dear Friedrich and Everyone,

Any adjective or label can be very misleading and, perhaps, even damaging as there is the tendency to try to live up to whatever that label is (which is mostly an interpretation, anyway) rather than enquire persistently together into what right education is, and what this may look like on the ground and within the context of a particular setting – this is tireless work, as there is no blueprint.

In my experiences at Inwoods Small School, over the years many people tried to label the place: you are alternative; you are not very alternative compared to this school or that school; you are a K school; you are not a K school; or, you are neither alternative nor mainstream, so what are you? My best attempts at describing the place involved mostly saying what we were not and then inviting those who were interested to come and see what we were doing (or trying to do) and to 'feel' the place rather than analyse it, and then to engage with us on questions fundamental to a learning environment.

Often a word has a definition that is specific to its context or one's particular understanding or experience of it. I find that to go at anything with depth some words need to be defined anew in the context of what is being discussed, otherwise we could be speaking at cross purposes. Broad labels will obviously not correctly define a place and will more likely leave people arguing over the right choice of label, reacting to it from their specific definition of it, or superficially judging the place by it. What a waste of energy!

In a similar way that Montessori and Steiner schools get stuck in a methodology and can't evolve, K schools can also become restricted by an intellectual idea of how they should be.

But more important than the question of labels is how we can support the necessary work and dedication of any school that is not just a place for acquiring knowledge and skills. If we are interested in education, how can we all collaborate with budding teachers, parents, school administrators, governors, etc. in finding the most constructive and useful approach to right education? Schools can be fragile places (especially if they are doing anything that is challenging or dangerous to society) and they need all the support they can get.

With very best wishes, *Mary-Ann, 15 August 2020*

K: Real education

Real education means that a human mind, your mind, not only is capable of being excellent in mathematics, geography and history, but also can never, under any circumstances, be drawn into the stream of society. Because that stream, which we call living, is very corrupt, is immoral, is violent, is greedy. That stream is our culture. So, the question is how to bring about the right kind of education so that the mind can withstand all temptations, all influences, the bestiality of this civilisation and this culture. We have come to a point in history where we have to create a new culture, a totally different kind of existence, not based on consumerism and industrialisation, but a culture based upon a real quality of religion. Now how does one bring about, through education, a mind that is entirely different, a mind that is not greedy, not envious? How does one create a mind that is not ambitious, that is extraordinarily active, efficient, that has a real perception of what is true in daily life, which is, after all, religion?

On Education

Krishnamurti on Education, pg. 14

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While thus far this conversation had been characterised by the exchange of different points of view in a generally positive valuation of K education, the question was waiting to be posed, as Lionel had already wondered, as to what extent the schools deliver on their aims. K himself used to ask this question, at one time commenting that after all their years of existence the schools produced improved mice and wondering where the lion, the elephant or even the gazelle were. Suprabha picked on this same issue and threw **a spanner in the works**. In her message below, she states that the K schools have not lived up to K's teachings. She sees no blazing individuals, no psychological revolution or freedom from the known. In other words, what the schools stand for is not what they produce. She is consequently issuing a challenge to the K educational community to come together and honestly engage in a searching dialogue about the issues involved in such an approach.

Dear Friedrich and Everyone,

I have been a student of three Krishnamurti schools that were so fundamentally different from each other that if you did not know about K, you would not see any connection between them. In character, application, pedagogical and philosophical matters, and in adult-adult relations, as well as adult-student relations, and human-nature relations. And also, of course, culture. This is partly contextual; every place is unique. But they are all Krishnamurti schools, and it is not at all clear what unifies them. I loved all three. Totally. And still hold the memories of each dearly in my heart. (Oops! Memories ...)

At the Gurukula Botanical Sanctuary, over the last three decades we have received students and teachers from all the K schools. There is a clear cultural aspect to each group. And a conditioning aspect. It's easy to pick out Oak Grove-speak and Brockwood-speak and Rishi Valley-speak and CFL-speak and so on. The students are like the fruit of their landscape, and you can tell a lot about the landscape from the things they say, or how they behave.

I have no judgements or preferences, kids are lovely on the whole and the teachers are nice too, but it's clear that the K factor is not particularly deep. Whichever adjective you use, "transformational, holistic, alternative", there is little K-related "oomph" – barring some loyalty to the text of the teachings, and some navel-gazing that is slightly better than the kind of stuff you get on the new age channels. And often the subtext: how "we" are different from all those mediocre and limited "others". It's clear that the teachings have been massively interpreted differently in each location and context and also by every individual. The key point I'm making is, there have been contradictory and varying interpretations and, once again, this is not something I judge, but rather am bemused about. Is interpretation in the very nature of language and being human? What does it mean not to interpret? I don't know.

I suggest that there is a re-evaluation, a move to discuss the substance and outcome of the schools and the processes involved in creating a K school. The biggest and most problematic adjective or qualifier is, of course, "Krishnamurti". The schools have not lived up to this name. Not now, not ever, though it was different when Krishnaji was alive. I'm sure most people would agree.

I see no blazing individuals. I see no psychological revolution. I see no freedom from the known. No dropping of the "me". No ending of sorrow, no ending of time. No ending of psychological conditioning. No ending of hubris.

I see nice people. A lot of vegetarians. And a certain absence of outright violence (though hidden violence seems rife). Some excellence within the conventional frameworks of academia and various arts and disciplines. And openness with respect to the natural world (but not necessarily a visceral connect).

But I see these elsewhere too. It's always nice to meet nice people. To meet good singers, and intellectuals and bright people who go on to business or politics, who care for their children, their enterprise and environment. We've been host to many schools. Lovely people everywhere. And many people stay in touch as they go on through life. However, the K schools do not stand up to K's teachings.

Sorrow, conflict, mediocrity, collapses, rebirths as well as a lot of people eating well, and sleeping in nice comfy beds ... as the world goes down. Things worsening by the second. With no personal insult intended to people in this group, I find philosophers and philosophizing tiresome. The lease of life granted to the schools, by the person that K was, is running out.

We need to speak in truth to each other, not about abstractions. And we need to speak without sentiment about how true any of the schools is to its own intention, or not. There is a dire need to speak about how we deal with separation, prejudice, power and falsehoods between us. Where can we uncover the nature and substance of a Krishnamurti school?

I have stayed out of the K framework for many reasons, one being that the degree of transparency required, given the teachings, falls way too short. And also, excellence in the human domain, given what has been written in the teachings. A good horticulture school that transmits excellent practice to its students is visible in the plants that they grow. A music school will show itself in the music. What is visibly “K” about K schools?

There was another email loop that Friedrich initiated some time ago when someone wrote about how distinct the K students were. I was not so sure about that, and in fact disagreed. Someone else mentioned Greta Thunberg as a counter example. Which I also disagreed with, as there is a tendency in the west to idolize individuals (and in the east too, except we make them into divinities!!). The self-serving tautological descriptions do not work.

Being outside the K community, I can be mediocre, messed up, and just in the thick of life. And watch myself, the whole movement of consciousness, or not. Insights, breakthroughs happen, or not. You don’t have that option if you claim to be a K school. It is intrinsic to the text of the teachings to be honest, open, enquiring, radical, whole ... Who can be this?! Can the whole school be this? I hear claims from different schools, but mostly, the outcome is fuzzy.

Now, all this is of course the subject of much navel gazing that goes on in the schools, endlessly so. The very nature of the enterprise seems to imply that if you talk about it, you are doing it. But then some spanner in the works shows that that might not be the case!

I'll stop here with a suggestion: why don't people get together on Zoom, and talk? It might be really nice to do a series of conversations. Emails are difficult to sustain.

With affection for K, and Friedrich, and the schools, and everyone I have known in and out of the K world, and of course the beautiful lands which give the schools the greatest ego-free character of all, and truly sustain them. I'm all for eco to annihilate ego! In fact, the two are mutually exclusive!

Best wishes, *Suprabha*, 20 August 2020

K: We have to be that

You know, sirs, it is said that the Benedictine monks held the light in the Dark Ages of Europe. The 14th to the 16th century was the Renaissance. Before that were the Dark Ages, and they held the light of knowledge. They were supposed to be the people who were enlightened. All around them was darkness. We have to be that. Because the world is mad.

One has to be completely dedicated to this. Sorry to put it that way. Nothing else matters but this. It is like having a baby: the mother gets up at two, three, four o'clock; whether she is asleep or awake, it is the baby first. I did that with Radha, changed the diapers I don't know how often. Complete dedication. The mother is dedicated. She is not even dedicated; the baby is *there*. She does not say, 'I am dedicated'. One must have the capacity, the drive – capacity in the sense of creating from nothing. Dedication implies capacity, and it implies also learning, quickly learning. Capacity for learning and the capacity to bring about a cooperative spirit to make one feel that we must work together. That is an extraordinary thing to have. And care, affection and love, all this is involved in it. That is the real dedication. If we have it, the place will burst with laughter.

*Chapter 4: A New Culture Comes Only with Religion
Unconditioning and Education, Vol. I, pp. 54–55
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THE TEACHER AND THE TEACHINGS

K: There is no path to wisdom

There is no path to wisdom. If there is a path, then wisdom is the formulated, it is already imagined, known. Can wisdom be known or cultivated? Is it a thing to be learnt, to be accumulated? If it is, then it becomes mere knowledge, a thing of experience and of the books. Experience and knowledge are the continuous chain of responses and so can never comprehend the new, the fresh, the uncreated. Experience and knowledge, being continuous, make a path to their own self-projections, and hence they are constantly binding. Wisdom is the understanding of 'what is' from moment to moment, without the accumulation of experience and knowledge. What is accumulated does not give freedom to understand, and without freedom there is no discovery; and it is this endless discovery that makes for wisdom. Wisdom is ever new, ever fresh, and there is no means of gathering it. The means destroys the freshness, the newness, the spontaneous discovery.

"My Path and Your Path"

Commentaries on Living, First Series, pg. 96

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K was very clear that wisdom was something quite different from the accumulation of knowledge. He saw knowledge as inherently limited, lagging behind the unfolding immediacy of 'what is', held in the bubble of the past even as that past exists in the present. That time gap is for K a key factor of limitation in our ability to face the whole and wholeness of life. Or put another way, it is the factor that makes for an inadequate response to the challenges of living and thus the very source of our endemic condition of fragmentation, conflict and suffering. This is a massive indictment of the very field on which humanity has for ages been placing its hopes of civi-

lized and creative order. This was Jacob Bronowski's proposal in his famous BBC television series *The Ascent of Man*. K had seen it when it first came out in the early 70s and he strongly disagreed with the premise that an advance in knowledge was an ascent for man, citing the great progress in science and technology and its ever more destructive uses in the exploitation of nature and in the tragedy of war. In other words, that while science had progressed, man remained, psychologically and morally, the same old barbarian – only now he was much better equipped. Which implies that without a fundamental psychological transformation, knowledge alone will not civilize man. This psychological transformation was K's urgent intent and it was not a matter of knowledge but of wisdom.²

On the other hand, K acknowledged that knowledge has its rightful place. Without it we would not be able to speak a language or find our way home or do the myriad things that we have to do. Knowledge informs our existence in all manner of useful and necessary ways. It also misinforms it in other ways and to distinguish between them, to separate the grain from the chaff, is one of the purposes of inquiry. K accepted that inquiry was important in awakening the mind to the actuality of its content and the implications of its actions. To that extent he trusted that the mind had the innate capacity to understand itself. Without such a possibility, it would be hard to understand his emphasis on self-knowledge as the key to the radical inner transformation he envisaged. This meant developing not just the art of observation, which was essential, but also the art of questioning, in particular questioning what he said so that we might not be taking it on authority but discover the truth for ourselves.

This inquiring engagement with the teachings is at the basis of the KFA annual Explorations Conference. They pick a theme from K's vast oeuvre and invite experts in related fields to discuss the matter together in dialogue with what K had to say. What he had to say concerned the vast extent of existence and affected every field of human endeavour in a gen-

2 The prefatory texts in this section of the Newsletter were provided by Javier Gómez Rodríguez.



Autumn larch in front of Videmanette, at Chalet Solitude, Rougemont

eral way and some more directly because of their closer affinity with the issues that concerned him. K was always open to such an engagement and held a number of conferences with scientists, psychologists and religious people. This year the Explorations Conference took as its theme *Individual and Society*. In preparation for it, KFA produced a general paper outlining the scope of the exploration. We thought this might be of general interest and below we reproduce the main body of this paper.

2020 Explorations Conference: *Individual and Society*

Exploration, for K, involved the process of examination after putting aside preconceived notions and beliefs. While this is easier said than done, it is our intent and hope that the conference will engender an environment that is conducive to exploration. Although exploration, according to K, is not merely an intellectual exercise, he suggested that the climate for inquiry should include the establishment of a rigorously rational and logical foundation of the landscape under consideration. He also repeatedly emphasized the importance of approaching exploration with a healthy measure of doubt and scepticism, wherein he urged his listeners to question and not readily accept any assertions, including even his own statements. The intent of the conference is not necessarily to find a common ground, nor to seek validation for K's positions, but to sharpen our understanding of the content and underlying principles informing diverse perspectives and their boundary conditions. We hope this deeper understanding may, in turn, augment the likelihood of developing a more unified and coherent set of insights. Thus, in light of these considerations, and as in previous years, the conference will feature a diverse range of perspectives on the theme of *Individual and Society* from K's body of work, and from the disciplines of socio-biology, anthropology, evolutionary and developmental science, neuroscience, psychology, and philosophy.

The conference will open with a presentation on K's perspective (or, more precisely, our best understanding of K's perspective) on the theme of Individual and Society. Why did he speak about this topic, and what did he have to say about it? There is no question that K's primary focus was on the individual. Particularly on the 'inner' state of the individual, in terms of 'conditioned' thoughts, feelings and behaviours. For K, this conditioned inner state is the fundamental cause of human conflict and suffering, and freedom from the effects of conditioning is the beginning of the realization of the highest human potential.

K viewed the current state of human society as predominantly characterized by disharmony, conflict and misery, and based on the foundations of ambition, greed, envy, and the pursuit of power and prestige. He proposed that this particular view of the state of society is an obvious fact; that it has always been so; and that it has remained essentially unchanged for as long as society has existed. K suggested that a transformation is warranted in the nature of human society, and he spoke about the process and sequence of actions that may bring about such a change. Here, K emphatically rejected as untenable and ineffectual the exercise of addressing societal transformation by attempting to engineer changes to any of its specific economic, political, social or ideological structures and characteristics. Instead, he suggested that the only way to effectively address the current state of disharmony and conflict in society might be through a deep insight into the nature of the individual who constitutes human society.

Why did K adamantly reject all notions of change in the structure of society, in favour of an exclusive emphasis on change at the level of the individual? His reasoning appears to be based on his observations about the nature of the individual, of society, and of the relationship between the individual and society. K affirmed that one of the fundamental attributes of humans is that we are social beings. We cannot live in a state of isolation, but only in a state of relationship with one another. These relationships create society, and the nature of these relationships create the attributes or properties of society. K recognized the reciprocal nature of the relationship between the individual and society. He suggested, on the one hand, that

it is the inner state of the individual, in terms of her or his ideas, dogmas, beliefs, and the nature of interpersonal relationships, that has produced the current state of society, going so far as to propose that this inner state of the individual is the predominant determinant of the nature of society. On the other hand, K also suggested that the characteristics of any given society, including its culture, norms and history, exert an influence on the makeup of the inner state of its individual inhabitants (their thoughts, feelings and behaviours), so much so that the strength of this influence forms the very basis of the inner state, or nature, of the individual.

Thus if, according to K, it is the inner state of the individual that has produced the structure of society, and it is the structure of society that has produced the inner state of the individual, why did he emphasize individual change and transformation as the conduit to effecting societal change, instead of the other way around, or both? We speculate that this is so because K perhaps viewed the causal contribution of the individual's inner makeup on society as a more fundamental process than the contribution of the nature of society on an individual's inner state. He suggested that society exists only for the fruition of the individual, in order to provide him or her the opportunity to realize their full potential.

In what manner did K suggest a transformation in the nature of the individual and consequently in society might come about? As stated above, K emphasized the critical importance of transformation of one's inner state in order to effect meaningful societal change. He suggested that the action of such transformation could come about by engaging in a process of inquiry into the question of the causal determinant(s) of the inner state. He described the key attributes of this kind of inquiry and suggested that the first and essential prerequisite of engaging in this process of inquiry is freedom from the dogmas, traditions, and beliefs imposed by society on the individual. He proposed that this kind of inquiry is based on the deployment of a certain dispassionate quality of attention, observation, awareness or direct perception of the activity of thought (cognition, affect and behaviour) in the generation of the individual's responses to contemporaneous events, conditions and states (including societal norms

and standards), and that such awareness of thought's activity could, in and of itself, bring about a cessation of this activity and result in a state of freedom from the effects of psychological conditioning.

