

Cover: In Rougemont, Switzerland

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

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# **DEAR FRIENDS**

#### Dear Friends

Some of you know that Friedrich turned 96 in September and that he was unwell.

His favourite poet, Erich Kästner, wrote: "Es ist nicht weit bis zur Ewigkeit." (It's not far to eternity.) This is what Friedrich felt too, especially when he was very weak.

On 10<sup>th</sup> October 2025, Friedrich died peacefully at home. He was in view of his beloved mountains and surrounded by affection.



(photo by Don Dennis)

He always felt he had enjoyed an amazing life with family and friends, with nature, with music and art, and especially with the teachings of Krishnamurti bringing inquiry and light.

He wanted to thank each of you for your friendship over the years and to send deepest best wishes to you all.

A short obituary begins on page 94.



# K: The Beauty of Death

One would like in education to bring death into some kind of reality, actuality, not of someone else dying but of each one of us, however old or young, having inevitably to face that thing. It is not a sad affair of tears, of loneliness, of separation. ...

As one looked at that dead leaf with all its beauty and colour, maybe one would very deeply comprehend, be aware of, what one's own death must be, not at the very end but at the very beginning. Death isn't some horrific thing, something to be avoided, something to be postponed, but rather something to be with day in and day out. And out of that comes an extraordinary sense of immensity.

Wednesday, 30 March 1984 Krishnamurti to Himself, pg. 134 © 1987 by Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd.

# **EDITORIAL NOTE**

# Dear Friends,

This year's Newsletter is unique in that it comes with the news of Friedrich's death. His passing was vaguely expected, given his age and the challenging condition of his heart, yet its timing came as something of a shock, especially to those of us who weren't present for his final days. He had turned 96 in September and passed away peacefully at home on October 10<sup>th</sup>. In normal circumstances, this would have called for a special issue of this Newsletter, which owes its name and existence to him. But the news came when we were in the last stages of putting it together, and an overhaul at that time seemed unthinkable. In any case, the contents of this edition correspond with his own wishes and selection.

The section ON EDUCATION is rather substantial this time, containing articles by Geetha Waters, Hillary Rodrigues and Ivone Apolinario. Geetha explores the critical balance between the educational aim of transmitting knowledge and the vital importance of questioning and observation in the art of learning. Hillary traces his discoveries and how these resonate with K's insights against the backdrop of his own educational journey. Ivone provides us with a brief update about the educational project in Portugal, which has had some teething problems. The theme that runs like a thread through these pieces is the centrality of staying with what is. We wrap up this section with an exam paper by Prof. Raymond Martin. Although we had published it some years ago, Friedrich was very keen to share it again with the Newsletter's readership.

In THE TEACHER AND THE TEACHINGS we reproduce the issue of The Book of Yourself Newsletter for August of this year. Friedrich was fond of these monthly newsletters and occasionally selected one for inclusion in this publication. We chose this one because it addresses the issue of meditation. While K generally rejected system, method and practice, when

he spoke about meditation in his schools, he offered specific instructions as to how to explore it. We thought this might be interesting for people concerned with the topic and its place in their lives.

ON DIALOGUE includes a piece by Geetha Waters, who shares her own precocious experience of this mode of communication and its importance in the education of the very young.

The REPORT FROM CHENNAI is its own section and reproduces an abridged version of a larger piece written to inform Friedrich about my trip to India on the occasion of the public address for the Centre for Continuing Dialogue held annually at Vasanta Vihar. Friedrich enjoyed it a lot and proposed its inclusion in this edition of his Newsletter.

In the PUBLICATIONS section we present two book reviews, one by David Moody of Geetha Waters' booklet *A Living Foundation for Learning* (Self-published, 2023) and another by yours truly of K's *Teaching – The Greatest Profession* (KFI, 2024). Both these works are on education, which seems to be the fundamental subject for this edition of Friedrich's Newsletter.

The CORRESPONDENCE section includes three wonderful letters to Friedrich from three long-time friends of ours. Mary-Ann Ridgway reports from Hungary about her creative educational journey and informs us about Jean-Loup López's passing. Hillary Rodrigues sends a warm update from Canada about his fascinating activities and includes a link to the full edition of the abridged article we have published here. Mark Edwards graciously shares his personal recollection of meeting and photographing K.

The OBITUARY for Friedrich could have been pages longer. However, given the timing of everything, as well as his fondness for the old saying: If you have something to say, take your time and make it short – well, we have followed that advice. Should you like to read more about his life, please do look into his two extensive memoirs at friedrichgrohe.com/publications/.



Spring near Brockwood Park, England

Friedrich's passing marks the ending of a long friendship and collaboration. That ending also involves the future of this Newsletter. We have been discussing whether to continue it or not. Friedrich had come to accept that the costs of printing and posting would become too much for us and that possibly making the Newsletter available digitally could be a good alternative. So we would like to ask if you would be interested in receiving a digital version of it. Do please let us know.

Take good care, amigos, and may we all be sources of light, cooperation and peace in the world.

Javier Gómez Rodríguez Madrid, November 2024 javier@thebookofyourself.com

### ON EDUCATION

#### K: What Is the Meaning of Education?

**Questioner:** The problem of the parent is what to teach our children.

Krishnamurti: First of all, what is our relationship with our children? Please bear in mind that we are investigating together. If you are the father, you go to the office and come home late in the evening. If you are the mother, you have your own ambitions and drives, your own loneliness and miseries, your own worries about being loved or not being loved; the children have to be looked after and there is the cooking and the washing-up; and if there is not enough money, you also probably go off to earn a living. Then what is your relationship with your children? Have you any relationship?

We are investigating, we are enquiring. I am not saying you don't have any relationship. Then, as they grow up you hand them over to a school where they are taught how to read and write; there they form gangs with other children who are also imitating and conforming and who are equally lost. You have the problem not only of your own children but also of other children who are bullying gangsters. Then what is your relationship with your child? You have children and you want to educate them rightly. Now, if that is really your deep, vital interest, you have to find out what is the meaning of education. Is it merely for children to acquire a particular kind of technological knowledge, so that they can earn a livelihood in a world that is becoming more and more competitive, because there are more and more people and therefore less and less jobs? You must face all this.

The world is divided by nationalities, with their sovereign governments, their armies and their navies, and all the butchery that goes

with them. And if you are only concerned with the development of technological knowledge, then see the consequences of all that; the mind becomes more and more mechanical and you neglect the whole field of life. When the children grow up, if they are lucky they are sent to a university, where they are shaped more and more, forced to conform and put in a cage. Is that your interest? Is that your responsibility? And because they don't want to be put into a cage, they are in revolt. Please, see all this. And when that revolt proves to be ineffective, there is violence.

How are you, as a parent, going to educate your children to be different? Can you form a new kind of educational system, or can you, with the help of others, start a school which will be totally different? To do that you must have money and a group of people who are really dedicated. If you are a parent, is it not your responsibility to see that such schools are created? So you must work for it; you know, life isn't a plaything. Now, is this your deep, vital interest or, as a parent, are you only concerned with your own ambitions, greed, envy, with your position at the office, getting higher pay, a larger house, a bigger car and so on? You have to look at all this. Therefore, where does education begin? Does it start at school or with you? That means, are you, as a parent, as a human being, re-educating yourself all the time?

**Questioner:** Is there any meaning in education, or will our children finish up just like us?

Krishnamurti: I was told that Socrates complained about the youth of his day. He said that they had no manners and no respect for their elders, that they were becoming permissive, and all the rest of it; and that was in Athens in the fourth century B.C. And we are still complaining about our children. So we are asking: does the education of children consist in training them to be like us, like other monkeys, or should education include not only technological instruction but also a deep understanding of the whole neglected field of life? The whole of life, not just one fragment of it, because the way we live we neglect all

that, we are concerned only with one fragment; therefore there is chaos and violence in the world.

Part VII: I. What is Your Overriding Interest? *The Awakening of Intelligence*, pp. 303–304 © 1973 by Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd.

Finding the meaning of education is a work in progress. K frames it essentially between the mechanical training of technical knowledge and the social conditioning, on one side, and the understanding and cultivation of the whole field of life, on the other. While, as things are, there is little argument about the necessity of acquiring technical knowledge and skills in order to earn a living, the very context in which this knowledge is applied is problematic, for although in principle it is intended to provide for our vital needs, in the larger scheme of things it is at the service of a competitive society in a divided world at war with itself. The very conformity to this oppressive structure is a recipe for upheaval and unrest. This is the reason why an education that is concerned with wholeness necessarily implies a global outlook. But K extends this global outlook to the whole of life. The whole he is pointing to involves an understanding of relationship as the essence of that very life and of consciousness as the factor of division and conflict. The dialectic of education essentially pivots around the two poles of consciousness as the mechanical field of the known, and therefore limited, and life as the creative wholeness of being. For K the educational emphasis on knowledge and tribal identification is the cultivation of fragmentation, which is the root cause of chaos and violence in the world.

In the following article, Geetha Waters explores, with reference to her own autobiographical journey, the critical balance between the educational aim of transmitting knowledge and information and the vital importance of questioning and observation. The cultivation of knowledge and the safety and satisfaction it seems to provide lead to prioritising the value of memory over direct perception, which becomes an impediment to learning. Knowledge is limited and does not cover the whole. Its observation is recognition and in that process it misses the new. There is a gap, therefore, between the known

and what is, from which questioning arises. So in principle a meaningful education would give importance to both the cultivation of knowledge and of the arts of observation and questioning at the heart of learning. Learning is free from the impositions and fear of authority, from comparison and competition, which makes for a relationship of mutual care and affection and a world free from violence.

# The Capacity to Explore Human Intelligence

Geetha Waters

Generally our whole education emphasises our need to 'know'. We learn predominantly from verbal instruction, and since the verbal transfer of information is favoured by the system to ensure that the individual assimilates what is prescribed in the curriculum, we relate to the stream of our thoughts as a significant source of information. This verbal transfer is also the means by which children are tested so they can graduate to the next level at the end of the academic year.

However, we haven't taken into account that to understand language one automatically relies on what is already known and what is familiar. What is overlooked in this transfer is that our emphasis on knowing gives greater prominence to the act of recall than any other function of human intelligence. This emphasis goes on for twelve years. So the mind is deeply conditioned to rely on prior knowledge to understand what is going on around us.

This creates a deference to what is known and becomes a serious impediment to learning. Anything new is automatically subject to what is already known and children lose sight of their capacity for observation as an authentic source of information and learning.

Soon, interpretation begins to dominate and what is observed is automatically subject to what is known. Being finetuned to rely on verbal

information requires the mind to keep up a running commentary on what is happening and it is to this knowledge that individuals refer to readily in order to make sense of their lives. Before one is aware of it one falls into a habit of recalling information which in the case of language provides one with sufficient content to make sense of what is being spoken about! It is a great relief for the child to be able to follow the spoken word.

Therefore, the act of recalling information becomes associated with a feeling of accomplishment and gratitude. I have found that these kinds of associations can have life long consequences, since excessive emphasis on knowing creates a fear of not knowing, leaving the mind to dwell incessantly on the known!

The preoccupation with knowledge, I found, began to encroach and disrupt my peace of mind by the age of seven. As the mind became more dismissive of the world, Krishnamurti was urging us to observe the impact of labels on the mind!

What we were asked to explore at school was whether the individual can be aware of the nature of the movement of thought. My observation made it clear that this movement subscribed to what is known and was at pains to conform to what is known. I was consumed by a deep sense of obligation to my knowledge base for enabling me to understand what people said when I was spoken to!

But throughout his time with us, Krishnamurti relentlessly declared that knowledge is limited. I was reluctant to take this on board initially. I imagined it was sufficient just to know that was the case. But without observing the limitations of what is known, the spoken word continued to take centre stage in my mind.

I wondered with a lingering hope that things would right themselves and observation would take over at some stage. But that was not the case. We had to observe the movement of thought for ourselves. Krishnamurti

also continued to declare that he was not an authority. It was up to us to explore and investigate. Only observation could reveal why knowledge is limited. So he had nothing to offer other than his declaration that knowledge is limited. His answer was most earnestly in the negative! Bur for some reason it worked to instill a sense of responsibility in me. No one else could observe for me. It was up to me to exercise intelligence as a whole.

I noticed that observing the limitations of knowledge within the sphere of everyday life is a lot easier than admitting the limitations of knowledge within the classroom, for very obvious reasons! Conceding that you do not know inside the classroom is an admission of failure and there is the added disadvantage when one has to wrestle with mixed feelings of fear, shame and embarrassment while admitting one's ignorance in front of one's peers. So, in retrospect, this explains why Krishnamurti so earnestly encouraged us to explore the impact of labels and observe our reactions and responses to the world in everyday life.

# **K: Language Does Not Condition the Brain**

The word, the phrase, the explanation are not the actuality. But the word is used as a communication of one's thought, one's feeling, and the word, though it is not communicated to another, holds the feeling inside oneself. The actual never conditions the brain, but the theory, the conclusion, the description, the abstraction, do condition it. The table never conditions the brain but god does, whether it is the god of the Hindus, Christians or Muslims. The concept, the image, conditions the brain, not that which is actually happening, taking place.

To the Christian, the word Jesus or Christ has great significance, great meaning, it evokes a deep sentiment, a sensation. Those words have no meaning to the Hindu, to the Buddhist, or to the Muslim. Those words

are not the actual. So those words, which have been used for two thousand years, have conditioned the brain. The Hindu has his own gods, his own divinities. Those divinities, as the Christians', are the projections of thought, out of fear, out of pleasure and so on.

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, feel the depth of it, the whole content of it, the consequences of 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, 9 May 1983 *Krishnamurti to Himself*, pp. 108–109 © 1987 by Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd.

Until this request was made I was not very aware of my reactions and responses. In fact even after hearing him urge us to do so, I thought about being aware of reactions and responses as a romantic theory. I

didn't actually observe myself reacting and responding for quite a few months. I played with the idea and thought how curious the notion was that I should observe such feelings as reactions and responses which went on within me.

The very suggestion left me with a feeling of novelty that was in itself a matter of curiosity for some time. I had not classified myself as being separate from the world as yet. There was no doubt in my mind at the age of six that I was very much a part of the whole movement of life. So the fact that I could react and respond to the world seemed an odd way of describing my existence in the world.

Gradually as my capacity to observe became established as an intrinsic part of intelligence, I began to realise how immeasurable this capacity is in relation to the knowledge base that I had learned to take such pride in after attending school for a couple of years.

There was nothing foreign about my capacity to observe, it was just that I had no feeling of ownership of it, so there was no need to hold on to it. It was simply present when Krishnamurti called on us to be aware of our capacity to observe. I realised that I had not noticed it before as being inclusive of much more than me.

Towards the end of junior school, when he spoke of perception I realised that there was in place a habitual definition between what went on inside and that the outside loomed large by comparison. It was as if the self was lurking behind the eyes and was looking out at the world with a sense of wonder.

This stance of lurking in the background of the phenomenal presence of life came with a feeling of hesitation which harboured a longing to be whole. I did not explore the implications of this division between the within and without since I had no idea what was yet to come. I did not expect the division to grow at all. It just seemed part of the natural order for one to adopt a stance from within to look out at life without.

As I began high school this complacent attitude of mine was certainly challenged when I heard Krishnamurti claim that he would like to blast the centre! I could see I had secured a centre based on my background because it seemed a perfectly reasonable thing to do. So why was he implying that a centre was an impediment to human intelligence?

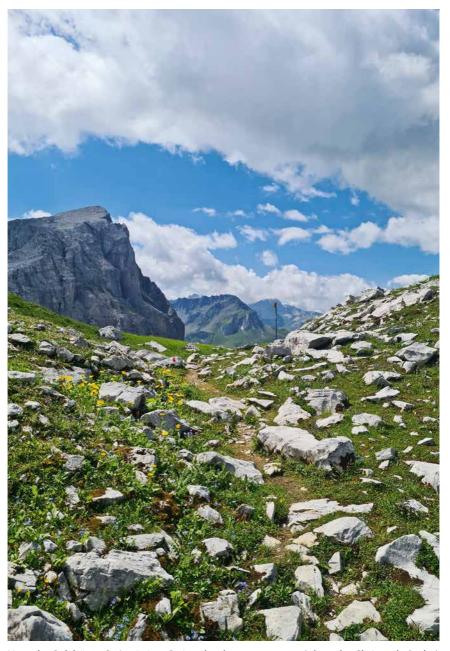
By the time I started attending high school, as I listened to his discourse and enquiry I began to distinguish between the monotonous movement of thought, my immeasurable capacity to observe and the momentous role of perception in informing one as a whole.

I continued to be aware of the fact that the centre was well and truly established. I had avidly observed the movement of thought between the age of six to twelve. The role of perception had a sense of immediacy that I could not explain. But my biggest hurdle was the habit of taking time to mull over all that I had made of life since I was first invited to observe the world directly for myself.

The immediacy of life was apparent from moment to moment, but what was I to do to stem the flow of thoughts from coursing through my brain and distracting me constantly from the immersive feeling of being part of the whole? The desire to be free was the biggest hurdle I had come across from the age of thirteen.

Seeing the turmoil building within, I wistfully posed a question to myself, "Can we undermine the authority of the known, without belittling knowledge/intelligence?" As Krishnamurti used to say, the 'answer is in the question.' But it took me decades to stop imagining answers and just remain with the question. Our capacity to question reveals an admission of the fact that knowledge is limited. The question also lists towards observation as a source of vital information with which to explore and investigate beyond what is known!

It is the ability to question that uncovers the limitation of thought and enables knowledge to find its right place in our lives. New answers can



Near the Sulzhütte, St Antönien, Switzerland

(photo by Christoph Grohe)

only emerge when we take responsibility to go beyond what is already known by taking into account our functional capacity to observe, to explore and investigate together. Learning together then becomes an opportunity for individuals to create a compassionate ground where minds can meet rather than compete!

In this manner discourse, enquiry and the process of dialogue can earnestly hold our attention to explore and investigate beyond the realm of imagination and remain active in the realm of life. We can learn through these processes by building relationships that can enrich the ground with the artful guidance required for living, loving and learning together.

Geetha Waters, April 2025 geethawaters@gmail.com

## K: Reading the Whole History of Humanity

I don't read books at all, except weekly magazines and detective stories; I really mean it. One can find in one's self, if one knows how to observe, the whole history of man, past and present. You investigate it in yourself, because yourself is the world, yourself is the division, the contradiction, the misery, the confusion, the aching loneliness and the suffering, and if you know how to look, then you need not read any book because the whole history, the whole life, is there; and you are your own teacher and your own disciple. You become a light to yourself and therefore do not depend on anybody.