K described some of the attributes of this quality of awareness: that it is essentially 'choiceless' in nature, i.e., not motivated or directed by any specific goal; that it cannot be arrived at through any specific method or approach; that it is not reliant on knowledge (including culture); that it is not a gradual or progressive process, i.e., it does not involve time, or the process of becoming progressively more attentive, observant or aware; and that the state of freedom it affords is total (as opposed to partial, or domain-specific). K proposed that a consequence of this kind of dispassionate inquiry and observation is a radical and immediate transformation or 'mutation' in the fundamental nature of the individual, that, in turn, would produce a radical transformation in the nature of society. Moreover, he suggested that if this kind of inner transformation was to occur in even a small number of individuals it would likely produce a far reaching, global impact.

Krishnamurti Foundation of America

K: The religious spirit and the scientific mind

These are the only two states of mind that are of value, the true religious spirit and the true scientific mind. Every other activity is destructive, leading to a great deal of misery, confusion and sorrow.

The scientific mind is very factual. Discovery is its mission, its perception. It sees things through a microscope, through a telescope; everything is to be seen actually as it is; from that perception, science draws conclusions, builds up theories. Such a mind moves from fact to fact. The spirit of science has nothing to do with individual conditions, with nationalism, with race, with prejudice. Scientists are there to explore matter, to investigate the structure of the earth and of the stars and the

planets, to find out how to cure man's diseases, how to prolong man's life, to explain time, both the past and the future. But the scientific mind and its discoveries are used and exploited by the nationalistic mind, by the mind that is India, by the mind that is Russia, by the mind that is America. Scientific discovery is utilized and exploited by sovereign states and continents.

Then there is the religious mind, the true religious mind that does not belong to any cult, to any group, to any religion, to any organized church. The religious mind is not the Hindu mind, the Christian mind, the Buddhist mind, or the Muslim mind. The religious mind does not belong to any group which calls itself religious. The religious mind is not the mind that goes to churches, temples, mosques. Nor is it a religious mind that holds to certain forms of beliefs, dogmas. The religious mind is completely alone. It is a mind that has seen through the falsity of churches, dogmas, beliefs, traditions. Not being nationalistic, not being conditioned by its environment, such a mind has no horizons, no limits. It is explosive, new, young, fresh, innocent. The innocent mind, the young mind, the mind that is extraordinarily pliable, subtle, has no anchor. It is only such a mind that can experience that which you call God, that which is not measurable.

A human being is a true human being when the scientific spirit and the true religious spirit go together.

On the Religious Mind and the Scientific Mind
Krishnamurti on Education, pg. 18
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It turns out that K considered the scientific as one of the two states of mind that were of value, the other being the religious. The scientific mind moves from fact to fact and the religious spirit, having no anchor, is able to see the whole and experience the immeasurable. Without moving from

fact to fact, the religious spirit would lack a proper foundation, so it necessitates the scientific mind. And the scientific mind without the religious spirit would lack the vision of the whole. The only difference would seem to be that the religious spirit is able to be factual and yet remain beyond the scope of knowledge. Perhaps this is something similar to what Einstein meant when he said that “Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind”. For K, the combination of these two states of mind is what makes one a true human being.

Our old friend Hanns-Peter, who’s a retired experimental physicist, has been deeply concerned with the complementarity and essential unity of these two fundamental human attitudes to the quest for truth. As there cannot be two truths, what then is the one truth that unifies them? He sent us the following reflections on his understanding of the connection between **K and science**.

Dear Friedrich,

I think it was three years ago that the Mürren gathering began with the question: “Why did I come to the gathering?” The answer I gave then was: “I’m concerned with finding a bridge between science and K.” This statement triggered an intense correspondence between Jaap van Manen and I, which should have resulted in a dialogue. But since, for personal reasons, Jaap could not come to Mürren, I started a series of talks presenting my views. I always felt this immense gap between the ‘truth’ coming from physical investigation and what K was telling us. I sought to bridge the two, since there cannot be two ‘truths.’

The last meeting of this year’s Mürren gatherings was in many respects extraordinary for me. After giving my presentation, Jacky’s friend asked me whether I knew Donald Hoffman, a neuroscientist who a little earlier had given a talk at the K center in Ojai along very similar lines. Intrigued, I wanted to find out more and went immediately to the internet. There I also found the talk he had given in Ojai and saw that Prof. Krishna and Jürgen had also been present. All of that was an

impressive example of synchronicity. In the end, it brought a clarification for me and a possible answer to my above question.

Our prevailing world view is materialistic, starting from the great success of the findings in Physics, which is the basis of our technology. We all profit very much from it; it makes our life easier and, last but not least, longer. Reflecting upon that, many of us scientists as well as public officials found ourselves believing that Physics is the foundation of the world. By itself that is not a problem, but its extension to the whole of our being is an exaggeration. That was part of my problem: the opposition between Physics and spirituality. The most valuable part of the scientific approach is its objectivity, which excludes the subjective outlook on the world.

However, after the death of my wife Marianne I started to doubt the concept of objectivity. This doubt was strengthened by all that K was saying. However, all my studies in Physics pointed to an extremely real foundation of everything grounded in an objective world which seems to exist independently of the mind. Now, I would say that I have found the bridge but, in fact, no bridge was needed. The two realities were never apart; they are both in consciousness. So, the search for the bridge was a wrong quest. My feeling that all is subjectivity may be the correct view. I think that a lot of people feel exactly this way in their guts but cannot express it, since it is very much opposed to the common view of the world. Our challenge is seeing, feeling and knowing that all is connected and, in that sense, timeless and spaceless. This is what Quantum Mechanics implies and what K has been saying. There was never a gap to bridge.

From there a whole new world emerges. A man with doctorates in computer science and Philosophy has inspired me and should be acknowledged here: Bernardo Kastrup. He investigated in depth the division between materialism and consciousness, which he traces back to Plato's idealism. He studied both fields in the greatest detail, both scientifically as well as comprehensibly – a rare combination these days. He brought clarity for me in the sense that the natural laws of Physics are a “basic structure in consciousness” and there is no world outside of consciousness or, in other words, that “we are the world” and “the observer is the observed,” just as K had been telling us all along.

I thought this would be of interest to you. It was you who informed me about the German K group led by Manfred Schneider (who celebrated his 90th birthday last year). That was in Vasanta Vihar, where the KFI Center for Continuing Dialogue organized a colloquium on “Approaches to Death,” later published (1993) by Sunanda Partwardhan, who had asked me to participate. I was an absolute newcomer in the K circles and was grateful for every piece of information I could get. So, thank you for all of that and for having played such an important role in keeping K alive.

With my fondest regards, *Hanns-Peter*,
29 November 2019

K: Humility, virtue and order

8 November 1961

Humility is the essence of all virtue. Humility is not to be cultivated, nor is virtue. The respectable morality of any society is mere adjustment to the pattern set by social, economic, religious environment, but such morality of changing adjustment is not virtue. Conformity and the imitative self-concern of security, called morality, is the denial of virtue. Order is never permanent; it has to be maintained every day, as a room has to be cleaned every day. Order has to be maintained from moment to moment, every day. This order is not personal, individual adjustment to the pattern of conditioned responses of like and dislike, pleasure and pain. This order is not a means of escape from sorrow; the understanding of sorrow and the ending of sorrow is virtue, which brings about order. Order is not an end in itself; order, as an end in itself leads to the dead end of respectability, which is deterioration and decay. Learning is the very essence of humility, learning from everything and from everybody. There is no hierarchy in learning. Authority denies learning and a follower will never learn.

Krishnamurti's Notebook, pp. 222–223
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The quest for a bridge between science and spirituality doesn't only concern the search for truth but the question of morality. From the beginning, human beings marvelled at the tremendous order of the heavens and sought to find in it the clues to human order. But that kind of cosmic order has proved difficult to mirror on Earth. Philosophy and religion have been particularly concerned with bringing such a quality of meaningful order about in the sublunary sphere. They appealed to both reason and faith as a way to establish the ethical laws that humanity should abide by in order to partake of the goodness or wholeness of creation. Leading philosophers like Aristotle reflected extensively on what is involved in leading an ethical life. Spinoza tried to rationalise morality by casting it in the mould of Euclid's *Elements*, with axioms, postulates and logical demonstrations of the resulting propositions. Every kind of religion has drafted and promoted its own moral code. But at the end of this long journey, our quest for virtue and rationality is far from over.

With the decline of organised religion over a century ago, the resulting secular society has been faced with the tremendous challenge of coming up with a moral foundation of its own. As science replaced religion as the purveyor of truth, it is now being asked to provide an answer. K always maintained that religion is the foundation of culture and, as the general chaos of humanity would indicate, a new culture is needed and, therefore, a new awakening of the religious spirit which, as we've seen, includes the scientific mind. This investigation would seem to have been given an added impetus by the perceived confrontation between the neoliberal relativist approach and the dogmatic stance of the traditional creeds. So how might K throw light on the current debate around this critical question of morality? In the following article, our old friend Rasmus Tinning sent us a preview of his investigations from the placid Danish archipelago.

The Foundation of Morals:

Can K's Teachings Throw Some Light on the Current Debate?

by Rasmus Tinning

Evolutionary biology and neuroscience have become hot topics in the last decades. There is a wealth of new insights into the way our emotions, thinking and behaviour have evolved, and into the underlying neurophysiology of such diverse psychological phenomena as retributive impulses, logic, suffering and attachment. These new findings challenge not only religious ideas but also the humanities – traditional psychology, philosophy and so on. So, the next step, of course, is that scientists should start writing about existential subjects.

The neuroscientist Sam Harris is one of the most popular of these scientist-philosophers. In his bestseller *The Moral Landscape*, he argues that the moral relativism of the typical liberal, secular westerner is too submissive in an age where religious fundamentalism is on the rise – in America the religious conservatives, in Europe Islam.

Harris seems to be part of a new trend in western thinking. In the late 20th century, it was central to the 'progressive' spirit that nobody is objectively right or wrong in moral disagreements between different cultures. This attitude is now under attack for not offering unambiguous answers to moral questions.

As an alternative, Harris proposes that a universal, 'objective' morality should be developed based on science. Existential concepts such as 'meaning', 'morality' and 'life's larger purpose' are questions of the 'well-being of conscious beings', which can be understood scientifically; the more we understand ourselves at the level of the brain, the more we will see that there are right and wrong answers to questions of human values. For instance, we now have a detailed neurophysiological understanding of how various kinds of emotional neglect in early childhood affect the brain. This insight should have consequences for the treatment of children all over the world.

Harris goes farther than most others in that he considers science to be the only genuinely solid source of truth. He predicts that in the future “opinions will be increasingly constrained by facts”. The morality he envisages can withstand zealous old-time religion because the rigidity of science lends it an unambiguous and authoritative quality similar to that of religion. Harris considers belief in religion and science as basically the same thing – except that the former is “iron age philosophy” and the latter is based on systematic observation and experiment.

The first problem is that, although the new knowledge of the brain may give a deeper understanding of why we behave the way we do, it makes it harder than ever to develop a consistent moral system. The very findings that Harris refers to reveal a brain that is not strictly rational or well-behaved in itself, not even that of a scientist or academician. Despite their formal education, people are first and foremost humans who are conditioned, not only by a certain type of personality and background, but by the whole evolutionary history of our species. Our brain is not a perfect computer that was created according to a masterplan, but the result of millennia of make-shift modifications to the primate brain. Like the apes, we are still ruled by the passions of the mammal – fear, aggression, lust, territoriality, etc. Our basic instincts and innate sense of morality may be closer to those of a chimpanzee than to the rational ideals that inspire Harris.

Secondly, the significance of the findings somehow needs to be interpreted and placed in a broader human context for them to become ‘values’ – especially if they are to give normative moral guidance. This is not straightforward. Science has triumphed in the practical field, but when it is combined with politics, the results are often unsavoury – Social Darwinism, eugenics. Even when the combination of science, politics and lifestyle is highly relevant, as in Environmentalism, it is still difficult for many to accept it.

Harris has been associated with an internet movement called the Intellectual Dark Web (IDW). There is a consensus in this group that



Laburnum at Chalet Solitude, Rougemont

the evolution of ideas through free discussion is the only way to create new values. But however much one agrees with that, it will only go so far. At the moment, the members of the movement seem too dissimilar for their ideas to merge into a coherent and viable whole. But they may be paving the way for something new.

The psychologist Jordan Peterson is another popular member of the IDW. He agrees with Harris on some points, but they have crossed swords several times. His philosophy is also influenced by science and he abhors both fundamentalism and moral relativism. However, the problem for him is that there must be an ‘a priori’ or ‘interpretive’ structure in the mind in order to understand anything. He envisions this ‘interpreter’ as a profound entity that may not be reducible to hard facts. It can be informed by or anchored in metaphorical truths such as, for instance, the narratives of *The Bible*. According to Peterson, these stories should not be taken literally but as symbolic representations of eternal, archetypal wisdom. He warns that dismissing the whole religious edifice could be throwing the baby out with the bath water.

It seems that Harris and Peterson are both, in their respective ways, groping towards a philosophy with sufficient depth and solidity to protect essential western values against both moral relativism and various forms of religious and political dogmatism. The inherent contradiction is that in order to achieve solidity they revert to a kind of thinking that could pave the way for a new dogmatic era.

J. Krishnamurti’s work offers a third viewpoint that throws a very different light on this whole issue. Krishnamurti doesn’t consider fixed ‘truths’, such as philosophies, religious beliefs or political ideologies, to be the foundation of the righteous mind but sanity, sensitivity and maturity. Generally, we assume that wisdom and morality must exist in the static form of a doctrine, a holy book or possibly a system of scientific morality such as Harris suggests – some kind of knowledge in which one believes firmly. But what if ‘knowledge’ and ‘wisdom’ are more divergent than we think? The brain may have two different modes

of functioning. The specialised, logical understanding of a fact may be something different from the full understanding of what that fact means in terms of human values.

Krishnamurti's subject is the human mind and the possibility of a deep change. At first sight, he doesn't seem to belong in a modern, rational discussion. His method of observation is based on the direct perception of the totality of the mind, not on the accumulation of knowledge and its subsequent analysis. In a sense, his mode of exploration is identical to his message. According to him, thought has a place in science and practical matters but it is incapable of dynamically understanding the totality of our emotions, thinking and behaviour as they unfold in life. Any kind of analysis, whether done by a scientist, a psychologist, a politician or a poor villager, will always be limited by the analyser's background.

The first question that a modern person must ask is whether Krishnamurti's observation of the thinking process and its limitation is just a peculiar oriental viewpoint or there is some evidence for it.

Social primates like us have big brains. It is primarily because we need social intelligence. However, around 70.000 years ago humans went through a new, different cognitive revolution. The use of language, problem-solving, planning, etc. exploded. This enhanced ability to think has led to the 'ascent of man' through knowledge, technology and civilisation.

The logical destination for the evolution of the thinking process is artificial intelligence. A computer is an attempt to copy aspects of thinking. It contains programmes that process data residing in its memory. No matter how large, its hard disk is always limited. It can only contain a finite number of programmes and bytes of data.

Similarly, human thinking is based on memory. It can only work on what it knows. No matter how much it knows, it is by its very nature

limited. This means that thinking as a cognitive mode will always produce a limited and incomplete understanding of reality. It can only analyse life from a limited knowledge base and a limited set of tools. It may be correct within its system and produce results, but it can't see the significance of the context that lies beyond its limited world. Therefore, to be sane and wise takes more than thinking.

What is more, the mind is not only conditioned by knowledge and tools in the narrow sense. Because the brain is so highly integrated, the thinking process does not exist in isolation. All kinds of fears, hidden motives and idiosyncrasies condition it. The rational part of the brain, the neocortex, may try to discipline the urges of the ancient, emotional mammalian brain, but the influence goes the other way too. Our deep-seated, unconscious emotions shape our way of thinking.

For instance, the logic of a politician may seem fairly consistent and rational in and of itself when he makes speeches. However, his so-called rationality is conditioned by his whole complex being, his personality, his past experiences, his ideology, his brain damage and so on. His paranoia and anger may be presented as rational ideas and be seen as such by his followers, who share his emotions. But he is creating chaos in a broader context. This is a massive problem in the world.

The need of the mind to feel secure in its particular belief makes it blind to itself. Its instinct is to defend its opinions like an animal defends its territory. This is why we are usually completely unaware of the limited nature of our consciousness and the questionable validity of our outlook. We feel that the entity that observes the world through our eyes is fairly objective and trustworthy. But as long as the mind analyzes the world from its limited set of ideas and experiences, it will always remain narrow-minded, tribal and prejudiced. It can never have that mature and balanced outlook which is the foundation of wisdom.

In the current debate, there is an interesting development. Several intellectuals within the IDW agree that our blindness to the unconscious

drives is a dangerous and fundamental problem. Peterson talks about the Jungian 'shadow', the biologists about our evolutionary conditioning. Krishnamurti has gone into this at great depth. He says that a mind that is unaware of its conditioning – its way of thinking, its true motives, pressures and so on – is an immature and biased mind. Krishnamurti says that such a mind has no foundation for action.

The irony is that even a mind that has got as far as understanding the basic problem will resort to some sort of thinking process in order to solve it. But because the very thinking process itself is limited by its conditioning, it is the wrong instrument. In other words, the interpretive structure is too biased to understand itself. So something else is needed.