Ojai, 18 March 1983 *Talks and Dialogues - Sydney Australia 1970*, pg. 21 © 1970 by Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd. When trying to decipher the meaning of education, one basic referent is our own experience of the process. This is what Hillary Rodrigues explores in the following article where, in the form of an autobiographical narrative, he traces his own discoveries and how these resonate with K's insights. Beginning with his happy and precocious initiation via a Montessori school in his native Mumbai up to his later responsibilities as a professor of religious studies, Hillary weaves his own personal experience with some key aspects of K's approach. The first thing is the deleterious effects of authority, reward and punishment on our innate human curiosity and desire to learn. Other key aspects emerge as he moves through high school, college and university, including his early experiences as a teacher. The standard educational curriculum and teaching method as well as the emphasis on knowledge leave vast areas of our being out of account. The very partiality of this educational enterprise does not prepare us to meet the vast challenges of life. The inner is practically ignored and the issues arising in our relationships are kept out of sight.

Coming of age in the late sixties, he experienced the full impact of the so-called Counterculture, whose winds of freedom were sweeping through the youthful consciousness of the West. This consciousness called for something more than the materialistic prosperity and existential mediocrity of a self-satisfied, complacent and warmongering bourgeois society. So after travelling for a year through Latin America, and under the influence of the Eastern spiritual currents of the time, he went off to India in search of his own liberation. This journey proved to be decisive for him, as not only did he deepen his interest in world cultures, but he lost his sense of identity. Upon his return, he worked for a year as a teacher at the Wolf Lake School on Vancouver Island, where he deepened his knowledge and understanding of K's pedagogical approach. This residential K school did not last long. It was on account of the perceived troubles it was experiencing that K had dictated, uncharacteristically, a list of rules for it. But the main lesson for Hillary at this time was that the ideal school was the world and life an endless opportunity to learn.

He then went on to pursue an academic career in religious studies rather than in his undergraduate area of specialization in Mathematics and Chemistry.

In his university teaching he has striven for competence, clarity, consistency and care. While religious studies is not the same as the religious education K intended for his schools, they have significant overlaps. K's intent was to bring about the flowering of the heart, the mind and the senses through clear, objective and impersonal perception. Hillary finds that the difference between K and the traditionalists is that he does not lay emphasis on the fusion with some ultimate Being but on the dynamically unfolding reality of the moment that he calls 'what is', which involves the continuous interplay between the inner and the outer. The most significant lesson he draws from the school of life is the importance of vulnerability and of surrendering to the creative flow of existence.

# Learning from 'What is': Resonances with Krishnamurti's Pedagogy<sup>1</sup>

By Hillary Rodrigues, The University of Lethbridge

In this article I highlight how Krishnamurti's notions concerning education resonated with my own observations and discoveries. It is written as an autobiographical narrative, because to me our educational experience is life itself. Autobiography is an opportunity to reflect on how certain life experiences have shaped one's pedagogy. The analysis of such personal experience in turn allows one to understand the cultures of teaching and learning. My hope is that my narrative might resonate with the reader and thus open up new avenues for discovery.

I was born in Bandra, a seaside suburb of Mumbai (then Bombay). When I turned four, my grandmother said that I was a big boy and would soon be going to school. I took her words to mean that I should start school

<sup>1</sup> This article is an abridged version of the longer one of the same title published in the Journal of Unschooling and Alternative Learning, 2024, Vol. 18, Issue 36, Ashwani Kumar, ed. Hillary graciously approved it for this newsletter.

immediately. A group of children would stream daily by our front yard heading to kindergarten and so I walked with them down to Auntie Myrtle's School. Myrtle was a warm and generous-hearted lady who ran a Montessori school in her home. It took weeks for my mother to discover where I had been spending much of my outdoor morning play time. By then I had become a regular attendee and could even count to a hundred. Myrtle recommended that I be allowed to stay, which I did for the next several months, not distinguishing play from learning, which is a hallmark of the Montessori approach.<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately, this self-actualized Montessori educational experience was radically altered half a year later, when our family moved to Kolhapur. My father, an officer in the Indian Forest Department, was posted to the nearby hill station of Panhala, where he conceived and oversaw the creation of the Tabak Forest Park, a beautiful botanical garden that still exists today. Our school in Kolhapur did not have a kindergarten, and my mother, who was herself a teacher, placed me in the First Standard (Grade One). As a result, I remained one of the youngest in my classes until the age of eleven, when we immigrated to Canada. Although I had excelled in my earliest schooling, the normal educational system started to take its toll, both in Kolhapur and later when we returned to Mumbai, where the Jesuit principal and the teachers advocated and subjected the students to corporal punishment for the flimsiest of infringements.

In Canada I was placed in Grade Six. Although two grades below where I would have been in India, I was relieved to be among classmates my own age, and after about half a year of adjusting to Canadian accents and such, I began to excel again in my studies. What I especially liked

<sup>2</sup> Maria Montessori had influenced the Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore, who had incorporated aspects of her approach in the schools that he founded, including Vishva-Bharati, in Shantiniketan. Montessori's approach had grown popular in India after she was forced to remain there from 1939–1946 during World War II.

was the absence of fear and the quality of freedom in the uncrowded classroom. My affection for school and learning returned as I completed my elementary education and high school. My early childhood experiences taught me that curiosity and the love of learning are innate to human beings and that these could be thwarted by the alienation induced by large classes, the banking model of education (Paulo Freire), and the fearful hierarchical structure of reward and punishment. Although I did not read anything by Krishnamurti until much later in life, experientially I resonated with his views on the deleterious effects of the tradition of fear, obedience and authority, not just in education but in society at large.

In the late 1960s, our high school in Quebec was a chaotic experiment in comprehensive education. A teacher shortage had induced a wave of hiring, and many of our instructors were not properly trained as educators; others, sensing the new-found freedom of the Counterculture, were anxious to experiment. As a generation weaned on innovation and questioning the status quo, we were open to alternative approaches. However, we were also quite concerned about their effectiveness in preparing us to pass the standardized tests on which our educational futures depended. Some were dismal failures and others surprisingly successful. Our Grade Ten French teacher simply gave up on us after the first month, causing me to lose a year in my poor trajectory with the French language. By contrast, our senior level Physics teacher was extraordinarily successful. He said the textbook was clearly written and we simply needed to read it. But there was an accompanying book chockfull of problems that we had to solve. The net effect was that we found ourselves learning independently, helping each other, and teaching our fellow classmates. Only when nobody knew how to solve a problem or understand some concept would we turn to Mr. Lawrence. This approach felt initially stressful on account of the grades, but in the final exams many of us scored in the highest percentage in the province. One of the aspects Krishnamurti values is that teaching and learning are a unitary process, so there is no pupil and no teacher, which accords with my experience in Mr. Lawrence's Physics class.

Although I had finished high school with one of the highest averages in the province, my undergraduate studies in Chemistry saw my grades slowly decline. For my Honours Research Thesis, I devised a mechanism to synthesize a new glucofuranose, which I could carry forward into a graduate degree. But I was growing disenchanted with the limitations inherent in the study of science and those professional concerns seemed rather remote from the realities around me. There were protest rallies against the Vietnam war, heated discussions on sociopolitical theories, cosmological speculations about the big bang, indulgences in alcohol and cannabis, summers of hard work in construction, Bob Dylan and Rolling Stones concerts, and emotional upheavals with personal relationships and family crises. So while my B.Sc. might secure me gainful employment, pursuing a doctorate in Chemistry was not what I needed at that point in my life. So I decided to take some time off to travel before going on to graduate school.

During my final undergraduate years, and in keeping with the zeitgeist, I had begun to read up on Eastern philosophy and mysticism. We would listen to Alan Watts on the radio or read the Bhagavad Gita. I also read a few books by Krishnamurti, which instantly struck a chord. Unlike Eastern philosophy, with its Sanskrit terminology, Krishnamurti's language was immediately accessible. His themes reflected my concerns, for they addressed fear, loneliness, violence, identity, intelligence, and love. Nobody else seemed to address these issues in the almost scientific way he did. He suggested observing oneself, the very movement of one's own consciousness. He denied all authority, including his own, on the meaning of life. Instead, he extended an invitation to inquire into it, not through words or narrowly focused techniques, but through a highly sensitive quality of awareness, or what he called the three arts of listening, seeing and learning. I immediately resonated with it. My academic education had directed me towards the mastery of knowledge and problem-solving, and my Roman Catholic upbringing had also pointed me into self-censorship, guilt and repentance instead of self-discovery.

# K: The Holistic Cultivation of the 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.

> Ojai, California, Tuesday 27 March 1984 *Krishnamurti to Himself*, pp. 125–126 © 1987 by Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd.

I spent the year after completing my B.Sc. in Chemistry traveling through Latin America. I felt I learned more about myself and life in that single year than in all my years as an undergraduate. Not only did I learn about international politics, economics, national histories, and cultures in Latin America, but I met other travellers who opened my

eyes to the world at large. It took long stretches of loneliness, gruelling bus rides, the uncertainties of hitchhiking, innumerable nights in cheap hotels in sketchy neighbourhoods, encounters with thieves and con-men, struggles with language, and so on, to begin to round out my education. Classroom education falls far short of the many skills that are needed to live effectively in the world. I understood Krishnamurti's saying that the whole movement of life, action and relationship is learning.