Krishnamurti claims that in addition to the thinking process – which has an important but limited place – the mind can discover a holistic mode of observation, a total awareness in which the inner observer itself, with its rational and irrational content, is revealed. The only stable foundation for a sane, righteous mind is an everlasting journey of learning about oneself. Krishnamurti rejects the whole endeavour to find a legitimate system of belief from which we can understand the world. Dogmas are invariably limited and divisive, and their authority denies the individual the possibility to understand life freely and creatively.

Wisdom is the result of highly integrated insights, not of thinking in the narrow sense. Thinking excels in the practical and scientific fields but to establish values on the basis of man-made dogmas is a misapprehension of the thinking process. By itself, it can never capture deeper wholeness-oriented experiences such as meaning, beauty, human dignity, inner freedom and compassion – all the things that make up wisdom.

According to IDW, western culture is in a crisis. The very instruments we are using to make sense of our life are breaking down. This is often attributed to cultural relativism and the erosion of values that is inher-

ent in postmodernism. But also, to the fragmentary structure of the internet itself, where anybody can pollute cyberspace with fake news and conspiracy theories. It is an urgent problem, because it destroys the very fiber of society.

Is it possible to turn the tide by deliberately establishing a new set of values? For such values to have a solidity comparable to old-time religion, we would have to reintroduce belief and authority – the very things that humanity is growing out of! The modern mind is beginning to understand the stultifying effect of dogma and belief. But if belief in authority is eroding, what will make us behave? It is too late to turn back, so why not take the next logical step?

Krishnamurti said his farewell to dogmatism in 1929 by declaring that “Truth is a pathless land”. He doesn’t mean that truth is relative; on the contrary. But that it is always new. By being dedicated to dynamically learning about the totality of life as it unfolds, you are in a state in which there is no choice. You must act on the truth. In other words, you are not anchored in dogma, but in truth. He calls this religion in its true sense. And he adds that through the process of negating the false you can come upon that which is truly sacred.

Rasmus Tinning

K AND THE PSYCHOLOGISTS

K: Knowing all the layers of consciousness

The beginning of meditation is self-knowledge, which means being aware of every movement of thought and feeling, knowing all the layers of my consciousness, not only the superficial layers but the hidden, the deeply concealed activities. To know the deeply concealed activities, the hidden motives, responses, thoughts and feelings, there must be tranquility in the conscious mind; that is the conscious mind must be still in order to receive the projection of the unconscious. The superficial, conscious mind is occupied with its daily activities, with earning a livelihood, deceiving others, exploiting others, running away from problems – all the daily activities of our existence. That superficial mind must understand the right significance of its own activities and thereby bring tranquility to itself. It cannot bring about tranquility, stillness, by mere regimentation, by compulsion, by discipline. It can bring about tranquility, peace, stillness, only by understanding its own activities, by observing them, by being aware of them, by seeing its own ruthlessness, how it talks to the servant, to the wife, to the daughter, to the mother and so on. When the superficial, conscious mind is thus fully aware of all its activities, through that understanding it becomes spontaneously quiet, not drugged by compulsion or regimented by desire; then it is in a position to receive the intimations, the hints of the unconscious, of the many, many hidden layers of the mind – the racial instincts, the buried memories, the concealed pursuits, the deep wounds that are still unhealed. It is only when all these have projected themselves and are understood, when the whole consciousness is unburdened, unfettered by any wound, by any memory whatsoever, that it is in a position to receive the eternal.

Questions and Answers 19: On Prayer and Meditation
The First and Last Freedom, pp. 219–220
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It has proven rather difficult to find an adequate label for Krishnamurti. To call him a philosopher, a teacher or a psychologist seems to fall short of the mark. Yet his insights into the human condition, into human relationship and consciousness, into the structure of thought, self and time, as well as into fundamental questions of beauty, goodness and truth, into meditation and that which may lie beyond thought, have attracted a great deal of interest from those involved in the fields of religion, philosophy, education and psychology.

As K is deeply concerned with self-knowledge as the way of transformation, psychology would appear to be very close to the heart of his endeavour. This affinity was not lost on the profession and in the mid-1940s a group of distinguished psychiatrists met with Krishnamurti in Washington, D.C. They included Drs. Benjamin Weininger, Harry Stack Sullivan, Erich Fromm, and David and Margaret Rioch. Calling themselves the Baltimore-Washington Psychoanalytic Society, they were to have a distinctive effect on the course of American psychiatry as it moved away from a historical perspective toward an emphasis on the immediate problems of living. Dr. Weininger describes this shift in his interview with Evelyne Blau:

“The key to self-understanding in psychoanalysis is based on the revealing of past history and Krishnamurti makes a very important point – a slightly different point. The key, as he sees it, is to be aware of your reactions. Usually your images of the way things should be are constantly being threatened, and when your image is threatened in any area, you react and sometimes you react with anger or hurt, and those reactions are always from your past. So you can get at your past by understanding your reactions rather than digging into the past history.” (*Krishnamurti: 100 Years*, pg.126)

In 1950 K met again with Dr. Weininger and a group of psychiatrists, this time in New York City. Still later, K met with Drs. Karen Horney, R.D. Laing and David Shainberg. In 1975 Dr. Shainberg organized a conference in NYC with K and 25 psychotherapists. There were further conferences with K and psychiatrists in 1976, 1977, 1982 and 1983. KFA published some of

this material, namely the transcript of one of the 1950 dialogues and Dr. Shainberg's report of the 1975 conference, both in NYC, in their Bulletin No. 70 (1996). As I found this material very interesting, I did what I could to distribute it as widely as possible and eventually KFA agreed to reissue it, with the addition of Dr. Weininger's full interview, in their Bulletin No. 86 (2012).

In his latest book, *Krishnamurti in America: New Perspectives on the Man and his Message* (see the review by Stephen Smith in the Publications section of this Newsletter), David Moody revisits this connection between K and the psychologists. Although he accepts that there is a religious dimension to his work, Moody's central tenet is that the substance of K's message is not abstract, mystical or metaphysical but factual, secular and psychological. He takes some of K's works, such as his *Commentaries on Living*, and the exchanges with the psychotherapists as a case study in the way K's philosophy could function as a therapy.³

Moody, however, is aware that K's approach to the psyche is quite a challenge to the professionals. He cites the case of K broaching the subject of fear, which is central to his teachings, with the psychotherapists. K's approach is to go to the root of all fear rather than deal with its specific forms or objects. Such a universal approach or the idea that one can be totally free of fear was not in the psychotherapists' repertoire. For K, the ending of fear is only possible when we understand the illusory nature of the self. This, too, was not contemplated in their psychologies. Further, K dismisses analysis as the approach to self-understanding and healing, thus undermining one of the foundations of psychotherapy. For him analysis was paralysis. The very partiality of the analytical approach was for him an extension of the fragmentation behind the sickness in which both the patient and the therapist – the whole culture, in fact – are involved and wondered whether the therapists were offering their patients anything other than a palliative.

3 This summary of Moody's report on K and the psychologists was provided by Javier Gómez Rodríguez.

K was concerned with taking life as a whole and wanted to go into such deeper issues as death, sorrow and what it means to be religious. This involved a consideration of the nature of consciousness and time. For K, psychological time was a dangerous illusion and the ending of time was the key to a radical and holistic transformation. The ending of time is the ending of fear, as fear is the product of thought, which is the response of memory, of the past. With the ending of the past, there is also no projection of tomorrow. For him, the total healing of man involved the emptying of consciousness of all its psychological content. That was his usual definition of meditation, which opened up a new dimension of emptiness and silence in which the encounter with the sacred could take place.

Moody considers that these conversations between K and the psychotherapists represent a rich and wide-ranging resource for anyone interested in both therapy and K's philosophy. He laments that this material has not been edited and published, as it could open up a new form of therapy. In the K world, however, it is customary to reject any association between therapy and the teachings. K is known to have said that what he was doing was not therapy. However, the word 'therapy' means 'healing' and he clearly intended to bring about a profound transformation and healing in human consciousness. One is tempted to say that K denied therapy because it did not heal – or at least not at the radical level he intended.

We became interested in this question and sent a circular around attaching the pages of Moody's book where he covers this subject, and among the responses was one from our friend and neighbour Dariane Pictet, who is a certified Jungian psychotherapist. In reading through the texts, she could sympathise with K's difficulties in talking to professionals for whom the existence of the ego is a psychological fact. Besides, the field of professional psychology includes a great variety of approaches, which makes it hard to generalize. Since she was not only a professional therapist but had been inspired in her inner quest by reading K, we asked her whether she would write something about the parallels between K and Jung and she kindly sent us the following article.

Krishnamurti and Jung: Some Commonality

by Dariane Pictet

I first encountered Krishnamurti in my late teens, when I was writing my senior essay for the Baccalaureat (high school diploma) entitled, in French, *They Are Murdering Mozart*. I was trying to make the point that education and parenting, as I had experienced and witnessed them around me, were killing creativity in the young instead of helping us to develop it. Needless to say, I didn't get a high grade ... However, it led me to K's book *On Education*, which greatly impressed me. In it, K highlighted the need to learn how to think, as opposed to what to think and, of course, the need for self-knowledge. I followed up this interest at Columbia University but quickly had to change departments because Psychology, as it was taught at the time, had nothing to do with my pursuit. I enrolled in the Comparative Religion department instead, which was a very good preparation to become a Jungian analyst. I studied man's search for truth as embodied in the various religions and read the sacred texts that describe his highest concerns.

The field of psychology has developed as a science with many different branches. Psychiatrists are medical doctors trained to diagnose 'pathological' mood disorders and medicate them. Psychologists are primarily academics who apply various theories of mental processes to business and institutions and employ statistical methods in their laboratory studies of the brain, rats and such things. Cognitive behavioural psychologists are concerned with changing the ego, teaching it new and better behaviours. And psychotherapists are trained experientially to listen and, usually, have to go through the process of self-inquiry themselves, as it is not possible to take people to a depth that you haven't experienced yourself. Except for the latter, the profession uses the 'medical model', which breaks down the person into different parts, each taken to a separate 'specialist' at the expense of a holistic understanding. Jung was trained as a psychiatrist and started his career working with mental problems. He quickly understood that it is hard to pinpoint the subtleties of the inner landscape

when you are submerged in neurotic and self-defeating strategies to survive with very little or no self-knowledge. He developed *analytical psychology*, where people functioning outside the medical model could train to engage with the unknown depth and mystery of consciousness.

This is only a brief and very general summary of a profession that encompasses so many different strands. I understand that K struggled with it and he has all my sympathy; it is very hard to talk to professionals invested in the reality of the ego and tell them that the self doesn't really exist, or not in the form that they think. Yet, there are psychologists who engage with the deepest questions, as there are exceptional human beings in all fields, and it is always a worthwhile experience and a privilege to be in their presence. Jung unwittingly initiated in psychology the transpersonal direction, where it is clearly seen that the self or ego is only a small aspect of what it means to be fully human and that we have to liberate ourselves internally. This, I feel, sets him on a parallel course with Krishnamurti.

The difficulty with the pursuit of self-knowledge, or wisdom, is that it is understood very differently in the West and in the East, where there is a lot of reticence to engage with western psychology, which is deemed too individualistic. The East has a very long tradition of analysing the different states that cause suffering and bypasses the psychological field, deemed to be irrelevant to a spiritual enquiry. It tends to teach that we should learn to observe mental activity to find a deeper reality within, a reality in which we are all one, so that what we do to ourselves we do to the world.

David Moody writes in his new book *Krishnamurti in America* that: "Once a psychologist came to Krishnamurti. K asked him – '*What do you do?*' The psychologist answered – '*We make people fit into society.*' K asked – '*Is society fit?*'" K was implying that we are our environment; it is not outside of us and that it is our fragmented understanding that creates ambition, anger and greed.



Beech trees near Haus Sonne, Black Forest, Germany

Jung also famously said “*give me a sane man and I will cure him for you*”. His concern was not to help people adapt to society, but rather, to go beyond our adaptation to society, family and professional values (the *persona*). His concern with letting the inner landscape emerge sets his psychology apart from the mainstream. If we can recognize our darker impulses, our shadow and take responsibility for it, we are better placed to have an impact on society. It takes little insight to realize that our world is pretty sick; the standards that we are meant to adapt to are not the ones either K or Jung would advocate as important. How could we possibly fit into a world that gives big business primacy over education? Or allow the precious ecology between man and the natural world to be destroyed, or uphold standards that supports inequality and poverty?

I do feel that depth psychology and spirituality can be “*an exploring together and also an observing ourselves as a whole*”. This is part of what we call analysis in Jungian circles. This would entail work with the *shadow*, the part of us that is unconscious and unreflecting; it is a necessary part of self-knowledge to differentiate and integrate impulses that are darker or more primitive in us. When they are seen and witnessed, we can begin to take responsibility for ourselves. When we discover that we are not better than the other, that we too fall under the grip of uncontrolled emotions, we are more prepared to end the cycle of blame and revenge. In this way, self-knowledge can lead to true compassion. If we are too busy being ‘good’, without this goodness flowing out of an authentic source, resentments constellate in the *shadow* and we end up kicking the cat.

K’s emphasis on education is vital, as adaptation to outer standards can create a number of psychological problems. If only the young could preserve a freshness of being and develop creatively without needing to conform to a world that has its principles upside down! We are all too painfully aware that the Covid-19 crisis has highlighted how undervalued the people in the fields of education and care are. “This conflict, (between man and society) within and without,” Krishnamurti notes, “will ever exist until the highest intelligence (in man) is awakened.”

This transpersonal higher intelligence, which Jung calls the Self, gives our lives meaning and purpose, and ultimately Joy.

I understand that K maintained that religion was always the result of past conditioning. This is what Jung would call the collective field. His *process of individuation* demands our constant attention so that we can evaluate our position ethically, from an inner authority (the Self) as opposed to our adaptation to outer norms. Both men advocate, albeit in different ways, our capacity to stand up to a sick society by learning to sort out the mess that constitutes an unexamined mind. Self-knowledge gives us better tools to change the world.

I think Jung and K would agree that one should uncover the mind layer by layer to experience wholeness. Jung would probably not call it *mind*, but analysis would seek to uncover what is inauthentic in us to find what is profoundly meaningful to us. This allows us not to dwell in a shallow level of consciousness at the expense of the wholeness of being. Krishnamurti was concerned with helping people to refine their attunement to introversion:

“You cannot live without dying. You cannot live if you do not die psychologically every minute. This is not an intellectual paradox. To live completely, wholly, every day as if it were a new loveliness, there must be dying to everything of yesterday, otherwise you live mechanically, and a mechanical mind can never know what love is or what freedom is.” (Freedom from the Known, pg. 77)

Jung contends that what we call the self usually refers to the personality, or what Eastern thinkers call the ego, and that it needs to surrender to the greater reality of the Self, a generative source that encompasses the totality of psychic life. Our identity with small, self-defeating narratives needs to break open to experience wholeness.

“There can be no doubt that Krishnamurti’s teaching contains a deep religious dimension. The nature of what he regards as religious, however, has

nothing to do with faith, or the hereafter, or some supernatural figure guiding events on Earth. It has everything to do with a state of mind that is orderly and whole, a mind that is healthy and sane. That is why his philosophy is almost exclusively psychological. Only a mind that is sane, he would say, can discover that which is immeasurable". (Krishnamurti in America, pg. 214)

I feel we could apply the same comment to Jung, whose concern was primarily psychological, but whose writings point to a field that is not so 'scientific'. He described the religious impulse as an essential human concern, a fundamental instinct shared by all human beings, which had nothing to do with religious creeds but with *relegere*, to read over, to reflect or consider. It was a striving towards a relationship with something that transcends human will. Such an attitude enhances consciousness and leads to a wider perspective, expanding the field of the possible beyond our understanding of the ego identity or personality, or even of reality. This has been my experience in working with addiction in the Twelve Steps programme. *Step 2 states: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.* The ego is only a small aspect of a far greater psychic reality, and it needs to wake up to this in order to be transcended.

Both Jung and Krishnamurti point to refined states of awareness that are ineffable and need to be experienced, not described. The search for freedom is not, in my view, incompatible with Jung's work, and can be seen as complementary. And Krishnamurti's poetic sensitivity and sense of oneness with nature would probably echo Jung's following statement:

"At times, I feel as if I am spread out over the landscape and inside things, and am myself living in every tree, in the splashing of the waves, in the clouds and the animals that come and go, in the procession of the seasons." (Memories, Dreams, Reflections, pg. 225)

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K: The whole process of the self

You know what I mean by the self? By that I mean the idea, the memory, the conclusion, the experience, the various forms of nameable and unnameable intentions, the conscious endeavour to be or not to be, the accumulated memory of the unconscious, the racial, the group, the individual, the clan, and the whole of it all, whether it is projected outwardly in action, or projected spiritually as virtue; the striving after all this is the self. In it is included the competition, the desire to be. The whole process of that is the self; and we know actually, when we are faced with it, that it is an evil thing. I am using the word *evil* intentionally, because the self is dividing; the self is self-enclosing; its activities, however noble, are separated and isolated. We know all this. We also know that extraordinary are the moments when the self is not there, in which there is no sense of endeavour, of effort, and which happens when there is love.

5th Public Talk, Madras, India, 19.01.1952
The Collected Works, Volume VI, pp. 272–273
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Psychology is the study of the psyche and at the centre of the psyche lies the notion of the self. What constitutes the self or ego, whether it is one single entity or a multitude, an established psychic faculty or the result of a fluctuating process of thought, whether it is something real or an illusion, something indispensable to a healthy mind or the very source of disorder in our lives, continues to be a matter of controversy and investigation in the fields of psychology, philosophy and religion. Inquiry into its nature is also central to K's teachings, where the presence or absence of the self would seem to mark the very frontier between good and evil.⁴

4 This prelude to the article was also provided by Javier Gómez Rodríguez.

Being aware of the critical role of the self in our lives, Erik Prochnow reiterated on several occasions his concern that more attention should be given to its study. Erik and his wife Michaela have been running a centre for natural medicine and psychological counselling in Germany for almost twenty years. Their clinical work is informed by K's teachings and for many years they have been organising dialogue groups. Erik is a poet and musician and also works as a teacher and journalist. As part of the exchanges on the subject of K and the psychologists, he sent us the following extensive article in which he tries to map out, to the best of his understanding and in light of his experience, the nature and emergence of the self. Erik and Michaela are always open to communicating with those seriously interested in this inquiry.

Reflections on the Self

by Erik Prochnow

Why does the self exist? Why is it, and with it thought, so predominant in our life? As thinking and the self are moving things, we can only explore them now, from moment to moment, how they come into being and dominate the world. Exploring means examining ourselves, being aware of what happens inside, in our mind while actively doing something. It also means realising, at the same time, that words and the content of thinking are not the truth.

To observe the existence of the self we have to realise that thinking is just a part, an instrument of the human organism. It is an important tool to help us survive and be physically secure. This security is not personal, or just bodily, but the very sustaining of life from moment to moment. The function of thinking is to accumulate memories, information, knowledge about a situation, subject or skill which we can apply in order to produce the desired results. This capacity to create from knowledge is not a freak of nature for its function is to sustain life. As an instrument, it is rooted in a material substance, which is the

brain, and is bound to a purpose or cause. It is a mechanism whose operation, like breathing or the beating of the heart, takes place from moment to moment. But it is crucial to realise that while thinking and knowledge are tangible facts, their content is only an abstraction of reality. While thinking is a living movement, the abstractions it produces are static descriptions of the past, so they are not truth. Furthermore, the application of knowledge always involves a task to be achieved, an aim and direction – not in a psychological but in a physical sense.

We can also see that thinking and the application of knowledge is insufficient to achieve physical security. Action can only happen in the present. Knowledge is of the past and fulfilling a task means doing it now. We have to be aware of what is actually happening at that instant. This attention is not knowledge or created by thinking. Its tools are thinking as well as the senses. If these are not functioning, we cannot be aware. Attention with all the senses is the basis for the sane and efficient use of thinking and knowledge in action.

When we observe life, we see that everything is always changing. Nothing stands still. In both their outer existence as well as their inner atomic structure, all things are always in motion. Another aspect of life is that it constantly renews itself. The next moment will always be new. By ‘new’ we mean not fixed or static, not predictable, not depending on a specific cause, not having a certain direction. We can predict the structure, the development or the movement of matter. But even cyclical patterns like breathing, the heartbeat or the seasons are never identical to the past. While their general pattern can be described, we cannot predict exactly what they will be or do next, for the next moment is inherently new.

Life is a movement from moment to moment in the unknown. So, to be attentive in life we also have to be in movement, alive. We perceive physical movement by moving our eyes, our head, etc. Perceiving something at the moment, learning something new implies that we must also

be inwardly in motion. If we are caught in thinking and only perceive out of knowledge, we cannot be fully attentive because we are mainly concerned with the static content of thinking. The movement of thinking, which is a living movement, can create new knowledge and renew or modify the old knowledge. But the new knowledge, being the past, will again be static. Knowledge is an inert body. It remains functional as long as it serves a purpose, but if we have no more use for it, its only movement will be one of decay.

It is not possible to perceive a living movement with an inert body. Knowledge, which is unmoving in itself, cannot capture the unknown, which is always new. Moreover, we have seen that thinking and knowledge are only partial functions of the organism and the part cannot perceive the whole. Only through observing attentively without the content of thinking is it possible to keep up with life's everlasting change and perceive its movement as a whole. Out of this attention we can apply knowledge in an effective and healthy way. This attention is not a personal thing; it is being alive, a living motion which cannot be created by thought. Though it needs a living body and its sensory functions in order to exist, this perception is not limited or bound by anything. It is a perceiving that has no cause.

What has all this to do with the self? To go into this question, we need to consider another important aspect of our being, namely feeling, which in this context means 'bodily sensation.' Through sense perception a feeling, a bodily sensation emerges. It is a unified, effortless movement characteristic of living. Feeling is only possible in the present and it is dependent on the healthy operation of the senses as well as on the inner and outer circumstances. As the conditions change all the time, we perceive something new and feel something different. Our feelings change from moment to moment and are never the same. Such feelings are in harmony with *what is*, which is the naturalness of existence. While feelings emerge through direct contact with what is, the knowledge and thinking about it can only come after it.



At Chas-Kaman Reservoir, Sahyadri School KFI, north of Pune, India
Photo by Mr. Prabhat Kumar, former principal of Sahyadri School

In order to act in life, we have to be able to perceive and feel with all the senses. This sensation is the signal for us to act, which is necessary to survive. If the body feels cold, we have to do something to get warm. If we feel hungry, we have to look for food. We have to find shelter when we are out in the rain. We are usually led to act by discomfort. When we achieve physical security, we get a feeling of wellbeing. As we identify the feeling of wellbeing with physical security, we want to have it permanently – which is impossible –, and that's when the self is born.

Psychological and physical security thus become synonymous for us and thinking enters the psychological realm. That means we act on the knowledge we create about our feelings. It is the capacity of

thinking to generate knowledge about everything, including itself. But not all of this knowledge is meaningful. It can even be dangerous. In the pursuit of physical security, thinking acts within the context of the whole organism and knowledge makes sense. The creation of knowledge about feelings, however, can be dangerous. Knowledge of feelings makes sense whenever it serves the welfare of the whole organism, such as describing a pain to the doctor. This knowledge is important in dealing with an actual physical problem. If the past feeling becomes important in itself, then thinking takes the feeling over and gives it continuity by producing it from memory. This feeling is no longer a present sensation in the context of sustaining organic life but the product of thinking.

Seeking psychological security requires knowledge about ourselves, our feelings and our experiences. That means memorising our feelings, categorising, comparing, judging and projecting them into the future and acting upon that subjective knowledge. We can then create situations which cause actual bodily sensations of wellbeing. Or we can avoid situations which might cause discomfort. This capacity of creating real feelings through thinking fuels an endless cycle of becoming. It is the creation of a psychological future into which we project images of feelings in order to achieve them. And to do that the remembrance of things past is essential. As we identify ourselves with this knowledge, we create the feeling of an independently existing entity which we call the psyche, the personality or the self, which is a bundle of remembered experiences and sensations. We separate it from the physical, thus dividing the wholeness of the organism. As this knowledge is no longer integrated in the overall context, it has no real natural purpose. Its only function is the self-appointed task of mental craving, the pursuit of a permanent sense of psychological wellbeing. That is not an activity in keeping with the needs of physical security but a self-centred and dangerous pursuit. Thinking then starts to dominate our senses, our perception of life and all our actions. We have to know who we *were* and who we *are* in order to generate feelings of wellbeing in the future. That is what we call the self.

Knowledge about ourselves then becomes something that we can accumulate and possess. From this possession arises the distinction between 'me' and 'you', 'we' and 'they', my knowledge opposed to your knowledge. With it comes the sense of good and bad, of reward and punishment. Attachment, personal identification, desire, action and the search for meaning are born out of this striving after wellbeing and thinking finds many subtle ways to keep this self-centred cycle going. This ancient conditioning of the human brain is now an entrenched pattern that consciously and subconsciously affects our lives.

But where does the conflict come in? Knowledge is only an abstraction, an image, an inward picture about the past. It is neither the original feeling nor a feeling at all. It is just the content of thought. We can recreate actual feelings in the body out of this content, but they are not the real and true feelings. These come from memory and have a personal motive, which is contrary to the spontaneous nature of feeling, which just happens from moment to moment independently of our will. Thinking creates both good and negative feelings, wellbeing and discomfort, for such feelings imply each other. We cannot have nice dreams without nightmares. Moreover, whether feelings stem from pure perception or from thinking, they are felt only in the present and they change from one moment to the next. That means that we have no guarantee that we will achieve psychological security and wellbeing and, if we do, that it will last forever. Sensing that it won't, fear arises and becomes our shadow.

Since thinking is the dominant factor, our reaction is to keep striving to achieve the state of wellbeing. We always want more in order to feel good, which is the root of greed. This endless struggle, which most humans see as natural, is the expression of the basic conflict in us, which starts the moment thinking takes over feeling and evaluates itself. The moment we sense wellbeing and want to keep it, we step out of the state of attention, the movement of living. Thinking recognises the feeling, categorises it and projects its fulfilment as an image into the future on the estimation that this is more important than being

attentive. Thinking evaluates itself and gives greater importance to the accumulation of knowledge about feelings than to the actual feelings. Thinking turns its content into the real thing, making its dreams come true, which they are not. Thinking thus turns itself into an authority, into the creator of its own life, into the self that is its own judge. This conflict then spreads through the whole organism and out into the world. But the truth is that the memories of feelings are not feelings. A life based on such feelings is an illusion. This illusion is made real by thinking, but its content is not truth. This illusion of self-created feelings is always in conflict with truth, with *what is*, which is the ever-changing newness of living that knows no psychological security. Whatever the content of thinking is, it is still thinking.

We are conditioned to believe that through knowledge and thinking we can achieve psychological security, which does not exist. We do not see this illusion because we live in a conditioned state of inattention, which is the breeding ground of illusion. Our life is not based on the direct perception of *what is* with all our senses but on thinking, which dominates the senses. This domination gives us the feeling of creating, of being in power and control. Neither thinking, nor the senses and feelings arising from them, nor our physical existence are created or controlled by thought. As an expression of life, they can only act together to sustain it. In this lies no conflict, as there is no centre acting separately from the whole.

Living is always a movement in the unknown and the self is the fear of living. To break this cycle, we have to be attentive to *what is*. And *what is* is the existence of the illusion of a self, with all its destructive implications of division, conflict and suffering in this world we share.

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INFINITE POTENTIAL

K: When the observer is the observed

Listen to the birds, listen to your wife's voice, however irritating, beautiful or ugly, listen to it and listen to your own voice however beautiful, ugly, or impatient it may be. Then out of this listening you will find that all separation between the observer and the observed comes to an end. Therefore no conflict exists and you observe so carefully that the very observation is discipline; you don't have to impose discipline. And that is the beauty, Sirs (if you only realise it), that is the beauty of seeing. If you can see, you have nothing else to do, because in that seeing there is all discipline, all virtue, which is attention. And in that seeing there is all beauty, and with beauty there is love. Then when there is love you have nothing more to do. Then where you *are*, you have heaven; then all seeking comes to an end.

The Art of Seeing – Madras 3 January 1968

The Awakening of Intelligence, pg. 195

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This past June 20th we watched the world premiere of Paul Howard's documentary *Infinite Potential: The Life and Ideas of David Bohm*. This documentary had been long in the making and there was a good deal of expectation about the results. As we live in interesting times, the premiere took place online. This was the shorter version, there being a director's cut or extended version that will be distributed through the usual channels.⁵

This documentary is very well done, and it manages to capture the general spirit of the man and his times. Naturally, some corners had to be cut, for

5 The introductory remarks in this section were provided by Javier Gómez Rodríguez.

it is impossible to crowd in every detail, mention every incident and every significant personage in Bohm's life. Not even all areas of his work could be adequately represented. The picture that emerges is of a complex world in which the subtle realms of theoretical Physics are inextricably entangled with the social and political upheavals of the time, where the personal and the collective continue their dramatic struggle, sometimes with the most devastating consequences, where science and spirituality find significant common ground and open new and creative vistas into the field of wholeness. For those who have not seen the documentary, please visit: <https://www.infinitepotential.com>.

The film basically follows the script of David Peat's *Infinite Potential: The Life and Times of David Bohm* (1997). As Paul Howard explains in the touchingly personal article he kindly shared with us, it was through meeting Peat at a café in the medieval Italian village of Pari that he got to know about David Bohm. This encounter and the subsequent work Paul did on the documentary had a profound effect on him, as it answered a fundamental question he had asked himself as a child concerning the nature of reality and the relationship between the unseen source and the moving image of the manifest world. He added a postscript announcing that he is now working on an addendum on dialogue. This aspect of Bohm's approach to consciousness was a missing chapter in the film. For those of us for whom Bohm's dialogue has been of special significance, this is most welcome news and we look very much forward to seeing the finished work, for which we would like to thank Paul most heartily in advance.

A Filmmaker's Journey into the World of David Bohm

by Paul Howard

I discovered David Bohm in a little medieval village in Tuscany, Italy, in 2005. Prior to that I knew nothing of him. Even though I grew up in a family where science, religion and philosophy were regular dinner con-

versations, where Einstein, Jesus, Stephen Hawking, the Buddha and Darwin were household names, David Bohm was never mentioned. After all, he was the one that Einstein had nominated as his “spiritual successor” and his Holiness the Dalai Lama called his “science guru”. Having just completed ‘Infinite Potential’, a film on David Bohm’s life and his ground-breaking work in physics, philosophy and on the nature of consciousness, the question is: why had I never heard about this extraordinary man before? The film is an attempt to answer this question, to shine a light on Bohm’s world and how making the film changed my life.

I’ve always had a strong intuitive sense. This has guided me to what I have come to believe about our place in the Cosmos and our perception of the everyday world of space and time. If followed with a sincere heart, mind and spirit, our deeper intuition can lead us to a true sense of belonging, connect us to the natural world and provide meaning and purpose in our lives.

When I was very young, I regularly attended the cinema in the small village, just southwest of Dublin, where I grew up. As soon as the lights went down and the projector beam hit the screen, I lost any awareness of those around me and entered another reality. Then the lights would come back on and I would slowly return from the two-dimensionality on the screen to the three-dimensional reality of my everyday world. This strange experience was repeated on countless occasions and it left a deep impression on me.

As I walked home after such screenings, I wondered whether the three-dimensional reality that I was witnessing could be some kind of projection, just like the flickering images on the cinema screen. This thought used to bother me a lot. I would spin around at great speed to see if I could catch sight of the projector hidden behind me. But no matter how fast I turned, I never spotted it. My friends found this behaviour strange and amusing. But the idea stayed with me and I continued to question whether our everyday reality is real or some kind of projected illusion.

My dad was an airline pilot and he read widely in science, mathematics and philosophy. He was not overly religious, but on occasion I would catch him reading *The Bible*. He advised me that, if I wanted to read the Gospels, I should start with Matthew. And there was Jesus saying to the multitude, “The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand”, and, “You must overcome the world”. At school, we used to recite the Lord’s prayer and I was always struck by the words “Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven”. My dad suggested that I should think of the Kingdom of Heaven as a dimension beyond our ordinary sense perception. This reaffirmed my intuition of the existence of an extrasensory dimension. So, could this be the invisible cosmic image projector of our daily sensory experience?

Some years later, I was travelling with my father in the cockpit of a Boeing 737. The aircraft was experiencing turbulence, it was raining hard, visibility was almost zero and we were descending rapidly. I asked, “How do you know where we are?”, and my dad told me, “Count to 15 seconds and you will see the runway directly in front of us”. I counted to 15 and, low and behold, there it was, the main runway at Heathrow, beautiful with the lights reflected on the wet tarmac. He told me further, “Count to 15 again and we will be on the ground”. And, sure enough, we were on the ground in 15. As we taxied towards the terminal building, I asked again, “How did you know our position with nothing visible in sight?” and, with a mischievous smile, dad replied, “Oh ye of little faith!” We both knew that it had nothing to do with any religious faith. The aircraft had landed safely through our reliance on instruments rooted in Einstein’s equations. In relativity, time is the fourth dimension of space, so I realized that even to navigate our everyday world we rely on another dimension.

When I saw Stanley Kubrick’s ‘2001: A Space Odyssey’ (1968), the mysterious Universe spread out before me in all its vastness and splendour. The scientific impulse to find out more about our universe was seamlessly interwoven with philosophical ideas about freewill, the ending of time, reincarnation, life beyond Earth, consciousness.

Suddenly, all the colours of light emerged as one from that giant cosmic projector.

I made a career in film and television. Having completed a television series, I was feeling exhausted. So, my wife Bernadette and I, along with our children, took some time out on Ireland's west coast. One evening, when visiting the local pub, Bernadette spotted an advertisement of a house for sale in Tuscany. Bernadette took down the local number and made the call. An Italian young woman answered. She said it was her parents that were selling. She showed us pictures of the house and of the beautiful medieval village of Pari.