After these Latin American travels, I found work as a substitute teacher in my old high school. My mother had occasionally remarked that I might make a good teacher, because of my patience. I regard that year of teaching as the practicums of my self-acquired teacher training. After the rollicking experience of teaching four or five different classes in different subjects at different grade levels, I permanently replaced a science teacher who had a nervous breakdown. It was rather challenging to get the lipstick-applying girls, and the strutting macho boys in my Grade Nine class to appreciate the value of knowing the appendages of a grasshopper. Maintaining discipline and order in the classroom was paramount, with the desideratum of teaching and learning playing a distant second. This raised lots of questions about the curriculum and its alignment with the students' needs and interests. A turnaround occurred when I ran into a group of them at the local shopping mall, including their disruptive leader whom I had expelled from the classroom the previous week, after which he had stopped coming to class. The group's discovery that I had once been a student in that same school, had backpacked through Central and South America for a year, and so on, changed our relationship for the better. I invited the 'bad boy' back, and he returned to class. We began to look at each other as persons rather than through pre-conceived images, which, as Krishnamurti repeatedly pointed out, are a fundamental obstacle to right relationship and learning.

My Latin American travels had made me aware that my appreciation of life could be enriched by expanding my knowledge into areas that I had

ignored or neglected. So during that year of teaching, I took evening classes at a community college to study art, art history, and sociology, to balance out my lopsided studies in mathematics and science. I can only applaud Krishnamurti and all those dedicated to holistic education in their efforts to nurture whole individuals in their broadest connections to society and their environments. However, Krishnamurti cautioned that holism is not just the cultivation of the intellect through the accumulation of knowledge in a wide array of subjects. For him holistic education is not only learning from books but through the observation of the world about us, seeing exactly what is happening, without theories, prejudices and values. The more important thing for him is what he calls reading one's own story, i.e. self-knowledge, as the universal history of mankind.

Armed with my earnings from that year of teaching, I went off travelling again. This time I was headed to India in what I called my 'Siddhartha Quest,' because I was setting out from home in search of nirvana or self-realization. Krishnamurti was adamant that, as each of us is the world, belonging to anything or anyone is a fragmentation of life, which probably kept me from following gurus and joining ashrams and monasteries. This journey deepened my interest in world culture and religion and shattered my sense of identity. To my great fortune, just when my money had almost run out my spiritual quest found fulfilment. Thereafter, having spent three years abroad, I returned penniless to North America. Instead of feeling arrogant about my accumulated knowledge of world cultures, I was graced with a sense of gratitude and humility in the face of the re-enchantment of life in all its unpredictability and creative flow. I am convinced that an essential goal in education is to bend the arc of knowing back to the joyful curiosity of discovery generated by a childlike not-knowing. This does not mean abandoning academic knowledge, but nurturing the openness that not-knowing provides. After all, many of the greatest discoveries in science and the most impressive innovations in the arts have resulted from awakening the quality of innocence and curiosity of a 'beginner's mind.'



The Pepper Tree, Ojai, California

(photo by Liz Otterbein)

I deepened my knowledge and understanding of Krishnamurti's teachings when I subsequently worked for a year at the residential Krishnamurti school on Vancouver Island. At that school I had the opportunity to study, discover and implement his pedagogical approach. We were attempting to deliver an education that matched the criteria of public schools, while simultaneously providing our students with nutritious meals, physical exercise, a robust appreciation of nature, cultural diversity, self-awareness, and so on. Krishnamurti challenged the educators to convey to the students, while teaching their academic subjects, that they were responsible for the whole of mankind. The essential thing was not academic knowledge, passing exams and having a successful career, but lay in the flowering of goodness, whose beauty would then infuse everything else.

#### K: List of Rules for Wolf Lake School

This is a Krishmamurti school with Krishnamurti's teachings to cultivate the development of the whole human being both academically and psychologically so that the student grows up without any conflict whatsoever and without fear. The school is the students' home, where they feel protected, secure and cared for.

- 1. This is a religious school in the deepest sense, but without dogma, belief or sectarian spirit. It is religious in the sense that we are concerned with right behaviour, right action, and right way of living.
- 2. The intention of the school is to help the students to put all things of life in their right place, i.e. money, sex, knowledge, amusements, etc., and not let any one of these predominate over the others, and to bring up children who will have no fear and no conflict.
- 3. The school is international, co-educational and vegetarian.
- 4. There shall be no meat eating, no smoking, no drugs, no sex.
- 5. The children must be exposed to the best of everything, i.e. art, music, etc.
- 6. The children must have a sense of dignity, respect, and consideration for others.
- 7. The intention of the morning assembly is to gather energy for the coming day. It would be good if all members of the school come to these morning meetings in which one sits quietly with the eyes closed and with self-revealing awareness. There may be reading of Krishnamurti's teachings, poetry or other writings that are non-sectarian. Music may be played. This is not a time for discussions or yoga.
- 8. The whole school must be punctual in all their activities, including bedtime. In this is a concern and respect for others.
- 9. There must be no visitors sharing rooms, i.e. girlfriends or boy-friends. We must first see what the community stands for, otherwise outsiders will come in and smother us.
- 10. We must all work together. The teachers should not separate themselves from the rest of the staff. We must all share the responsibil-

- ity together, but the ultimate responsibility rests on the two sisters. The sisters are responsible to Krishnamurti, to all the Krishnamurti Foundations, parents, students, and the government.
- 11. All the staff (whosoever is at the school at that time) shall be consulted in the election for students and staff. It would be best to have an interview also with the student and parent, and to have the child come and stay with us if possible. Every staff member should meet the child.
- 12. There should be no competition in academics or games. We play games for the game's sake. No marks are to be given in academics.
- 13. We are responsible for the students' behaviour, their clothes, their manners, their cleanliness, etc. This implies sensitivity in all things.
- 14. The year's academic work must be covered. It is the responsibility of the staff to help the students to understand without psychological pressure the necessity to cover this work.

CONCLUSION: Apart from the responsibilities that have been listed as the ultimate responsibilities above, the staff must all work together as a unit. Krishnaji has said that the sisters must make this very clear to the staff.

XI. 1978 – Canada, Switzerland Wolf Lake School, Canada, 22 April 1978 Listening is the Guru – A Diary of Conversations with J. Krishnamurti, pp. 139–141 © 2005 by author Jagdis K. Siddoo<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Jagdis Siddoo reported that K spent over two hours drawing up the list, which was written down in longhand by Sarjit, Jagdis' sister. (Jagdis and Sarjit are the 'sisters' referred to in the text.) She states that it was unusual for K to suggest such a list, but in this instance he was addressing the immediate crisis and issues facing the school. She then adds that such a list should therefore not be considered a part of his approach to education. However, independently of the problematic circumstances, this list of rules does reflect his pedagogical views. K was enthusiastic about Wolf Lake, envisioning the large estate as a sanctuary not only for trees and birds but for human beings.

Despite its best efforts, the school struggled with the usual challenges. Not only was there the pressure to get students to master the curriculum, but a continuous effort to grasp Krishnamurti's notions of 'goodness' and of teaching without authority, plus a host of other personal foibles that seem inevitable when a group of people, however ideologically aligned, come together. Even so, this experiment with understanding and implementing Krishnamurti's approach crucially affected my own pedagogical notions. One of the most profound realizations I had at this time was that I did not have to work at a Krishnamurti or any other ideologically focused school to continue my own education. I felt that the ideal school was the world, that everyone I met was my teacher, and that life was an unending opportunity for learning. As Krishnamurti himself noted, education is the art of learning, not only from books but from the whole of life. This is the spirit that has informed all my subsequent educational work.

Prior to returning to university to pursue graduate studies, I had taught advanced mathematics and science at a college for foreign students in Ontario. Most of these students were highly motivated. Discipline was never an issue, nor have I ever had such mathematically gifted students year after year. I quickly learned that I first needed to prove my mastery over the material to earn their respect. Since then, this has been a hallmark of my approach. If I make a mistake or do not know something when questioned, I admit it and strive to find the answer as soon as possible. I believe my students find this quality of vulnerability reassuring, for erring while learning does not diminish anyone.

In graduate school, I was impressed by the knowledge of my professors and the vulnerability they showed when it came to learning. It is perhaps a hallmark of higher education that the more one learns and knows, the more one becomes aware of the limitations of knowledge. Krishnamurti says that while knowledge can be taught, wisdom cannot. Wisdom is about discovery and for that there must be freedom from the known. This contrast between knowledge and wisdom was vividly illustrated when I conducted a year and a half of fieldwork

for my doctorate in the holy city of Banaras, India. I had thoroughly researched my subject, which focused on the Hindu Great Goddess. Even so, the richness and complexity of her worship, the temple rituals, the devotion of worshippers, the festival traditions, and so on were far beyond anything imaginable from my readings. This is why anthropologists regard participant observation as vital for the understanding of cultures.

I can now turn to my educational approach as a professor of religious studies. It is honestly difficult to analyse what aspects of my teaching have been most effective, but I do strive for competence, clarity, consistency, and care. Establishing one's competence is vital for students to feel that their learning is being guided by someone who is knowledgeable. I also tell stories about my own process of learning because these are touchstones to which they can relate. Consistency and clarity of instruction and expectations help to reassure the new undergraduate students. I feel a sense of care, responsibility and concern for my students' educational experience. In letters to his schools, Krishnamurti dovetails clarity with care, which he equates with love, saying that the flowering of the mind and the awakening of the heart take place when there is clear, objective, nonpersonal perception. He states further that the flowering comes naturally and easily when the mind, the heart and the body are in complete harmony. For him this is our responsibility as educators, which makes teaching the greatest profession in life.