In 2005, I was alone in a small café in Pari when an elderly gentleman with a strong Liverpudlian accent appeared beside me and ordered an espresso. We got to chatting. He told me that his father, an electrical contractor, had employed George Harrison as an apprentice electrician, before the young man handed in his notice and left to join some obscure band called The Beatles. His name was David Peat. David was running conferences based in large part on the ideas of a quantum physicist by the name of David Bohm. I felt there was a certain inevitability about this meeting. Over time, my family and I got to know David, his wife Maureen and their extended family quite well and became friendly. When Peat found out I was a film maker, he asked me to read a short script he had written titled 'Infinite Potential', based on his book on the life and times of David Bohm.

In that brief synopsis, I read about the concept of wholeness, the implicate and explicate orders, the quantum potential and non-locality. I was immediately drawn to the philosophical ideas and to Bohm himself, the maverick intelligence behind them. Here was a clear explanation of the emergence of the manifest world of form out of an infinite organizing potential in the universe that provided a context for creation and a gateway into a deeper reality. It confirmed what I had always intuited and now believe: that we are made manifest through the infinite organizing power of quantum phenomena, all in conformance to an informa-

tion potential that allows our physical universe to exist. This was it. I had indeed found the projector I had been looking for: *the beam of light, emerging from the deeper cosmic reality behind all the dualities of our three-dimensional world, in which humankind, both as actors and audience, appear on the screen of manifest reality.* **The jigsaw was complete.**

Once grasped, I was able to comprehend that behind the duality of our everyday world there is a deeper dimension where everything is interconnected. I came to *know*, not just as an intellectual idea, that *the observer is the observed*, and began to sense that beyond the veil of form and separation one can realise a *wholeness* present in everyone and everything. I sensed the realm of *Being*. In that state of being, I began to perceive that we are all *one consciousness* and that the Ultimate Reality is that Consciousness, the immeasurable, the ‘Spirit’ Bohm says “is never born and never dies” – that there is no death.

Bohm believed that nature has an infinite quality. He merges into his physics profound ideas which have been known for millennia in the mystical traditions of the East; that every particle in our physical universe is informed of its condition and context, giving rise to an unbroken wholeness, a profound interconnectedness throughout the entire Universe. A realization that the whole is contained in every part of the Cosmos and that all of time is contained in each passing moment. A wholeness that is held together by Consciousness itself. That was David Peat’s gift to me when we met in that café in Pari by introducing me to the life and ideas of David Bohm – the Visionary Scientist and Spiritual Man.

Postscript

I believe the film that I have had the privilege to make is comprehensive. It covers David Bohm’s life, his work in Physics, in Philosophy and in Consciousness. The missing chapter is his work with dialogue, or what I refer to as the dialogic route to consciousness. There was no time



House sparrows at Chalet Solitude, Rougemont

for it in the 110 minutes. This version is definitive. It will travel in its long-form and in series form, 2 hours or 4 to 5 half-hours. The dialogic episode will form part of the total story.

The big lesson we learn from Bohm is that we constantly need to review and question everything. Society at large has a tendency to accept the status quo. We need to question what impels our economic, political, social and spiritual structures. We need a safe space to have unsafe discussions, to re-imagine our world and make it a more com-

passionate and equitable place to love, live and work in harmony with nature and to regain our essential wholeness.

When we understand this, then I think we will be empowered to take care of ourselves and each other better, and to look after this *household* we all share – planet Earth. **David Bohm would have wanted that.**

Paul Howard

K: Being nothing

You are nothing. You may have your name and title, your property and bank account, you may have power and be famous; but in spite of all these safeguards, you are as nothing. You may be totally unaware of this emptiness, this nothingness, or you may simply not want to be aware of it; but it is there, do what you will to avoid it. You may try to escape from it in devious ways, through personal or collective violence, through individual or collective worship, through knowledge or amusement; but whether you are asleep or awake, it is always there. You can come upon your relationship to this nothingness and its fear only by being choicelessly aware of the escapes. You are not related to it as a separate, individual entity; you are not the observer watching it; without you, the thinker, the observer, it is not. You and nothingness are one; you and nothingness are a joint phenomenon, not two separate processes. If you, the thinker, are afraid of it and approach it as something contrary and opposed to you, then any action you may take towards it must inevitably lead to illusion and so to further conflict and misery. When there is the discovery, the experiencing of that nothingness as you, then fear – which exists only when the thinker is separate from his thoughts and so tries to establish a relationship with them – completely drops away. Only then is it possible for the mind to be still; and in this tranquillity, truth comes into being.

‘Self-Defence’

Commentaries on Living, First Series, pg. 92

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In his biography, Peat reports how much Bohm suffered from depression during his last years. According to Peat, Bohm had always been prone to depression, but at the end of his life this tendency seemed to be exacerbated, provoking what to all appearances was a mental breakdown. His condition was considered severe enough to warrant his temporary internment in a psychiatric clinic. As could be expected, Bohm's psychological condition has given rise to a good deal of speculation as to its nature and has been the object of debate regarding the quality of his understanding and, consequently, the value of his contribution to the field of consciousness and the transformation of man. So while some might dismiss him on account of his apparent mental imbalance, others point out that great geniuses, e.g. Nietzsche or Van Gogh, are often subject to some kind of mental derangement, which is part of the price they have to pay for their creativity. Even in K's case, the outbreak of the 'process' in Ojai in 1922 could have been considered, from the standard medical point of view, a psychotic episode. It just so happened that the people around K understood that something else entirely was happening, that instead of a pathological condition what they were witnessing was a profound inward transformation attendant on the opening of the source of wisdom in our time. Otherwise he would have been deemed a fit candidate for bedlam.

My own interactions with Bohm in the last two years of his life, when these dramatic events were taking place, indicated that his intelligence was as lucid and insightful as ever and, perhaps due to the suffering he was enduring, endowed with a deeper quality of compassion. The dialogues we had with him at Brockwood between 1990 and 1992 were invariably illuminating. He openly admitted he had been depressed by the outbreak of the first Gulf War. But, curiously enough, he had been learning a great deal about dialogue from his psychiatrist, Patrick de Maré. Bohm was learning from his own condition as part of the general psychopathology of mankind. In such a state, he displayed a total vulnerability that made him human, all-too-human and endeared him all the more to us.

Eddie O'Brien, who also was in close contact with Bohm during this final period, sent us a longish peace in which he explores this fine line between

pathology and insight or, in his own words, between breakthrough and breakdown.

The Importance of Questioning Fixed Assumptions

by Eddie O'Brien

Following the release of Paul Howard's very timely and important documentary, 'Infinite Potential: The Life and Ideas of David Bohm', David Bohm's life and work is being brought to the attention of many people who previously may have had little, if any, knowledge about this extraordinary man. This article is an attempt to question the commonly held belief that at one time in his life David Bohm suffered from a deep psychiatric condition. I want to propose that something fundamentally different than a mental imbalance may have been taking place.

I met David Bohm for the last time in his office at Birkbeck College in London just a few weeks before he died. When I arrived, I was struck by how depressed David appeared and our conversation was slow to come alive. At one point, I suggested to David that I felt one of thought's many capacities was to be able to 'bluff'. By this I meant not only that people can get tricked into holding certain rigid beliefs, but also that there is a human tendency to believe the narrative our own thought process is telling us about ourselves. I was looking forward to meeting David a few weeks later at a scheduled dialogue weekend. However, when I returned to Ireland, I had a very strong premonition that David was about to die. And just a few days before the dialogue meeting I was told that David had unexpectedly passed away.

There were some very striking events surrounding David's death. At that dialogue event, Don Factor, one of the people working closely with David on his dialogue proposal, told us about David phoning him the evening before he died. Don shared that David was excited about

a breakthrough he was experiencing. David told Don that there was a 'self'. Don asked David if this 'self' was the same as in Buddhism and David had said that it was different. Later, for his book, *Infinite Potential: The Life and Times of David Bohm*, David Peat interviewed Don about this conversation he had with David and Don told him that David had said: "There was indeed a self, but this self is not an object but an entire mental process, an on-going activity."⁶ Anna Factor, Don's wife, who was also involved with the exploration of dialogue, had also talked with David on the phone the evening before he died. David told her that he was on the edge of something new and feeling excited about it. David sounded so alive that Anna felt he was 'on fire'. (The following day, within the hour before he died, David phoned his wife Saral. His voice was bubbling with energy and he told her: "You know, it's tantalising, I feel I am on the edge of something."⁷) The Factors, who were also close friends of David and Saral, had arranged for all four of them to travel together to the launch of Sogyal Rinpoche's book, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* (1992). When Anna and Don arrived at the launch, they told Sogyal that David had died earlier that day and he immediately phoned the Dali Lama to inform him.

During the latter years of his life David had experienced a deep fear of dying. However, the insights and events that occurred in his last days suggest that he crossed the threshold of death unaccompanied by this fear. And in doing so he may have contributed to puncturing a hole in the powerfully unconscious belief in materialism as an absolute, which has such a tight grip on the consciousness of so much of humanity. Perhaps this final breakthrough that occurred in David's life may not only have been one of his most significant, but everything he encountered in his life, including the experience of depression, may have been fundamentally necessary in order for this final break-

6 *Infinite Potential – The Life and Times of David Bohm* by F. David Peat, Helix Books, 1997, pg. 318.

7 *Infinite Potential – The Life and Times of David Bohm* by F. David Peat, Helix Books, 1997, pg. 319.

through to have occurred. And having occurred it may have meant that his life's purpose had fulfilled itself and he was then fully ready to leave.

I find it interesting that Krishnamurti also referred to this threshold into death. Krishnamurti told Asit Chandmal: "When someone dies, there are one or two persons he or she may want to see. They will only come back to a house where there is no violence, where there is love."⁸ It seems that what is operating very actively in our lives is not just our faculty of conscious awareness, but that there is also an awareness taking place in the nonconscious dimension that may be more influential than what is happening consciously. I suggest that one of the important elements that may be operating in this domain is what I like to call 'unconscious curiosity'. It may have appeared even to David himself that he was going through some deep psychiatric trauma, without this having been actually the case. Perhaps it was necessary for him to enter those very challenging realms, such as depression, to enable him to address the core of the mental imbalance that pervades so much of society and to allow him to make the discoveries that turned him into the very creative social and cultural therapist that he was.

Even though David was deeply aware of the dangerous level of incoherence and confusion in the world at large, I think it was of crucial importance that he did not fall into the very unhelpful belief that there is something fundamentally wrong in the core essence of our humanity. He was rather concerned with the danger of tacit and unwarranted conclusions in preventing the operation of a deeper quality of intelligence that is otherwise inherently natural to us. This point is illustrated in the following excerpt from an interview David did with Mark Edwards and Alan Hunter, which appeared in *The Journal of the Metamorphic*

8 *The Last Walk*, by Asit Chandmal. *The City Magazine*, Bombay, March 7th, 1986, pg. 38.

Association, in 1986, in an article titled, *The Importance of Questioning Fixed Assumptions*.⁹

Alan Hunter: *One problem is that many academics – philosophers or psychologists – would say that there is no reason to believe that such an intelligence exists. It may be an old metaphysical idea. Is there any reason to suppose it actually exists?*

David Bohm: *Is there any reason to believe that there isn't such an intelligence? You could say of that approach that it is a self-fulfilling assumption. If we assume there is no such intelligence, that will automatically be fulfilled. That way we could never find it, is that clear?*

Alan Hunter: *If we deny the possibility of it?*

David Bohm: *Yes. That is the danger in a lot of the academic approaches, that they contain tacit assumptions that people are not very aware of which tend to be self-fulfilling. People find their assumptions verified and therefore they say that must be the truth. Now, I think we need an attitude of exploration here, of not having fixed assumptions but being ready to explore. So I think this would be the first requirement in any view of education of the nature which Krishnamurti had in mind. The mind must be free and ready to explore, without fixed conclusions and presuppositions and assumptions, without being blocked by them. Now most of the history of humanity has been to hold fixed assumptions, which are unconscious or blocked, without movement. In fact people generally start from these assumptions without knowing they have got them; therefore they are, as Krishnamurti would say, tethered in some limited area. I think one of the first questions implied by what you say: Is it possible to be free of those fixed assumptions and conclusions? That already would be a transformation of the mind. So part of Krishnamurti's education is aimed at freeing the mind from these, and in that sense it would parallel what these other people are doing with no authority and creativity and so on. Presumably they have a similar aim. Except that they don't realise, perhaps, that even they are still*

9 *Metamorphosis – The Journal of the Metamorphic Association*. No. 9, Summer 1986, pg. 6.

bounded by fixed assumptions that they are not aware of. That is, there may be a tacit assumption by modern educators that they're enlightened and free ...

Alan Hunter: *... at least compared to everybody else ...*

David Bohm: *Yes, and they may not realise the extremely great power of very subtle fixed assumptions. So a lot of Krishnamurti's education is a form of questioning, getting people to learn to question, and I think it would be necessary to arouse this spirit of questioning, the ability to be aware of your assumptions and conclusions and prejudices.*

Mark Edwards: *That in itself requires a degree of intelligence that people don't necessarily have.*

David Bohm: *Well, I think they would have it naturally, but society has grown in such a way as to damp it down. You see, I think every society tries to maintain its form by destroying intelligence, by destroying the responsiveness of the human being to intelligence.*

Another reason why it is important that we don't become immersed within a belief system that we are essentially flawed, is not only because this would imply that we are not responsible, but that we are victims of the events we encounter in life. David's proposal about the existence of this fundamental intelligence implies our potential for participating in the unfolding universe, whose wholeness would thus be intrinsically bound with us. In this regard, I find the following statement he made in an interview with Renee Weber to be particularly striking: *"We have at least the potential to participate ... Yes, we may participate in the whole and thus help to give it meaning. This is a position more favoured in the West than in the East, which is inclined to make the human being rather a small thing in the cosmos. But we are nevertheless an intrinsic feature of the universe, which would be incomplete without us in some fundamental sense."*¹⁰

¹⁰ "The Physicist and the Mystic – Is a Dialogue Between Them Possible?" A conversation with David Bohm conducted by Renée Weber; edited by Emily Sellon, *Revision*, Vol. 4, No. 1, Spring 1981, pg. 32.

I think it is interesting that David Bohm's 'depression' was the catalyst that brought him in contact with the psychiatrist Dr Patrick de Maré, who had been pioneering medium and large group dialogues for decades. These two men had many conversations and David acknowledged Patrick's immense contribution to his understanding of dialogue. I think this is an example of the apparently ironic manner in which new and even transformational understanding can emerge. The meeting between these two men might be indicative of something taking place in somebody's life other than meets the eye: in this case the surface appearance of a breakdown being the occasion for a breakthrough. So, did what was taking place in David's life really involve a psychiatric issue, as such issues are commonly understood?

It is important to mention that Patrick de Maré, just like David, did not doubt our human potential for intelligence. However, Patrick asked: Why is it that intelligent people perpetuate cultures that are so self-destructive? "We do not have to turn to other cultures for anthropological study; we have only to step outside our own front door."¹¹ David Bohm was a scientist of mind as well as a scientist of matter and I think that the complementarity of these two explorations contributed significantly to the clarity that emerged through him. However, I suggest that another very important factor that enabled him to discover and share such important gifts with the world was not just clarity of mind, but purity of heart.

Since the object of this article is to emphasise the creative aspect of what to all appearances looked like a pathological condition, I think it might be appropriate to end it with the words of the Polish-American scholar Alfred Korzybski that David himself was fond of quoting: "Whatever we say a thing is, it isn't."

Eddie O'Brien, August 2020
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11 *Koinonia – From Hate, Through Dialogue, to Culture in the Large Group*. Patrick de Maré, Robin Piper, Sheila Thompson. Karnac Books, 1991, pg. 87.

K: Language does not condition the brain

It seems that language really doesn't condition the brain; what does is the theory of the language, the abstraction of a certain feeling and the abstraction taking the form of an idea, a symbol, a person – not the actual person but a person imagined, or hoped for, or projected by thought. All those abstractions, those ideas, conclusions, however strong, condition the brain. But the actual, like the table, never does.

Take a word like 'suffering'. That word has a different meaning for the Hindu and the Christian. But suffering, however described by words, is shared by all of us. Suffering is the fact, the actual. But when we try to escape from it through some theory, or through some idealized person, or through a symbol, those forms of escape mould the brain. Suffering as a fact doesn't and this is important to realize.

Like the word 'attachment'; to see the word, to hold it as if in your hand and watch it, the fact that we are attached – the fact, not the word; that feeling doesn't shape the brain, put it into a mould, but the moment one moves away from it, that is, when thought moves away from the fact, that very movement away, movement of escape, is not only a time factor, but the beginning of shaping the brain in a certain mould.

Monday, May 9, 1983

Krishnamurti To Himself, pp.108–109

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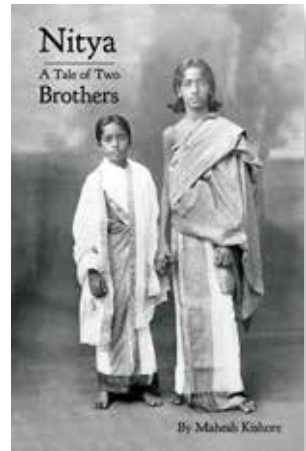
Nitya: A Tale of Two Brothers

by Mahesh Kishore

(SFH Publications, Portland, 2019)

This book may be ordered from:

<https://shfpublications.com>



Foreword

by Scott H. Forbes

For twenty-three years, only a few copies of this manuscript existed. While they might have been valued privately, it was only in the spring of 2019 that this remarkable work was really studied, appreciated, and viewed as worthy of a wider audience.

Nitya: A Tale of Two Brothers is not concerned with the Teachings of Krishnamurti, which may disappoint some readers, but that was not the intention of Mahesh Kishore. Mahesh was interested in the young lives of Krishnamurti and his younger brother Nitya before those Teachings appeared – variously said to have begun in 1929 or 1933. As Nitya died in 1925, he was never exposed to those Teachings, but most intriguingly, Mahesh postulates that Nitya's life and death had an enormous impact on Krishnamurti, his development, and, consequently, the Teachings.

Mahesh meticulously researched and assembled his findings over a period of ten years. His position as the last secretary of the Krishnamurti Foundation of India to be personally appointed by Krishnamurti provided him with access to the three Foundation archives in India, America, and England. He also clearly had significant access to the Theosophical Society archives at its headquarters in Adyar, India.

Much (but not all) of the information Mahesh collected appears in disparate accounts of Krishnamurti's early life, yet here he gathers them

all together for the first time. More important than collecting this information (valuable in its own right) is Mahesh's stringing together of these pieces to create a new picture of two astonishingly intertwined young lives with extraordinary destinies.

As Krishnamurti and Nitya lived in a Theosophical world during the years depicted in this story – and all of the contemporary accounts of their lives were written by Theosophists – Theosophical terminology, images, tropes, and motifs unavoidably fill Mahesh's narrative. When Mary Lutyens wrote the excellent first volume of her biographical trilogy of Krishnamurti in 1975, *Krishnamurti: The Years of Awakening*, she faced the same issue and received a great deal of criticism for making his early life seem so Theosophical. However, in those early years, Krishnamurti *was* a Theosophist, regardless of his differences with certain expressions of it. To not acknowledge this would be a disservice to historical accuracy.

Mahesh's work could also be criticized for his interpretation of the information he uncovers, but he is honest about this at the start of his book. In the third sentence of his Introduction, he says candidly, "... although the story is solidly grounded in factual information, that information has been interpreted from the viewpoint of the 'inward eye,' a mystical perspective which aims to unearth the deeper significance of outward events and to set them in a context in which spiritual reality is not fragmented from the temporal order." Such are the limitations of all histories wherein facts are interpreted, perhaps not from the "mystical perspective" of an "inward eye" but instead from a cultural, national, or religious perspective that can and should always be questioned. One can only appreciate Mahesh's refreshing candour.

People may also criticize this extraordinary study in feeling that Mahesh does not sufficiently question all of his sources equally. While he is often sceptical of the more outlandish claims by Leadbeater, he seems unquestioning of the Sloss book, so much of which has been debunked. But this is a small fault, if it is any fault at all, that does not



Autumn between Überlingen and Salem, near Lake Constance, Germany

detract from this exposition of these remarkable brothers and what they brought to each other.

There is so much mystery surrounding Krishnamurti, both his nature and the source of his Teachings. Anyone interested in these two mysteries will find Mahesh's exhaustive research to be a valuable new resource. We can only be grateful to Mahesh for his remarkable narrative.

K: My brother and I are one

An old dream is dead and a new one is being born, as a flower that pushes through the solid earth. A new vision is coming into being and a greater consciousness is being unfolded. A new and more beautiful aspect of the same old truths of life is becoming clear, and the beauty of old things, whether open or obscure, has now a different meaning with a different delight. A new thrill and a new throb is being felt. A new strength, born of suffering is pulsating in the veins and a new sympathy and understanding is being born of past sufferings – a greater desire to see other people suffer less, and if they must suffer, to see that they bear it easily and come out of it without too many scars. I have wept but I do not want others to weep; but if they do, I know now what it means. Forget the event and remember the lesson.

Anyway, I believe in life after death; and as it happens, I have seen my brother. Now I have seen him happy as a bird in the blue skies, for it is a tremendous relief for him to be released from that body. Now he can work and our dreams will come true. On the physical plane we could be separated. Now we are inseparable. We both shall enjoy the fun of life and laugh together even though he is not in his body. He and I shall work together with greater purpose and enthusiasm. His great capacities will not be wasted, his hopes will not fail to bear fruit. For my brother and I are one. As Krishnamurti, I have now greater zeal, greater faith, greater sympathy and greater love, for there is also in

me, the essence, the Being of Nityananda. I now possess two minds, two emotional bodies, which have had many experiences, have entertained many points of view, all working for one thing, the Master, the Teacher, the Lover. So he is not gone but is working unhindered by all the ugliness of the gross world. And so I am happy because we are one and there is no separation, and because we want and long to work for our Teachers.”

Chapter XXXII: Krishnamurti's Agony and Ecstasy

Nitya: A Tale of Two Brothers, pp. 312–213

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Michael Krohnen also sent us a review of this book, which he found to be a very moving account of the close relationship between the two brothers.

A Review of Nitya: A Tale of Two Brothers

by Michael Krohnen

The book *Nitya – A Tale of Two Brothers* was published by SHF Publications toward the end of 2019. The author, Mahesh Kishore (known to most of us as Mahesh Saxena) had died over 20 years ago. J. Krishnamurti had appointed him secretary of the Krishnamurti Foundation India (KFI) in 1985. As such, Mahesh had access to the archival material available at that time. Fascinated by the life and role of Nityananda, K's younger brother, and very much identifying with him, he researched and put together the manuscript which is the basis for the book under consideration.

K and Nitya's relationship was very close; especially after their mother's death in 1904 they became 'inseparable'. Their intellectual capacities and personal characteristics differed considerably: while K was vague and dreamily observant, quite lacking in academic potential

and never able to pass a test, Nitya was sufficiently sharp and capable to earn an academic degree. From a certain angle they complemented each other, especially in the context of their future lives under the auspices of the Theosophical Society (TS).

This was significant because it was K who was designated “the World Teacher,” and Nitya fulfilled the necessary role of assistant and helper for 15 years. Most previous biographies of K (by Mary Lutyens, Pupul Jayakar, etc.) naturally focus on K, attributing to Nitya a secondary, supportive role.

This book, however, as the title indicates, emphasizes Nitya’s personality and explores not only his total dedication to K but also the tremendous influence he exerted on his brother’s life and philosophy.

In this book, which at heart is a compilation of biographical material, Mahesh presents the considerable correspondence between the two brothers, and also with theosophical leaders like Annie Besant, C.W. Leadbeater, Emily and Mary Lutyens, and others. This archival material has only been minimally included in the previous biographies, but here it is enormously expanded, and held together by Mahesh’s account of the brothers’ travels, activities, and relationships. It also includes a detailed presentation of the complex theosophical ideology and belief system, which plays an important role in the proceedings. Mahesh does not include any critical exploration of his in that regard.

So the book will be fascinating for those interested in K’s early life, and provide source material about his actions and behavior in his later life, when he was without his bright brother, who died in Ojai, California in 1925, at the age of 27. K, of course, went on for another sixty years teaching and travelling the world. And he passed away in 1986, at the age of 90, also in Ojai.

All in all, one might describe the book as a historical document, presented in a readable format. It’s quite unique.

As for myself, I was very moved by the extraordinary closeness of the two brothers. In some sense it was like discovering hidden aspects of K's person and finding their source in the manifestation of these early events.

K: What is philosophy?

Question: What is philosophy, and is it useful for us?

Krishnamurti: For most of us, philosophy is learning all that the other philosophers, including myself, have said. It certainly is not philosophy – dealing with ideas and systems of ideas. Philosophy means obviously, as we were talking the other day, love of wisdom. Neither have we love, nor do we listen. We talk, we discuss in philosophic terms, but we do not know what wisdom is, and we do not know what love is. You cannot buy wisdom, and no teacher, no guru, no book, will give you wisdom.

Wisdom begins where sorrow ends. Wisdom is a thing that comes through self-knowing – knowing yourself, knowing every movement of your thought, every feeling, every reaction. And as you understand all about yourself, there is that emptiness; and in that emptiness there is wisdom.

Love cannot be taught, nor is it to be found in any book. It comes stealthily, unknowingly, when you begin to observe, to see, to feel, to hear the things and the mutterings of the world. And out of that there comes sensitivity, and then there is the beginning of that which is called love.

Third Talk in Rajghat, 8 December 1963

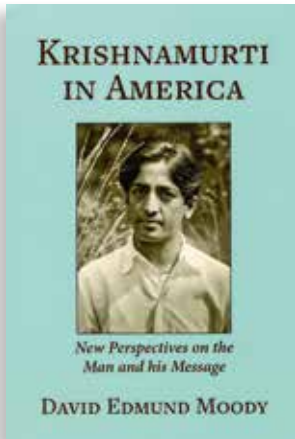
The Collected Works, Vol. 14, pg. 76

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Krishnamurti in America: New Perspectives on the Man and his Message

by D.E. Moody

(Alpha Centauri Press, Ojai, California, 2020)



A Critique of Krishnamurti in America

by Stephen Smith

The publication of *Krishnamurti in America: New Perspectives on the Man and his Message* coincided, almost, with that of *Nitya: A Tale of Two Brothers*. Both books offer new perspectives, though in a very different vein. The latter, by Mahesh Kishore, is intimate, personal and gains in drama and intensity by moving Nitya centre-stage. The mere fact that he is the “main character” causes us to look at Krishnamurti anew and allows Nitya

to emerge as a person in his own right. The warmth and goodness of his nature are stressed while Krishnaji remains more enigmatic, more distant. The two lives are fused into one by Nitya’s death whereby, according to Kishore, K gained what he lacked in human terms and without which he could not have fulfilled his mission: the World Teacher *assimilated* his brother. Add to this Nitya’s death at the age of twenty-seven, and one has all the makings of Romantic high drama.

Moody has no truck with such an approach. He strives at all times to be factual and, where he is called upon to speculate, he does so with restraint. In other words, he is a Classicist, preferring lucid diagnosis, and an appropriately “chiselled” style, to more colourful imaginings and exuberant prose. Which doesn’t mean that his writing lacks verve; on the contrary, at times it fair races along, but this is largely due to his engagement with his “characters” (no fewer than eight of the twenty chapters, from *The Two Brothers* to *Scott Forbes*, are devoted to individu-

als). This speaks volumes for the nature of his immersion in his subject: it is the human aspect that interests him most or, at least, where he is most at home. This involves him in a certain amount of repetition since we are already familiar, via *The Unconditioned Mind*, of his difficult relationship with Erna Lilliefelt and, via *An Uncommon Collaboration*, of his championing of David Bohm.

Moody sets the bar deliberately high. He introduces his work in tandem with Mary Lutyens' three-volume biography and Pupul Jayakar's expansive *Krishnamurti*, delineating the shortcomings of each: the "dryness" of the one and the "Indian-ness" of the other. Fortunately, he does not dwell on these points; they are, rather, places of passage to what will be his own frame of reference: Krishnamurti in America, and particularly in Ojai, and the definition of the man as a "philosophical psychologist". This is based on two factors: the sheer amount of time that K spent in California and where he had his most intense and most intimate experiences; and the fact that his *mahavakyas* (great statements or pronouncements) like *the observer is the observed* and *you are the world* are psychological – not mystical or spiritual – in nature. K starts with the basic "stuff" of the psyche – its greeds, desires, anxieties and grasping – and moves from there to the Absolute, never losing sight of either. It is this that makes the teachings unique.

The book starts with the arrival of the two brothers in Ojai but, inevitably perhaps, requires the narration of the founding and early history of the Theosophical Society. Even here, the emphasis is on the people as "characters" – Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater, in particular – although we are soon into the formation of the Order of the Star, an international organisation within the TS of which Krishnamurti was the Head. The function of the Order was to prepare humanity for the coming of the World Teacher, an extremely rare phenomenon of which the last manifestation had been Jesus Christ. This in itself was controversial, causing the resignation of the clairvoyant Rudolf Steiner and, with him, most of the German members of the society. It was the first rumblings of the upheaval that was to follow.

The setting is Ojai, the year 1922. The two young men are stepping for the first time into an “earthly paradise”, a land of abundance, sun and blue skies, barely touched by the trammels of tradition. No Savile Row suits, no Brahminical injunctions. But it was something of a holiday. In August of that year began the events, amply chronicled by Krishnaji, by Nitya and by the TS’s Mr. Warrington, that are collectively known as “the Pepper Tree Experience”. Significant among them are the periods of intense pain, chiefly in Krishnaji’s neck and spine, to which the name “the process” has been given. Readers of *Krishnamurti’s Notebook* will be aware that “the process” was still active in the 1960s and, most probably, well after that.

Moody does not dwell on it, anxious as he is to distance himself from anything that smacks of the esoteric. He does, however, make the point that in this new-found, liberating setting Krishnamurti is becoming the man he was: a human being with a distaste for ritual, ceremony or secrecy. It is part of an organic development – from the god-man of the TS, with its towers of expectation, to the humanist expounder of eternal truths. That this definition can also be challenged goes without saying, but one thing it categorically asserts: that Krishnamurti’s coming-of-age was a natural progression, from his “discovery” on Adyar beach in 1909 to his *Truth-is-a-Pathless-Land* speech twenty years later. It also asserts, though minimally, the impersonal character of the teachings. They belong to no-one, not even K himself: they belong, in their wholeness and entirety, to the world at large, to humanity, to all of us.

The War Years (1939–45) saw Krishnamurti confined to the ranch-house property at the east end of the Ojai Valley known as Arya Vihara (noble monastery). It was a good life, by all accounts. It seems to have been run as a smallholding, with fruit trees, a vegetable garden, poultry and even a cow. Oddly, Moody does not mention a primary source, Bill Quinn, who lived there as a young man and who described the atmosphere as “magical”. He does, however, dwell on and frequently come back to the tortured relationship with Rajagopal. This man, slightly younger than Krishnamurti, was appointed by Annie Besant to take care

of K's affairs after the death of Nitya (1925) and the dissolution of the Order (1929). In 1927 he married Rosalind Williams, a young American living in Ojai, who had been present at "the Pepper Tree Experience". After four years of marriage they produced a daughter, Radha, after which their conjugal relationship ceased. Much has been made, particularly by Radha in her vengeful *Lives in the Shadow with J. Krishnamurti*, of the sexual liaison between her mother and K, but this should surprise no-one since they had already been intimate in a psychological, even spiritual, sense. Thus began, in 1933, a very unlikely *ménage à trois*.

Predictably, perhaps, it was doomed to failure, but at first it can be seen as part and parcel of a broadening and deepening of Krishnamurti's life-experience which embraced the spiritual, the communal, the intimately personal and the educational. Even during the war years, when K was forbidden to speak in public, people came to see him individually. Others, such as the artist Beatrice Wood, moved to the Valley just to be close. There was a sense, articulated or not, that the Ojai Valley was a special place, a focus, as the theosophists had claimed, for the emergence of the Sixth Root Race, the next phase of human development. Krishnamurti was attuned to the "newness" of California, to its inventiveness and disregard of the past – he also loved the climate, the light and the land – but when the "liberated sixties" came he was quick to condemn their promiscuity and dishevelment. We owe it to Alain Naude, his secretary at the time, that he made a connection that now seems obvious (*Question Authority* was the mantra of the age).

At the back of it all, unfortunately, was the deteriorating relationship with Rosalind and Rajagopal. The latter had threatened to "reveal all", thus silencing friends of K who had given money for his work. He had also removed him from the board of KWInc. (Krishnamurti Writings Incorporated) and even personally acquired the copyright to his work. He had, in a word, rendered him powerless. The outcome was, that from 1960 on, Krishnamurti was "exiled" from his home: "the tenants", as Moody puts it, "had evicted the landlord". When Erna Lilliefelt came on the scene, Arya Vihara with its eleven acres of land had been put on

the market for nine thousand dollars and the work of the World Teacher was almost in tatters.

The author may be criticised for spending so much time on the Rajagopals and being preoccupied with K's "passivity" – hard, certainly, for a Westerner to understand – but it is a necessary feature of the overall rhythm of the book. The sense of liberation and delight that he felt when, in 1922, he first came to California are matched only by the feeling of release he experienced in 1968 with the creation of the first Krishnamurti foundation, the Krishnamurti Foundation Trust, based in England, and quickly followed by the Krishnamurti Foundation of America (1969) and Krishnamurti Foundation India (1970). Although already in his seventies, one senses Krishnaji "rarin' to go" – indeed, pitching in as never before. Brockwood Park opens in 1969; the Oak Grove School in 1973; The School – KFI, Chennai, also 1973; and Valley School, Bangalore, in 1978. A year later, in 1979, he commences his *Letters to the Schools*, two a month, where he creates a template for what "these schools" should be, incorporating such distinctive topics as *the awakening of intelligence* and *flowering in goodness*. Obviously, these are no ordinary letters and they complete the cycle begun in 1953 with the manifesto-like *Education and the Significance of Life*. By 1978, and happily, he is also "back home" in Pine Cottage with the person he was closest to in his final years, the lady-like, soft-spoken Mary Zimbalist.