# K: Teaching is the Highest Calling

You, too, must have observed the state of the world and our society and seen that there must be a radical transformation in the way human beings live, in their relation to each other, their relation with the world as a whole, and in every way possible. We are talking to each other, both being deeply concerned not only with our own particular selves, but also with the students for whom you are wholly responsible.

The teacher is the most important person in a school, for on her or him depends the future welfare of mankind. This is not a mere verbal statement. This is an absolute and irrevocable fact. Only when the educator himself feels the dignity and the respect implicit in his work will he be aware that teaching is the highest calling, greater than that of the politician, greater than that of the princes of the world. The writer means every word of this, so please do not brush it aside as an exaggeration or an attempt to make you feel a false importance. You and the student must flower together in goodness.

Letter 13: Habit, 1 March 1979

The Whole Movement of Life is Learning, pp. 47–48
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Krishnamurti spent his life teaching throughout the world about the possibility of a pivotal insight that would open human beings to the full flower of intelligence and love. At the heart of his teachings lies the notion that our existence is conditioned by environmental, cultural and personal experiences. Our sense of self is the cornerstone of this conditioning. For him the self or ego has an ephemeral quality because it is constructed through the accumulation of memory and the identification, inclination and intentionality of thought. While many Eastern philosophies of liberation seek to transcend the ego through the union with an Absolute Reality, my own close study of Krishnamurti's teachings indicates that this is not the thrust of his message. He places the focus on the dynamically unfolding reality of the moment, which he calls 'what is,' which requires a very clear, unprejudiced, and undistorted mind. In a Krishnamurti school the students are invited to observe the inner workings of their minds in tandem with whatever they are learning. Such sensitive observation reveals the constant interplay between the inner and the outer.

The conventional orientation of university classes and the expectations of students who register for my courses, is markedly different from those

attending Krishnamurti schools. Our discipline is not concerned with religious education, but with the study of humanity's religious impulses and configurations as these have played out in history. Despite this disjunction between a Krishnamurti school and a conventional university, the field of religious studies meshes well with aspects of Krishnamurti's message. The students are exposed to varying and contrasting world-views, which may enhance their tolerance of other beliefs and value systems and cause them to question their own. They might even realize that individual realities are culturally conditioned constructs.

I shall conclude with an observation on my pedagogic approach that meshes well with Krishnamurti's teachings on 'what is.' In my experience, university students do not respond well to approaches that vary radically from what they have been used to. This is `what is.' So I begin with approaches that are not radically different. If I wish to implement something new, we discuss and decide on it together. The younger generations are growing up with electronic devices, making the printed book passé, so I have pioneered the use of digital texts. Portability, rich illustrations, seamless searching, and links to additional content, all for far less than the price of a printed text, are some of the advantages. Learning is illustrated by one's openness to the new. Such creative freedom resonates with Krishnamurti when he says that wisdom is the perception of the truth of 'what is,' which is never static and beyond the grasp of the old.

I have boundless gratitude to those from whom I have learned, and appreciation for those who have learned from me. The most significant lesson in the so-called school of life, and one to which Krishnamurti also repeatedly points, is simply to yield to the creative flow of one's existence. Life shakes us out of habitual patterns with its unpredictability, enchants us with its beauty, and entices our curiosity with its unfathomable depth. This elicits a natural response of attention, care, and love for what it continuously reveals. There is a vulnerable openness in the surrender to that flow, which is the nexus both for life's teachings and for one's own learning. The more fully we yield to that space in all

our relationships, but certainly as teachers and students, the richer our capacity to share and to understand.

Hillary Rodrigues – September 2025 rodrigues@uleth.ca

### K: Remaining with What Is

Our brains are very old. They have evolved through countless experiences, accidents, death. The continuity of the flowering of the brain has been going on for millennia. It has varieties of capacities, is ever active, moving and living in its own memories and anxieties, full of fear, uncertainty and sorrow. This is the everlasting cycle it has lived, with passing pleasures and incessant activity. In this long process it has been conditioning itself, shaping its own way of life, adjusting itself to its own environment as few species have, combining hatred and affection, killing others and at the same time trying to find a peaceful life. It is shaped by the infinite activity of the past, always modifying itself. But the basic structure of reward and pain remains almost the same. This conditioning attempts to shape the outward world, but inwardly it is following the same patterns, always dividing the 'me' and the 'you', 'we' and 'they', being hurt and trying to hurt, a pattern in which passing affection and pleasure is the way of our life.

It is necessary to observe all this without value judgement if there is to be any deep, living change, to perceive the complexity of our life without choice, just to see exactly *what is.* What is far more important than what should be. There is only *what is* and never what should be. What is can only end; it cannot become something else. The ending has greater significance than what is beyond ending. To search for what is beyond is to cultivate fear; to search for what lies beyond is to avoid, to turn away from what is. We are always chasing that which is not, something other than the actual. If we could see this and remain with what is, however

unpleasant or fearful it may be, or however pleasurable, then observation, which is pure attention, dissipates that which is.

Letter 49 – Vision, 13 January 1983

The Whole Movement of Life is Learning, pp. 174–175

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# O Mundo Somos Nós – A Brief Update from Portugal

By Ivone Apolinario

Our learning centre, O Mundo Somos Nós (omundosomos.org), located in the north of Portugal, has had a very calm and reflective year. After last year's "storm", we took some time to integrate our learnings, reorganise the team, and consolidate our work. We are deeply grateful for this period of growth and balance, as the improvements have been significant.

We are still looking for a new educator to join us and work with children aged 3 to 6 years old.

It is always a challenge to see how easily people can take things personally or make judgements without first seeking to understand. This happens even among those who have taken *non-violent communication* courses or meditate regularly. It often seems that we are all doing well until a problem arises – and it is precisely in those moments that we truly see another side of ourselves and of others.

Here, we have noticed that the friendly and close environment allows these dynamics to surface sooner rather than later. Feelings of comparison or ideas of justice and injustice can arise, and as we are working to educate children, it becomes essential to have mature adults around - adults who can face their own personal challenges responsibly, so that our learning centre does not turn into a place primarily focused on healing past wounds. This continues to be one of our biggest challenges.

In September, we opened a new space for children aged 10 and above, where they can engage in project-based learning. This approach allows them to work hands-on, integrating different subjects while learning about themselves and about life.

This year, instead of taking the whole team to the Krishnamurti Centre and visiting Brockwood Park School, the three members of our board chose to go on a smaller retreat. We felt it was important to have some quiet time together to enquire and look inward. Our Portuguese Committee also held a small retreat at the same time, maintaining our tradition over these past few years.

The most exciting news of the year is that we submitted an application for EU funding to create an organic farm. This project aims to provide fresh vegetables for the school, as well as to establish the first building, electricity, and running water at Quinta de Sandelhas — the land we purchased in 2020. Our vision is to develop this place into a retreat centre with accommodation and a school. You can find more information at quintadesandelhas.com. We hope that Phase 1 of this endeavour will begin soon, allowing us to continue moving forward step by step.

We are also continuing with our volunteering programme, welcoming seven international volunteers this year. We take time to introduce them to enquiry and the teachings of Krishnamurti, which remain at the heart of our work and daily life.

Looking ahead, next year we plan to deepen the work we are doing with our education team, continuing to learn together and to nurture a space where children and adults can live sanely.

Ivone Apolinario ivoneapolinario@gmail.com



At Chalet Solitude, Rougemont, Switzerland

## K: The Art of Thinking Together

I think it is important to learn the art of thinking together. The scientists and the most educated human beings think. They think according to their profession, specialization, and according to their belief and experience. We all think objectively or according to our own inclination, but we never seem to think together, to observe together. We may think about something, a particular problem or a similar experience, but this thinking does not go beyond its own limitation. Thinking together – not about a particular subject – but the capacity to think together is entirely different. To think together is necessary when you are facing the great crisis that is taking place in the world, the danger, the terror, the ultimate brutality of war. To observe this, not as a capitalist, socialist, the extreme left or extreme right, but to observe it together demands that we comprehend not only how we have come to this rotten state, but also

that we together perceive a way out. The businessman or the politician looks at this problem from a limited point of view, whereas we are saying we must look at life as a whole, not as British, French or Chinese.

What does it mean to look at life as a whole? It means to observe the human being, ourselves, without any division of nationality, to see life as one single movement without a beginning and without an end, without time, without death.

'The Art of Thinking Together', 15 January 1982

\*\*Letters to the Schools\*, Vol. 2, pp. 14–15

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Some years ago we published one of Prof. Raymond Martin's final exam papers. This was at a time when several professors in US universities were incorporating K in their studies. I seem to recall that, when presented with one such final paper on his own work, K himself wondered whether he would have passed the exam. The chances are that he wouldn't for, as he explained to us once, he was unable to pass exams because his mind went blank. Wisdom and passing exams are clearly not the same thing. The questions, as you can see, are quite challenging, and answering them knowledgeably and intelligently might not be all that easy. Friedrich was quite fond of this exam paper and insisted that we publish it again. And perhaps it is a fitting tribute to this whole endeavour, as our knowledge fades when faced with vital fundamental questions.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> I have edited the original to avoid repetitions and eliminate redundancies, otherwise it is exactly the same.