Luckily, for us and for posterity, not all of Krishnamurti's time and energy were consumed by the Black Hole of failed close relationships. Two men especially, Aldous Huxley and David Bohm, each of whom has a chapter to himself, were of major significance in his life. Aldous, with his wife Maria, moved to California in the 1930s, after the death of D.H. Lawrence, a fellow writer whom he greatly admired. He was by then a successful author in his own right, having written (in 1931) the book for which he is best known, *Brave New World*. He and K became firm friends, enjoying long conversations – he was erudite to a fault – and, even more, long walks in the Ojai hills. Though intellectually brilliant, he was a modest man, quick to recog-



Spring in Rougemont

nise in others the genius he knew he lacked himself: so D.H. Lawrence, so Krishnaji.

After World War II K needed to “regroup”, to regain the public platform as a speaker and to make his presence felt as a writer. Huxley recognised in him a unique talent: that of combining poetic descriptions of Nature with accounts of conversations he had had with seekers. This “movement” from the outer to the inner, seamlessly achieved in a natural flow, was both the form and the content of *Commentaries on Living* which appeared in three volumes between 1956 and 1960. Huxley also wrote the foreword to *The First and Last Freedom*, published in 1954. He was a friend and, as a writer, a mentor to K.

Moody highlights Krishnamurti as a writer, according that aspect of his *oeuvre* the same importance as his talks and conversations. The elucidation, for instance, of *Krishnamurti’s Journal* (pp. 170–171) with its weaving in-and-out of Nature and Psyche offers a diagnosis not only of our dilemma, but places it, as he puts it, “within a broader framework of beauty and order”. It is of a piece with the teachings as a whole.

David Bohm’s is a different story. He approached Krishnaji, both personally and thematically, through reading *The First and Last Freedom*, where he came across K’s phrase “*the observer is the observed*”. It is a well-known fact that this question is axial to an understanding of the Quantum Paradigm, with its assertion that the behaviour of sub-atomic particles is affected by the fact, the *act*, of observation. That someone should be writing of this *in terms of consciousness* was of immediate, compelling interest to Bohm, an *eminent* physicist with an international reputation whom Einstein had looked upon as his “intellectual son”. The two men met and their offspring was Dialogue. In the years that followed, and into the 1980s, they sustained a level of mutual inquiry, the seeds of which are still germinating, growing, and of which the proof, as well as the crowning glory, are the fifteen chapters of *The Ending of Time*. For depth and range they are unparalleled.

In light of this it is rather puzzling that Moody spends so much time “fighting Bohm’s corner”, especially as, in *An Uncommon Collaboration*, he has firmly established parity. For this writer, the very keynote of Bohm was his ability to lay his vast knowledge aside and to probe with K to the limits of the utterable. He was naturally modest as well as naturally brilliant, but whether that makes him a “genius” ...? Men (and women) of genius are as unique as they are rare. Bohm was “one of us” – that was his nature – and that is his inimitable contribution. After his later years of suffering and mental breakdown, amply described in his biography *Infinite Potential*, he emerged with a masterpiece: *Thought as a System*.

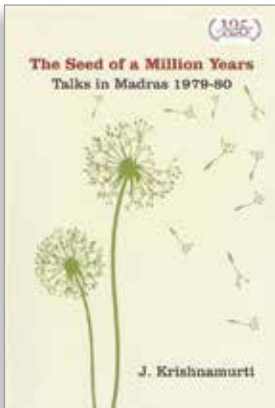
Moody omits to mention a number of books that may be of interest to the general reader: Roland Vernon’s *Star in the East*, for instance, and Christine Williams’ biography which makes use of Krishnaji’s letters to Rosalind. The playwright Stuart Holroyd wrote two books on Krishnamurti: *The Man, the Myth and the Message* and *The Quest of the Quiet Mind*, both recommended by K himself. Among the offerings of Edwin House Publications, G. Narayan’s *As the River Joins the Ocean* and Sunanda Patwardhan’s personal memoir *A Vision of the Sacred* give interesting, if very different, perspectives. Perspective itself is a strange thing and, at least partly, “in the eye of the beholder”. Who, for instance, is the mysterious *Rosenstein* who, like Hitchcock himself in a Hitchcock movie, makes a cameo appearance on page 129?

But these are questions and *addenda*, not quibbles. Moody has written a fine book. If it lacks some of the *gravitas* of the official biographies, it makes up for it by the pace of its narrative and its unequivocal engagement with the difficulties of relationship. From these, too, Krishnaji was not exempt. He remains, however, a mystery and the question still hovers: Who and what was he? In extending and elaborating the ground up to that point, Moody has performed an invaluable service.

Stephen Smith
East Meon, May–June 2020

The Seed of a Million Years: Talks in Madras 1979–1980

(KFI, Chennai, 2019)



K: The seed of a million years

Man throughout the ages has asked for something beyond time, searched, looked at, inquired into something that is incorruptible, something beyond all experience, beyond all knowledge, outside of all human endeavour, because human endeavour is the movement of thought in different directions, and thought born of knowledge is very limited. So he has said there must be somewhere something that is not perishable, that is incorruptible, that is timeless, eternal.

That seed has been sown in man from time immemorial, and we have got that seed moving all through mankind. But we have never opened or looked at that seed. We have said what that seed should be, we have said what that seed must do, what its activities are. We have clothed it with all kinds of ignoble or noble things, but we have never said, ‘This thing which man has started from time immemorial, I wonder if it can ever flower, grow.’ That is meditation.

Sixth Public Talk in Madras, 6 January 1980

The Seed of a Million Years: Talks in Madras 1979–1980, pp. 107–108

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World Teacher: The Life and Teachings of J. Krishnamurti

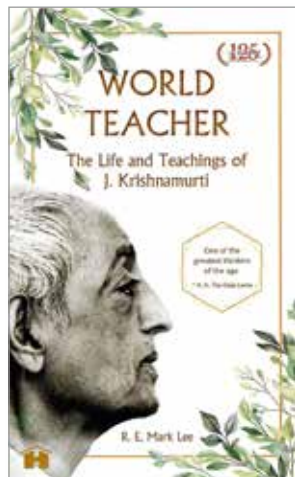
by R.E. Mark Lee (Hay House Publishers, New Delhi, 2020)

K: Waiting for the World Teacher

Dr Besant said to all the members, and I used to hear this very often, “We are preparing for a World Teacher. Keep an open mind. He may contradict everything you think, and say it differently.” And you have

been preparing, some of you, for twenty years or more; and it does not matter whether I am the Teacher or not. No one can tell you, naturally, because no one else can know except myself; and even then I say it does not matter. I have never contradicted it. I say, "Leave it. That is not the point." You have been preparing for twenty years or more, and very few of you have really an open mind. Very few have said, "Let us find out what you are talking about. Let us go into it. Let us discover if what you say is true or false, irrespective of your label." And after twenty

years you are in exactly the same position as you were before. You have innumerable beliefs, you have certainties, and your knowledge, and you are not really willing to examine what I am saying. And it seems such a waste of time, such a pity that these twenty years and more should go wasted, and you find yourselves exactly where you were, only with new sets of beliefs, new sets of dogmas, new sets of conditions. I assure you, you cannot find truth, or liberation, or nirvana, or heaven, or whatever you like to call it, by this process of attachment. That does not mean that you all must become detached, which only means you become withered, but try to find out frankly, honestly, simply, whether what you are holding with such grim possessiveness has any significance, whether it has any value; and to find out if it has any value there cannot be the desire to cling to it. And then when you really look at it in that way, you will find something which is indescribable. Then you will discover something real, lasting, eternal. Then there will be no necessity for a teacher and a pupil. It will be a happy world when there are no pupils and no teachers.



Talk to Theosophists, Auckland, NZ, 31 March 1934

The Collected Works, Vol. II, pg. 31

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Reaching the Young

by Javier Gómez Rodríguez

Mark Lee wrote this general K biography as part of his commission for the 125th Birth Anniversary being celebrated in India. It was written for a young audience – more specifically, for a young Indian audience. Its launch at the KFI Headquarters in Vasanta Vihar, Chennai, in February was a pleasant and august occasion, with few mosquitoes and the rather touching reunion of Mark Lee with some of his former students from fifty years ago. We were all young once and much water has flowed under the Elphinstone Bridge.

Reaching a young audience has been a perennial question around the teachings. K was talking about it on his deathbed, how to attract young people to the serious work of the schools and foundations, as the old guard were about to disappear. The same question continues to be posed today and will most likely be posed tomorrow. Young people, with the exception of those attending the various K schools in India, the US and England, don't know about K or what he stands for. K has not entered the cultural mainstream. Or he is known but his radical and profoundly inward approach to the human condition, though endowed with an unmistakable aura of truthfulness, may prove too daunting to embrace. His teachings are all-encompassing and represent a total challenge not just to the ways and values of our time but to the very makeup of human consciousness. They mean to uproot the old tree of knowledge to regain the lost garden of innocence.

This is, of course, a biblical image but, although K repudiated organized dogmatic religion, his core intent is not dissimilar. He realized that mankind has taken a wrong turn by adopting time as the core of being, thus initiating and perpetuating the cycle of violence and sorrow generation after generation. The teachings are a reading of this universal tragedy of self-centredness being played out in the theatre of our daily lives. But do the young appreciate the scope and depth of the human drama and the responsibility each of us bears as the reincarnation of mankind?

But perhaps the way to reach the young is not by drawing their attention to the dark side but more via the sensitive appreciation of beauty, of affection, kindness and joy. K did not think much of hope and his message can sound hopeless. He can come across as rather negative, denying the validity of art, science and religion, of every human endeavour. He can paint a grim picture of the ways of humanity, where everything we do, think and feel is riddled with conflict and tinged with despair. Everything of real value, like beauty, intelligence and compassion, seems to exist in a dimension requiring the denial of our very selves. All this that K points out may be true, but such an approach could be initially off-putting and perhaps it needs a gentler introduction to the vast spectrum of existence if the young are to embark on such an inward journey of self-discovery and liberation.

This book is certainly gentle. It is well written and covers key aspects of K's life in an uncontroversial manner, interspersing the narrative with lovely and significant quotes. It is expected to be translated and published into several Indian languages and Mark generously signed over the advanced royalties to the publisher for its promotion on social media. One can only hope that it will manage to bridge the gap.

Javier Gómez Rodríguez
Lelystad, September 2020

A Jewel on a Silver Platter: Remembering Jiddu Krishnamurti

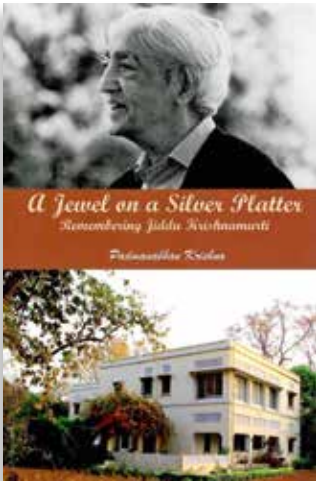
by Padmanabhan Krishna

(This book may be ordered from: www.lulu.com)

A Review

by Trisha English

This is a rare book featuring interviews and dialogues with people in India who knew Jiddu Krishnamurti intimately over many years. It pro-



vides insight into what they understood about Krishnamurti, the man, and his teachings.

Krishnamurti was both a friend and mentor to Professor Krishna, who brings to his explorations a scientific, learned mind informed with insights gathered from his lifelong membership of the Theosophical Society.

The title of the book, *A Jewel on a Silver Platter*, is taken from a conversation between J. Krishnamurti and Professor Krishna on the occasion of the latter being offered the job of Rector of the Rajghat Besant School in Varanasi. Krishnamurti declared that Professor Krishna was one of the few people whom he trusted completely. The World Teacher and philosopher, as he was sometimes called, did not have long to live and it was imperative that he hand over his mission to those who would carry on his work. Professor Krishna made a considerable sacrifice in resigning from his job as Physics professor at Benares University.

It is typical of the man's integrity that he never looked back but dedicated himself to the task that Krishnamurti entrusted to him. To the present day he remains resident on the Rajghat campus and is frequently called upon to give lectures in the USA, the UK and India.

Readers familiar with Krishnamurti's life story will recognize some of the people in the first section of the book. They include Dr. David Bohm, Achyut Patwardhan, Vimala Thakar, Radha Burnier, Dr. Annie Besant and Mark Lee. The second section of the book is an in-depth study and examination of some of the major concerns in Krishnamurti's teaching, including his views about education, relationships and the connection between the scientific and spiritual quests.

The epilogue is particularly absorbing because it raises questions and problems which other authors tend to avoid. The fact is that nobody has a monopoly on truth. So readers who approach this book with the intention of confirming their own prejudices or interpretations of Krishnamurti's teaching will be disappointed. This book at some point will challenge every reader and this is as it should be. The aim of Krishnamurti's teaching was not to provide soporific comfort, but to set humankind unconditionally free. *A Jewel on a Silver Platter* makes a valuable contribution to this enormous endeavour.

Trisha English, WA

K: Creativeness

So what do we mean by creativeness? Surely, a state of being in which conflict has completely ceased, a state of being in which there is no problem, no contradiction. Contradiction, problem, conflict, are the result of too much emphasis put on the 'I', the 'mine' – 'my success', 'my family', 'my country'. When that is absent, then thought itself ceases, and there is a state of being in which creativeness can take place. That is, to put it differently, when the mind ceases to create, there is creation. One of the causes of problems is your belief, your greed, and so on; and the mind creates as long as it has a problem, as long as it is the originator of problems. A mind that is chained to a problem, that is tethered to the creation of its own problem, can never be free. Only when the mind is free from creating its own problems can there be creation.

'Educating the Educator', Bombay, 13 March 1948

Educating the Educator, pp. 14–15

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Bud to Blossom: Blooming Creativity in Life and Education

(Understanding the Living Teaching of J. Krishnamurti)

by S. Gopalan (Mind Mingle, New Delhi, 2019)



Foreword

by P. Krishna, 23 July 2019

My colleague and friend, Gopalan, has spent a whole lifetime working to create an education in accordance with the vision propounded by J. Krishnamurti.

For several years he was closely associated with Shri Kabir Jaithirtha in developing the Valley School in Bangalore, founded by J. Krishnamurti. In this book he has distilled for us the essence of Krishnamurti's vision as well as the difficulties faced in implementing it.

At a time when there is great dissatisfaction with the present system of education, not only in India but globally, this book can be of great help to those looking for an alternative vision of education.

Essentially, Krishnamurti wanted education to be a joyous learning experience for the child and not a hardship to be somehow gone through for the sake of making a living. The entire approach is therefore student-centred, with the teacher acting mainly as a friend and facilitator of the learning.

Krishnamurti is on record saying “*Self-knowledge is the key to wisdom,*” but education has not taken on itself the responsibility to create a mind that is proficient both in knowledge and in wisdom, even though it is clear that knowledge without wisdom is often used destructively. Fritjof Capra, the author of *The Tao of Physics*, asked K, “*Sir, do I have to give up*

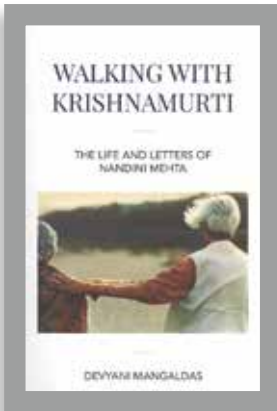
my science in order to do what you are saying?”, to which K replied, “No, sir; but you are a human being first and then a scientist. So learn the art of living and then do your science.” In one of his talks in Bombay he said, “Put your intellect in your heart; it has no value outside it.” Other quotes of his which come to mind in this regard are: “Without goodness and love one is not educated” and “There is no intelligence without compassion.”

The aim of education should be to equip the student with a mind that is learning creatively both in the field of knowledge and in self-knowledge. Such a mind is both scientific and religious at the same time. Such an approach regards religion not as belief but as an inquiry into truth which is complementary to the scientific inquiry. Krishnamurti felt that such an education can be a harbinger of profound change in the individual and therefore in society.

The greatest difficulty in creating such an education lies in the fact that we the teachers have ourselves been educated in the old system and we too need to creatively learn all this along with the student. Children are quite eager to learn but the grownups find it very difficult because they think they know what is right and their mind resists the new. Educating the educator is more difficult than educating the student since it is not just some technique to be learnt; it is a totally different approach to education and to life.

The only criticism I have of this book relates to Gopalan’s view that the ancient Hindu way of educating had all these elements in it and the faults are all due to adopting the Western model of education. I doubt this because if this was true why is the Hindu mind so traditional and unwilling to change? In 1928 Krishnaji wrote an article entitled “Tradition which has lost its soul.” A reading of that would dispel any romantic notions of a glorious past.