# Final Examination on the Teachings of J. Krishnamurti

### Prof. Raymond Martin's philosophy class in June 1985

#### Section I

- Krishnamurti teaches that gurus and spiritual disciplines are counterproductive. Why? Give the best reason you can for disagreeing with him.
- 2. "The great religions of the world are the repository for our collective spiritual wisdom and use it as a guide to his own experience."
  - a. Would Krishnamurti agree? Explain why or why not.
  - b. Do you agree with Krishnamurti? If so, give the best reason you can for *disagreeing* with Krishnamurti. If not, explain why not.
- 3. Consider: "The clerk, when he seeks to become a manager, becomes a factor in the creation of power-politics which produce war; so he is directly responsible for war." Does Krishnamurti mean that, since you also are ambitious, you are, in virtue of your ambition, directly responsible for war? Do you agree? Give reasons for your answers.
- 4. "We will learn how to solve our problems when we learn how to give them more thought and better thought."
  - a. Would Krishnamurti agree? Explain why or why not.
  - b. Give the best reason that you can for *disagreeing* with Krishnamurti's answer.
- 5. Could you live your life effortlessly?
  - a. What does Krishnamurti think?
  - b. Do you agree? If you do, explain why. Explain why, if you disagree.

- 6. Why aren't we fearless?
  - a. What does Krishnamurti think?
  - b. What do you think? Give reasons for your answer.
- 7. Consider: "What is important, surely, is to be aware without choice, because choice brings about conflict. The chooser is in confusion, therefore he chooses; if he is not in confusion, there is no choice." Explain in your own words and in considerable detail what Krishnamurti is talking about.
- 8. Consider: "Now, if we examine our life, our relationship with another, we shall see that it is a process of isolation."
  - a. Explain in your own words what Krishnamurti means.
  - b. Give the clearest example from your own life, to show that what Krishnamurti is saying is sometimes false. Explain why this is an especially suitable example.
  - c. Now explain how someone could argue that what Krishnamurti is saying is even true of your example.
- 9. Bhagwan claimed to be contradictory on purpose. Krishnamurti doesn't make any such claim. But he may be contradictory, nonetheless. Argue that Krishnamurti is sometimes guilty of an important contradiction. Does it matter? Give reasons for your answer.
- 10. What does Krishnamurti mean by "loneliness"? How much of your life is an attempt to distract yourself from loneliness—according to Krishnamurti, according to you?
- 11. Krishnamurti talks a great deal about "meditation."
  - a. What does Krishnamurti mean by "meditation"?
  - b. Things that some others call meditation, Krishnamurti would not call meditation. What are the most important of these?
  - c. Why does Krishnamurti think that meditation is important?

- 12. Krishnamurti talks a great deal about memory. He seems to think that certain kinds of memory are essential and that certain kinds are a hindrance.
  - a. What are Krishnamurti's views on the importance of memory?
  - b. What, in his view, is the relationship between memory and the self?
  - c. Do you agree with his views on memory? Give reasons for your answer.
- 13. What are Krishnamurti's views on sex and love? Do you agree? Explain your reasons.
- 14. Taking what Krishnamurti has to say all in all, what do you think is the greatest merit of his views? What do you think is the greatest difficulty? Give reasons for your answers.

#### **Section II**

Part I: Briefly explain what Krishnamurti meant by any five of the eight quoted remarks.

- 1. "Negative thinking is the highest form of understanding."
- 2. "Action creates the actor. That is, the actor comes into being when action has a result, an end in view."
- 3. "Love is not an experience."
- 4. "I think we shall understand the significance of life, if we understand what it means to make an effort."
- 5. "Without the foundation of thought, there is no time."
- 6. "The mind cannot experience anything new."
- 7. "Revolution comes only when the thinker and the thought are one."
- 8. "Truth is in every leaf, in every tear."

Part II: Answer any two. Make your answers as complete as possible, given your limited time.

- 9. Krishnamurti is concerned with the problems posed by individual and collective human violence. He thinks there is one and only one solution. What is it? What is his main objection to alternative solutions? Do you agree?
- 10. Do you have a self or the illusion of a self? In either case, what should you do about it?
  - a. What does Krishnamurti think?
  - b. What do you think? Give reasons for your answer.
- 11. Krishnamurti says some confusing things about whether it takes time to acquire self-knowledge. In some places he implies that it does and in others that it doesn't. Although his words are sometimes unclear, what he means is clear enough, and also consistent.
  - a. Does Krishnamurti say confusing things on this topic?
  - b. Is there any plausible interpretation of the many things Krishnamurti says on this topic that is both clear and consistent? Give reasons for your answer.

#### Section III

Part I: Briefly explain what Krishnamurti meant by any five of the eight quoted remarks.

- 1. "The understanding of oneself is not a result, a culmination; it is seeing oneself from moment to moment."
- 2. "Effort is a distraction from what is."
- 3. "Reality, truth, is not to be recognized."
- 4. "Action as we know it is really reaction."
- 5. "Belief is a denial of truth."

- 6. "Cultivation of the ideal is considered virtuous; but if you look at it closely and directly you will see that it is nothing of the kind."
- 7. "The more knowledge a mind is burdened with the less capable it is of understanding."
- 8. "Where there is ambition, there is no love; and action without love has no meaning."

Part II: Answer any two. Make your answers as complete as possible, given your limited time.

- 9. Consider: "One of the fundamental causes of disintegration of society is copying, which is the worship of authority."
  - a. Explain in your own words what Krishnamurti means by the quoted remark.
  - b. Does Krishnamurti recognize any circumstances in which authority is alright?
  - c. What do you think is the most serious problem with Krishnamurti's view? Give reasons for your answer.
- 10. When you suffer psychological pain, who or what is it that suffers?
  - a. How would Krishnamurti answer this question?
  - b. Explain what Krishnamurti means, so that someone who had never read Krishnamurti or any other Eastern philosopher could understand you.
- 11. Is Krishnamurti an atheist, a theist, or an agnostic? Explain you answer in detail.

## THE TEACHER AND THE TEACHINGS

## K: Self-knowledge is the Beginning of Meditation

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 tranquillity 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 tranquillity to itself. It cannot bring about tranquillity, stillness, by mere regimentation, by compulsion, by discipline. It can bring about tranquillity, 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.

*The First and Last Freedom,* pp. 219–220 © 1987 by Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd.

The question of meditation in the context of K's teachings is not often discussed. There may be various reasons for that. One could be that for K his teachings were a meditation from beginning to end, so meditation is not a separate subject. Another may be that it is understood that meditation emerges as an actuality in the process of self-knowledge, as the culmination of the movement from choiceless awareness to attention to insight. Still a third could be added, namely that K always denied that meditation had anything to do with method, system or practice, in which case it could only be talked about when already in the inner state of space and silence emerging from the emptying of consciousness of its content. Whatever the reason, meditation, like religion and the religious mind, is not inquired into as often or with the same intensity as other aspects of self-knowledge. The ultimate reason may be that we feel that we have to put our house in order first before we even touch on the subject. K himself was adamant that unless we lay the ground of order, which he called virtue, in our lives, the pursuit of meditation will become an escape and will have no meaning. However, he also encouraged the staff and students in his schools to experiment and find out about meditation. If the whole of his teachings are imbued with the quality of meditation, then meditation is what we begin with and where we end up. In this article, which was published as one of my online newsletters, I revisit K's instructions for our active engagement with the exploration of meditation as he understood it.

## **Actively Exploring Meditation**

Javier Gómez Rodríguez

## The book of Yourself Newsletter Issue XLV: august 2025

Dear Friends,

Meditation is at the heart of K's teachings. You could say that their core intent is to develop or unfold the quality of perceptiveness that culminates in the emptying of consciousness of its psychological content

and the consequent emergence of an inner dimension of vast space and silence. He tended to define meditation precisely as the emptying of consciousness, so it is not a means to an end but the end is the means, i.e. the emptiness is in the emptying. There is a substantial difference, but their essence is the same. That is why he denied that meditation was a form of achievement. For him meditation had nothing to do with method, system or practice. He dismissed the usual schools of meditation as involving concentration, resistance and control with the aim of attaining a particular goal, thus operating from the known to the known, making such practices a form of pre-meditation. From his public talks and writings, it is generally understood that for him meditation was something far more spontaneous, involving an awareness of what is from moment to moment, awareness that then opened up ever deeper and more expansive areas of attention and insight. But for K meditation was part of life and therefore an integral aspect of a holistic education and he urged the students and teachers in his schools to experiment with it. To that end, he made a number of clear and concrete suggestions. These suggestions could easily be taken for a method, but the point is to begin to learn the art of seeing things as they are, without judgement, sublimation or control, in what he called 'choiceless awareness'. This sense of awareness opens the way to the dissolution of the duality of the observer and the observed, which is the key to the quality of space and silence at the core of meditation.

First of all, sit completely quiet, comfortably, sit very quietly, relax; I will show you. Now, look at the trees, at the hills, the shape of the hills, look at them, look at the quality of their colour, watch them. Do not listen to me. Watch and see those trees, the yellowing trees, the tamarind, and then look at the bougainvillea. Look not with your mind but with your eyes. After having looked at all the colours, the shape of the land, of the hills, the rocks, the shadow, then go from the outside to the inside and close your eyes, close your eyes completely. You have finished looking at the things outside, and now with your eyes closed you can look at what is happening inside. Watch what is happening inside you; do not think, but just watch; do not move your eyeballs, just keep them very, very quiet, because there is nothing to see now; you



South Lawn, Brockwood Park, England

(photo by Abhijit Padte)

have seen all the things around you, now you are seeing what is happening inside your mind; and to see what is happening inside your mind, you have to be very quiet inside. And when you do this, do you know what happens to you? You become very sensitive, you become very alert to things outside and inside. Then you find out that the outside is the inside, then you find out that the observer is the observed.

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This is the kind of general instruction that he imparted to the staff and students in his schools. In fact I remember him teaching us something very much along these lines when I first arrived as a student at Brockwood in the summer of 1975. He told us to sit comfortably and quietly, with our legs crossed and our backs straight so the blood would flow easily to the brain, which needed to be properly oxygenated. He

suggested that we first listen to and look at our surroundings. In this paragraph, to judge by what the listeners would see if they looked, he was speaking at one of his Indian schools. Then, having seen, we should close our eyes so we move from looking out to looking in. He suggested that to facilitate this inward observation we should not move the eyeballs, not only because there is nothing to see now but because, as he explained to us, the movement of the eyeball is closely related to the movement of thought, so if we keep the eye from moving we already reduce the incitement to thought. In this passage he says that to see what is happening inside the mind we have to be inwardly very quiet and that when we do that we become very sensitive. But, from my recollection of what he told us at Brockwood fifty years ago to the day, there is a part missing from this description, namely that the mind is far from quiet, for there is a constant movement of thoughts about this, that and the other running over each other. What is going on inwardly is this noisy stream of consciousness. So he proposed we watch it like we would watch a river or a natural phenomenon, without judging the thoughts as good or bad, in other words, without the censor, in what he called 'choiceless awareness'. The suspension of the censoring observer is the quietness of the observation. He said that there was no good or bad thought, but just thought. Thought was a movement, a natural process, like that of a flower that is born, blooms and dies. As we do not interfere with the movement of thought, it completes itself. As each thought is allowed to end, the volume of the flow diminishes and the current slows down. This is important in that as thought slows down it can be more readily perceived. As this choiceless awareness is sustained, there comes a point at which there is no thought, the stream of consciousness dries out and we discover a dimension in which there is no inner and outer. no observer and observed

Meditation is something extraordinary, if you know how to do it. I am going to talk a little about it. First of all, sit very quietly; do not force yourself to sit quietly, but sit or lie down quietly without force of any kind. Do you understand? Then watch your thinking. Watch what you are thinking about. You find you are thinking about your shoes, your saris, what you are going to

say, the bird outside to which you listen; follow such thoughts and enquire why each thought arises. Do not try to change your thinking. See why certain thoughts arise in your mind so that you begin to understand the meaning of every thought and every feeling without any enforcement. And when a thought arises, do not condemn it, do not say it is right, it is wrong, it is good, it is bad. Just watch it, so that you begin to have a perception, a consciousness which is active in seeing every kind of thought, every kind of feeling. You will know every hidden secret thought, every hidden motive, every feeling, without distortion, without saying it is right, wrong, good or bad. When you look, when you go into thought very, very deeply, your mind becomes extraordinarily subtle, alive. No part of the mind is asleep. The mind is completely awake. That is merely the foundation. Then your mind is very quiet. Your whole being becomes very still. Then go through that stillness, deeper, further – that whole process is meditation.

On Education, pp. 35–36 © 1974 by Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd.

Curiously enough, here K, who denied system, method and practice, talks about the 'how' of meditation. Meaning, of course, is contextual and this word that K rejects on principle may find its meaning in the limited context of giving indications as to how to go about exploring something that in essence can never be reduced to a method because at its core lies the creative action of the direct perception of what is. While this paragraph would seem to be almost identical to the one quoted earlier, it brings out some complementary aspects. The first, which we did not mention, is the quality of unforced quietness. This was part of the non-methodical approach. No forcing, no effort, no control. In other words, no duality and the exercise of will to achieve a premeditated goal. Then, when it comes to watching the movement of thinking, he not only invites us to follow each thought without judgement or control but to find out why it arises. In the discovery of the reason for the arising of thought and feeling we begin to understand its meaning. Our thought-feelings move with an explicit and a implicit meaning. K says that through the

non-judgemental awareness of the movement of consciousness every hidden motive will be revealed, every secret will be exposed. This deepening inquiry of awareness into the shadowy depths of thought-feeling makes the mind extraordinarily subtle, quiet and awake until, as he says, no part of it is asleep. This, he says, is merely the foundation. For there are further depths to be discovered by delving deeper into the stillness. This would seem to describe a beautiful journey of awakening into ever deepening inwardness. And this process is meditation.

Have you ever sat very quietly with closed eyes and watched the movement of your own thinking? Have you watched your mind working - or rather, has your mind watched itself in operation, just to see what your thoughts are, what your feelings are, how you look at the trees, at the flowers, at the birds, at people, how you respond to a suggestion or react to a new idea? Have you ever done this? If you have not, you are missing a great deal. To know how one's mind works is a basic purpose of education. If you don't know how your mind reacts, if your mind is not aware of its own activities, you will never find out what society is. You may read books on sociology, study social sciences, but if you don't know how your mind works you cannot actually understand what society is, because your mind is part of society; it is society. Your reactions, your beliefs, your going to the temple, the clothes you wear, the things you do and don't do and what you think - society is made up of all this, it is the replica of what is going on in your own mind. So your mind is not apart from society, it is not distinct from your culture, from your religion, from your various class divisions, from the ambitions and conflicts of the many. All this is society, and you are part of it. There is no 'you' separate from society.

*This Matter of Culture,* pp. 78–80 © 1964 by Krishnamurti Foundation of America

This is another aspect of this exercise in self-awareness, namely the discovery of the mirror relation of mind and society, which is part of the perception in meditation that the inner and the outer are in a tidal movement of ebb and flow. He states that to know how one's mind works is a

basic purpose of education, not only in schools but in the education that is relationship, that is life. In finding out how our minds work, we come to understand society, for society is the replica of the mind. In fact, the mind and society are one and the same. This awareness of the unitary movement of mind and society dissolves one of the major causes of suffering, which is the sense of separateness and struggle between one human being and another. In this way, meditation is not only a purifying inward movement but a healing factor in relationship.

These explorations of meditation would require a specific time and place, whereas K's general intent was to awaken a quality of awareness that would be sustained throughout the day and bring order into it. These indications, therefore, could be seen, in a simile that David Bohm employed at that time to explain this apparent discrepancy, as learning to ride a bicycle. When one begins, one chooses a quiet back street in which to practice until one feels confident enough to join the traffic on the main road. Perhaps this is not exact, but it might be helpful in dissolving the apparent contradiction, which can prove paralising, between meditating as a specific activity and meeting life with a meditative state of mind. One other aspect that might encourage the type of experimentation K is proposing, is that, while the inner is the outer, and therefore meditation is not to be treated as a separate fragment of daily life, these are invitations to enter a space of stillness, aloneness and self-recollection in which the mind can be aware of itself and discover its conscious and unconscious content, reaching ever further into the depths of silence.

There is much more to this, of course, so we might follow it up again another time.

Be well, amigos, and let's take K's invitation to learn the great art of meditation,

Javier

Javier Gómez Rodríguez – September 2025 www.thebookofyourself.com

## **ON DIALOGUE**

#### K: Dialogue is an Exchange of Ideas and of Our Problems

This is supposed to be a dialogue, an exchange, not merely of ideas but of our problems, in order to see if we can't understand and resolve them. There must be freedom between us to express whatever you want and freedom to listen, not to be so occupied with our own problems that we refuse, or don't have the patience to listen to others. So in order to communicate with each other there must be freedom, patience, and a sense of deep, inward demand to comprehend, to understand. And also we must be able to face our problems, not merely remain at the intellectual, verbal level, but to go into them very deeply in this exchange of our feelings, our ideas, our opinions, and expose ourselves - if we can - to each other, which is rather difficult. Otherwise I am afraid these discussions will have very little meaning. Can we talk with each other at that level freely, with an intention to enquire into ourselves and our problems and difficulties, and have that patience to listen to what others are saying? Also, can we change our opinions, our conclusions? Can we proceed along these lines?

The Brockwood Talks and Discussions 1969, pg. 54 © 1970 by Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd.

It has often been assumed that the dialogues that are held around the teachings are not intended to treat personal matters or solve specific problems. They are understood to be more general or universal in nature, addressing human issues but not getting into the messy existential details. But quotes like these suggest that K's views might have been more nuanced. One might say that, given his depth of insight, he could tackle any personal issue that came his way. The series of the *Commentaties on Living* would suggest as much. At the same time, he was adamant that his talks and dialogues were not a form

of therapy, which is what is suggested by saying that dialogue is an exchange of our problems to see if we can understand and resolve them. As a form of communication dialogue requires freedom to express and patience to listen, as well as a deep urge to go deeply into our problems in what he envisions as an exchange of feelings, ideas and opinions. What we are doing is to expose ourselves to each other with an intention to inquire into our difficulties. The question is whether we are willing and able to do that and at which depth.

The urgency of dialogue begins with the awareness of pervasive fragmentation socially and psychologically. This fragmentation has its source in our individual and collective conditioning, which determines our way of thinking, feeling and action. The key factor of fragmentation in thinking is identification as the me and the mine. This fragmentation is not limited to conceptual or ideological contradictions but it involves our basic assumptions concerning significance, value and purpose. These are at the core of our sense of meaning and self-worth. That's why they are defended with an emotional charge. This emotional charge in the defense of the meanings we have identified with as the core of our being, is the factor of division and conflict. All this is made explicit or manifest in our communication. Thus, if we are concerned with facing, understanding and transcending the pervasive state of fragmentation, conflict and sorrow, the natural thing is to come together to observe the whole process, learn about it and see whether we can see our way through it to a holistic quality of thinking together, relating and being.