I must congratulate Gopalan for elucidating very clearly several aspects of Krishnamurti’s vision for the readers and all that is involved in implementing it.



Walking with Krishnamurti: The Life and Letters of Nandini Mehta

by D. Mangaldas

(Self-published, New Delhi, 2018)

Preface

Nandini Mehta first met the philosopher and spiritual teacher Jiddu Krishnamurti in Bombay in 1948, when she accompanied her father-in-law, the mill-owner Sir Chunilal Mehta, to one of his meetings.

Over the course of the next 38 years, until his death in 1986, Nandini and Krishnamurti became good friends and exchanged innumerable letters. Through the years, Krishnamurti shared with Nandini his thoughts and teachings, his compassion for her and her family.

Very little about the life of Nandini Mehta is in the public domain, apart from what is in her sister Pupul Jayakar's biography of Krishnamurti, *Krishnamurti: A Biography*. She remains an obscure figure, and other biographers of Krishnamurti have mentioned her only in passing. Some of the letters Krishnamurti wrote to Nandini Mehta became part of Jayakar's book. An independent booklet, based on these letters, entitled *Letters to a Young Friend: Happy is the Man who is Nothing*, was also published by the Krishnamurti Foundation. This booklet was subsequently translated into several languages, including Hindi, Marathi, Greek, and Portuguese.

At the time of its publication, it was not disclosed that the letters were written to Nandini Mehta, though those in Krishnamurti circles of the time knew that the "young friend" was actually her. This is how Pupul Jayakar introduces the letters: "He wrote the following letters to a young friend who came to him wounded in body and mind. The letters, written between June 1948 and March 1960, reveal a rare compassion and clarity ..."

The rather obvious question often asked is: Why did he write these letters? Why did he maintain such a long and dedicated correspondence? Obviously, Nandini became a close friend and associate. She was important to him and he cared about her. Less obviously, he probably saw in her a spirituality and calmness of the kind he sought to develop in all those who gathered to listen to his discourses.

Few understood the complex and beautiful friendship Nandini shared with Krishnamurti. One needs to understand Krishnamurti's concept of compassion and understanding, only then can one fathom their bond and respect for each other.

What is relevant and highlighted in this memoir is the way in which Nandini absorbed and understood Krishnamurti's words, how they helped her, how she tried to live her life according to his teachings. This biography spells out her life, her struggles, her path to a peaceful, spiritual existence.

This manuscript is based on her diaries, extracts of letters Krishnamurti wrote to her, which she had copied into her diaries, and letters and conversations between Nandini and her daughter Devyani (Devi) Mangaldas. Through these words, the life and thought of Nandini Mehta unfold, as does her connection to Krishnamurti.

Three years after Krishnamurti's death, when Nandini was 72, in her diary, she wrote him a letter. The letter nostalgically reminisces about the joys of walking with Krishnamurti in Bombay, Banaras, Rishi Valley, and Sri Lanka. It also recalls a distant memory of walking with him in Ooty and watching the world through his eyes. The letter ends with a moment of epiphany, when Krishnamurti's spiritual presence lifts her thoughts and mind. It is because of these last words she wrote to Krishnamurti, and the way in which she personally and metaphorically walked with him during her lifetime, that this memoir is entitled *Walking with Krishnamurti*.

READERS' CORNER

Our friend N. S. Murali sent us his appreciation for the Newsletter and his wishes for a **Merry Christmas**.

Dear Mr. Friedrich Grohe,

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Thank you so much for your Newsletter 2019 and calendar 2020.

Really delighted to go through the topics covered in the Newsletter. Letter/report, education, the teacher and the teachings, on dialogue, publications, readers' corner and obituary. Everything is information for many like me to be connected with the K world. The manner in which all these are woven together with passages from K is making the Newsletter a valuable asset.

The Study Centre Bangalore received these gifts and we gladly distributed them to all our staff.

Looking forward to the new edition of TBM. Last month we had two teachers and 8 students of education from Switzerland visiting us. We gave them the TBM and talked about you.

Today we are having another friend from Switzerland, Mr. Bernard Pulfer. I remembered his nice comment about the 90th birthday celebration, published in your Newsletter. We are conveying our gratitude and affection through him as well. He said that he will be meeting you in January. I am not waiting so long, hence this email.

Wishing you, sir, once again Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

With Love, Murali, 16 December 2019

Samdhong Rinpoche sent his **warm greetings from Dharamshala**, expressing his appreciation for our publications and hoping to be able to visit

Europe this year. We hope he manages to come to Switzerland, as it would be a great pleasure to see him again.

Dear Friedrich Grohe,

Warm greetings from Dharamshala!

I am so happy to receive your kind email dated 1st February 2020. I am regularly receiving your publications and calendars, which I greatly value. I am looking forward to receive the brochure from the Saanen Museum exhibition, *J. Krishnamurti in Saanen: 1961–1985*. It is always a great pleasure for me to receive communications from you. I also enjoyed reading Prof Roland Reichenbach's email. Thank you for sharing it with me.

For the last few years I have been avoiding visiting foreign countries, but this year there is a small possibility to visit Europe, although it is not yet certain. In case I happen to come to Switzerland, I will definitely let you know in advance. I will be happy to meet university students. I cherish the happy memories of meeting you several times in the past and look forward to meeting you again in the near future.

With my warm personal regards,

Yours Sincerely, *Samdhong Rinpoche, 2 February 2020*

Eduardo Weaver sent us a grateful and personal **report from Brazil**. After his early acquaintance with K, his work has been informed by the teachings. He is now working on an education project in Brasilia in which he will incorporate some references to the K schools.

Dear Friedrich,

During the past few years I have received from you several valuable gifts. First, I received a box, with several copies of your book *The Beauty of the Mountain*, your memories of J. Krishnamurti. Then I started receiving

your wonderful Newsletters and Calendars. I am sorry to have waited so long to thank you for these marvelous gifts that have been a source of inspiration for me during all this time.

I read with great joy *The Beauty of the Mountain*. Your stories and quotations related to your experiences with Krishnamurti were very touching. I am 70 years old now, but my appreciation of Krishnaji's work started when I was 24. At that time, I read one of his books and was very impressed with the clarity of his insights and teachings. One year later, I went to England to do a M.Sc. in Birmingham University. I used to go often to London. At that time, I was already a member of the Theosophical Society. One day I was in a meeting in London with a group of young theosophists and they told me that they were going to Brockwood Park to participate in a series of talks that Krishnamurti was giving. I enthusiastically joined them and had the chance of being close to him for the first time. I was very impressed with his presence and the way he changed the atmosphere of the tent as soon as he entered it. This happened in 1975. When I finished my M.Sc. I decided to go to India and when I was in Adyar, at the TS Headquarters, participating in the International Convention, I was told that Krishnaji was going to give a series of talks nearby. I was lucky to attend not only the talks but also a private meeting that K had with scientists, yogis and philosophers. Radha Burnier was at the TS Convention and, knowing my interest in K's teachings, invited me to go with her to this private meeting. She was one of the people in the conversation circle, and I sat just behind, listening attentively to that meaningful dialogue.

When I returned to England, I learned that Krishnamurti was going to give another series of talks at Brockwood Park. So, I went again to this marvelous site to hear him again. I am very grateful for having had the opportunity to be present at 14 talks in India and England. Since then, my life has been very influenced by K's worldview. I have been giving talks and organizing workshops about his teachings for many years. Since 2012 I have a TV program called "Dialogues about Life" that is broadcasted twice a week on TV Supren, where I have very interesting dialogues with Marcos Resende, another great student and enthusiast of K's teachings. In this program, we choose the theme of the



The fountain at Chalet Solitude, Rougemont

dialogue (a topic related with K's teachings) when we are about to start recording. The ideas flow naturally and spontaneously, without previous planning. The result has been very good. Although these programs are in Portuguese, you may be interested to take a look at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x65hA8ImZk4>.

I must say that your calendars have been a constant source of inspiration for me. I always hang them on the wall in front of the desk of my home office. I thank you for the beauty of the pictures and the nice messages.

I enjoyed your newsletters a lot. I used the contents of some of them in my lectures. I especially appreciated the 2018 Newsletter, with its rich content about education. I appreciated the diagram depicting the "Pedagogy and curriculum in relation to Inwood's intentions for holistic education". It is thought provoking. I am very engaged presently in creating a holistic and "green" methodology for a public school in Brasilia, as part of an initiative of the local government called "Innovative Schools". The experience of K schools is a good reference for our group.

I must also say that I distributed the copies of *The Beauty of the Mountain* that you sent me to people interested in K's teachings.

I am one of the directors of the Theosophical Publishing House in Brazil. We have already published about 140 books, including some of Krishnaji's. I would like to ask you permission to translate and to publish your book in Portuguese (in hard copy and as an e-book). I am sure that many people that don't understand English would love to read it and to see your gorgeous pictures. Let me know if this is possible. The Editorial Council has already approved the publication, in case you authorize us to do it.

Well, I have already written too much. But I had to express to you my immense gratitude for the work that you have been doing.

With love and affection
Eduardo Weaver, 7 August 2020
eduardo@ecosintonia.com.br

ON THE CURRENT CRISIS

K: The crisis is within

The crisis is not a matter of economics, of war, the bomb, the politicians, the scientists; the crisis is within us, the crisis is in our consciousness. Until we understand very profoundly the nature of that consciousness, and question, delve deeply into it and find out for ourselves whether there can be a total mutation in that consciousness, the world will go on creating more misery, more confusion, more horror. Our responsibility is not in some kind of altruistic action outside ourselves, political, social or economic; it is to comprehend the nature of our being; to find out why we human beings – who live on this beautiful earth – have become like this.

Chapter 7: Ojai, 1 May 1982

The Flame of Attention, pg. 83

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It would be a bit strange to issue a substantial publication like this without barely a mention of the pandemic and its universal challenge to the current mentality and welfare of mankind. As Camus masterfully depicted in his novel *The Plague*, such crises are part and parcel of our human condition and a test of our mettle, solidarity and intelligence. Crisis is opportunity, not to pursue a new advantage but to reexamine our ways and change direction. The present crisis, though produced by a deadly pathogen, throws every aspect of our existence into sharp relief. By breaking the inertial continuity of things, it opens a gap in time that could facilitate a creative break with the past. The question is whether we are up to the challenge. Some say this changes everything. That was also said of global warming, with no significant changes thus far. Others maintain that no virus can change man and that after the storm we'll be back to our

good old ways. None of us knows what will happen, but a little reflection might be in order.

The Inner Compass and the World Ahead

by Javier Gómez Rodríguez

The historical record shows that humanity has been subject to any number of devastating pandemics. The Spanish flu that broke out at the end of WWI is the most recent major precedent for what is taking place now. That virulent influenza killed more people globally than died or were maimed in the Great War. The medieval plague decimated the population of Europe. The vaunted triumph of science over nature promised the final extinction of such biological threats. However, the pathogens keep mutating and evolving and an infected bat in Wuhan ended up spreading panic all over the earth, throwing a deadly spanner in the works.

The outbreak of the coronavirus has taken the world by storm and it has disrupted the whole economic and social systems. As the system has serious issues, this halting of what to some is a doomsday machine is an opportunity to rethink the whole thing and consider seriously which way we should proceed. While the immediate reaction would seem to be to return as soon as possible to the presumed safety of normality, we all know that we cannot carry on as before, for the simple reason that we are destroying the planet. The suspension of the usual routine operations opened a window of opportunity to take a good look at ourselves and hopefully break the inertial continuity between past and future.

We all know that to break with the past is no easy matter. Even individually that is a daily challenge, and all the more so when we are talking about the whole of humanity. The current crisis is going to require massive changes and an exceptional degree of international cooperation at the scientific, political and communication levels in order to provide the right information, coordination and response. But humanity is as

divided as ever. Even as we speak, issues of racial discrimination, social inequality, religious and political sectarianism, parochial nationalism, dictatorship, trade and other wars are in full swing. The virus affects everyone without distinction, but such a universal and egalitarian threat is insufficient to bring about the realization that each and every one of us is the world, that we are our brothers' keepers and all this injustice, exploitation and violence must stop.

The global scene presents us with a patchwork of conflicting interests and a series of self-destructive tendencies. First there is the perfectly natural desire for betterment. But betterment at the expense of others and the environment is a suicidal proposition. Then there are the means to that end. These involve the scientific knowledge and technical skills required to achieve the desired results. These results will invariably have effects beyond our own calculated purposes, for we exist in a vast network of fragile relationships. Such relationships depend on our actions and our actions on our assumptions. Our relationship with nature, for example, has been informed by the presumption that it exists for our use. This use has not been guided by a symbiotic balance between our needs and its integrity, but by our superior greed. Our knowledge has become our power, our power has become our pride, and our pride our undoing. Which sounds like a classical Greek tragedy being played on a global scale.

Science and technology, however, offer the best guarantee of our being able to contain and even eradicate this invisible enemy. In such extreme circumstances, we are naturally grateful for the existence of a social safety net and for the dedication of so many who daily risk their lives in the social care and medical sectors. The investigators are working round the clock to develop a vaccine and the public authorities are presumably doing their best to manage the situation. So there is a palpable measure of solidarity and compassion being felt, as tends to be the case when we face any major collective catastrophe. War, for example, is known to bring people powerfully together, albeit in a fight to the death with their equally united antagonists. So we must

look beyond the current emergency and its concrete solutions and take a longer and wider view of the more essential and unifying challenges we face.

While it seems evident that science is our best hope in dealing with the coronavirus, beyond that lies the broader question of the role of knowledge in the field of action. For example, when it comes to climate change, the science is clear, but action is prevented by competing economic and political interests. These are so strong that the captains of industry and the heads of State prefer to bury their heads in the sand. Never mind that the world is on fire, that the Arctic forests are burning, the polar caps are melting and the coral reefs are bleaching. The socioeconomic momentum in which collectively we have invested our security and becoming is such that it overrides the dire warnings of nature and the grim prognosis of science. It is this endemic quality of self-deception that causes knowledge to lose the name of action.

The wise have repeatedly pointed out that there is no complete knowledge of anything. If so, all knowledge comes with its own margin of error, so that acting from knowledge is likely to produce effects we did not intend. This is, therefore, to be expected and the rational response is to avoid harm by readjusting the system. But the fact is that we see what is happening and proceed to deny it so we can carry on as before. This is not the kind of honest mistake attendant on the inherent limitation of knowledge, but the kind of sustained incoherence derived from wilful ignorance. And this deliberate overriding of scientific certainty can only be achieved by the blind momentum of our psychological motives, at the centre of which lies self-interest. Without the removal of these psychological barriers – which is a revolution in outlook and values –, the world will continue to be what it is because thinking makes it so.

There is little doubt that our civilisation is fast reaching the end of its tether. The assumptions and values on which it is based have become self-defeating. The notions of unlimited growth at the core of the eco-

conomic system are unsustainable, as is its dependence on fossil fuels. The separatist and competing mentalities of group identities are not a means of security and wellbeing but of dissension and violence. And the pursuit of happiness through the ruthless cultivation of ‘the more’, with its excess production and consumerist waste, is a recipe for universal disaster. The current crisis, therefore, is not just a momentary glitch in the triumphant march of progress brought on by a rogue virus but an existential impasse in the ways of human consciousness, motivation and action.

The current biological emergency is thus highlighting the underlying pathological condition at the heart of consciousness. That is the psychological baggage we need to leave behind if we are to make a smooth transition into a new and compassionate world. That is the past we need to drop from our motives and identities. Defeating the pandemic is just a matter of time, but we have to stop defeating ourselves. Time is our ally in the fight against the pandemic, but psychologically it works against us. The fragmentary and isolationist structure of society is the result of our identification with the past. The continuity of these separate identities, with their competing self-interests, is the primary factor standing in the way of the concerted international action we need to tackle these global problems. We keep fragmenting everything on account of a past in which we have invested our being, whereas that past, being dead, denies the present, which is the only time of living. That kind of time is our greatest enemy.

Time, psychologically, is inertia and the postponement of action. We might make some cosmetic changes here and there, fix the leaking roof and repair the walls of our humble or opulent dwellings, but the total challenge we are facing requires a far more fundamental change, a revolution in the assumptions about our own being. It is indeed our earth, not yours and mine. It is indeed one humanity, not us versus them. It is indeed one universal consciousness, not a collection of individualities. We are the world and the world is us. The past and the future are contained in the present. To be whole is to embrace that oneness and

simultaneity of world, consciousness and time. Without this unitary and compassionate movement, the world after the coronavirus will be heading, albeit with a better navigation system, for the same old cliff. We need to change our inner compass if we are to meet a new and wholesome world ahead.

Pax.

Javier Gómez Rodríguez
Lelystad, August–September 2020

K: Death, love and eternity

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.

Three Talks in New York City: 2 – Relationship, 24 April 1971
The Awakening of Intelligence, pg. 84
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Krishnamurti and Friedrich at Brockwood Park School, 1984 – Photo by Asit Chandmal

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