In the following piece, Geetha Waters takes up her central theme of the relation of language and observation in the creation of meaning. Growing up in Rishi Valley, Geetha became aware from an early age of the primacy of observation over description and interpretation, i.e. of the infinite possibilities of relating directly with what is versus the nature of language as second-hand information. She goes back in memory to the impression the experience of dialogue made on her at a very tender age. Lacking as yet the knowledge of the English language needed to understand what the grownups were saying, what impacted her was not the verbal exchange but the feeling of togetherness. Later on she discovered the critical role that emotions such as shame, guilt and embarrasment play in our lives and relationships. As a result, she

feels that dialogue during the early years can serve as a way to examine such emotional states, so there is a deepening awareness of our conditioning and the consequent awakening of learning in freedom.

## **The Ground**

By Geetha Waters

Language is not a source of information in itself. Language is rather a conduit for information. The facts that language communicates to us can be assimilated best only when we can observe them. So, when Krishnaji denied that he was the authority, he appealed to our powers of observation by default.

His denial shocked me away from my simple habit of merely following what he was saying to briefly reflecting and studying the context to which he was referring. If he was not the 'authority' on the matters of which he spoke to us, it was up to me to be aware and check the veracity of what he said by myself! To distance himself from being seen as an authority on spiritual matters, Krishnaji referred to himself as the 'Speaker'. This began to create a tendency within me to refer to myself and sometimes others as the Speaker whenever we took the opportunity to speak.

The view of language as being a body of second-hand information made it an intriguing subject to study for me. The more I investigated this body of information, the more interesting it turned out to be. My unravelling of the mysterious associations that words had for me began when I attended serious dialogues during my early years.

These were formal events, where well-dressed people greeted each other, sat in a circle, and fell silent for a while before amicably engaging in an inquiry, and their manner had a strong impact on me. I was three years old when I had my first experience of such a dialogue in

Rishi Valley. We had gathered at Mrs. Iyer's house for the purpose. My sister Girija had recently been born in Madanapalle, on 15 February 1964. While I stood beside my mother in the garden appreciatively sniffing the fragrance of gardenia blossoms above me, Amma held her newborn infant as the other invitees came around to admire mother and child. Then Mrs Iyer, our gracious and beautifully dressed hostess, invited the Rishi Valley staff members who had gathered in her garden to come into her home for tea and snacks, before they held their dialogue.

It was a festive scene that evening. The tableau created by the dozen adults gathered there at sunset, which was casting a golden glow on their formal clothes, still lingers in my mind. The ladies wore vibrantly colourful, ornately embroidered blouses and sarees. My mother was wearing her peach-coloured silk wedding saree, and my father was dressed in a white lungi and crisp white shirt with long sleeves buttoned at the wrists. Many of the other men were dressed in starched, white cotton *kurtas* and *pyjamas*.

I sensed that this was an occasion that honoured the fact of being together and was celebrating being a part of a ceremony which turned out to be a serious inquiry. There was no background noise of endless chatter that I was accustomed to. Doctor and Mrs Iyer calmly took the initiative to sustain the thread of an ongoing dialogue around the room.

Having grown up within an extended family household, where the open courtyard by the well was the only nursery in which a new generation of children could play, I had never had the chance to be part of a formal gathering where my elders sat together to engage in a quiet and prolonged conversation. So, for me, the occasion had a strong impact. The considerate tones with which matters were discussed struck me as being very novel. Thereafter, I experienced this same feeling of novelty during all subsequent dialogues. It helped to spark my interest in the process of inquiry.

There was always something new to learn from such gatherings. Dialogues create a space where people can pause and reflect on life even as it is unfolding within and around them. Every gesture can be observed, and every word is heard and interpreted by a group of serious people. Every incident is important during such occasions. The urgency to understand one another wells up from the ground and is sustained by the participants, as they focus on clarifying what others say.

The collective attention that sustained the flow of dialogue created a sense of urgency. I too paid close attention for the first time in my life. I felt honoured to be present in such a gathering, and I saw my parents with fresh eyes. They were no longer the people who patted my back or pinched my cheeks while speaking to others over my head. Instead, they spoke in earnest, and they were completely engaged in the task of making themselves clear while others carefully monitored what they said. Sitting on the ground beside my mother cradling my baby sister who was fast asleep, I realized with surprise that I felt safe and proud to be with this group of elders!

From then on, being part of such a group sustained my interest in the process of dialogue. It was like I had touched the ground with reverence for the first time in my life. It was a space where calm prevailed. There was no yelling, no shouting, no criticism, no threat and explosive denial. There was a strong sense of urgency sustained by a thread of serious inquiry where all participants were honoured and welcome to have a say. The atmosphere of mutual respect struck a joyful note in my heart. It had the feeling of a salve that soothed a hitherto neglected bruise. Not knowing enough language to communicate in English, I just sat and keenly watched the scene unfold, while they took turns to speak.

The source of information was not the spoken words as much as the feeling of being together. Krishnaji often used to call our attention to the fact of being together, during his talks with us in school. Every time he did this, I would go back to my first encounter with dialogue, and the fact of being part of an ongoing inquiry into the serious matter of



(photo by Michaela Markovicova)

living together on this beautiful earth would resonate through my being. It was a gift I cherished. A gift which kept on giving, every time I took the time to look inside!

Thus, by sustaining the process of ongoing inquiry, and by exploring and investigating language and our feelings, the fact that language was not the source of information, but rather a second-hand version of what actually exists in life was brought to the fore throughout our education. While Krishnaji urged us not to become "second-hand human beings", he also ensured that we would be exposed to the art of inquiry through the process of serious dialogue.

Geetha Waters - April 2025 geethawaters@gmail.com

## REPORT FROM CHENNAI

## K: As Long as There is Division, There Must be Conflict

No external imposition, laws, systems, will ever stop the killing of man. Nor will any intellectual, romantic, convictions stop wars. They will stop only when you, as the rest of humanity, see the truth that as long as there is division in any form, there must be conflict, limited or wide, narrow or expansive, that there must be struggle, conflict, pain. So you are responsible, not only to your children, but to the rest of humanity. Unless you deeply understand this, not verbally or ideationally or merely intellectually, but feel this in your blood, in your way of looking at life, in your actions, you are supporting organized murder which is called war. The immediacy of perception is far more important than the immediacy of answering a question which is the outcome of a thousand years of man killing man.

Krishnamurti to Himself, pg. 62 © 1987 by Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd.

The following is an abridged version of a longer report that the author had sent to Friedrich to inform him of his trip to India. We reproduce it here at Friedrich's request. This trip took place at the invitation of KFI and happened to coincide with the celebration of the annual International Trustee Meetings, which made for a wonderful reunion of old friends. The occasion was the annual public talk organised by KFI's Centre for Continuing Dialogue. As the purpose of these events is to examine issues of contemporary life in the light of the teachings, the invited speaker chose to address the topic of conflict, as this is a very current and urgent issue, especially in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This specific conflict has proved unbelievably divisive, as there is a traumatic history behind it, as well as vested geopolitical interests involved. But to use such things to justify this genocide is so abhorrent,

that the whole thing stands as an indictment of the morally corrupt state of humanity. Such catastrophes and their unspeakable suffering are the concrete expressions of a deeper recurrent pattern of violence in which the whole of humanity is caught. As long as we remain within the traditional bounds of this universal conditioning, it will not matter what identifying labels we wear, what our ethnicity, religion or ideology might be, for we will all be acting out this perennial dance macabre of the victim and the victimizer. If we are at all awake to the horrors of violence and to our total responsibility as human beings, we must search out its causes and eliminate them in ourselves, for it is this inner transformation that alone will change the world.

## **Notes from Chennai**

By Javier Gómez Rodríguez

The muezzin intoned his punctual call to prayer around 5 am, just as the first faint glimmers of dawn began to stir the whole sprawling city into action. The raucous crows, who seem to keep up their cawing all day long, would soon start their sermons among the trees, followed by the other birds, the myna, the brain-fever bird or hawk cuckoo, and the screeching green parakeets. One other assiduous visitor to the compound is a small heron that comes to feed at the lotus pond. The fruit bats, whose flight at evening is a magical spectacle, probably return at sunrise to their usual roosts. Then you hear the stirrings in the houses on the other side of the wall and the clinking of the metal pots and cutlery as the servants prepare the breakfast and bring small flasks of black tea with milk to each of the guestrooms. A plane heading for the city airport comes flying so low that it feels like it might land on the lawn. The air is still and the majestic trees in the compound hold that stillness and their crowns welcome the first hazy rays of the reddish sun as it rises dreamily from its bed in the Bay of Bengal.

I wrote that on my last day. The purpose for my visit was to give a public talk and then conduct a question-and-answer session as part of the

annual activities of the Centre for Continuing Dialogue. They had put adds in the local papers, distributed posters, and a couple of days after my arrival they informed me that some 300 people had expressed an interest in attending. This would be the first time I would be doing such a thing, and it felt a bit intimidating. K used to give his annual set of talks under the trees across the driveway and here I was giving a talk based on his work on the south lawn. That was quite a responsibility, and it made me nervous.

The invitation had come from my old friend and current KFI Secretary Vishwanath Alluri. Vish, as we all familiarly call him, although from humble origins made it as an entrepreneur. Reading K triggered something in him, and he would rather support the work of the foundations, schools and study centres than indulge his greed and vanity. We had coincided last summer in Mürren, where we met daily at 7:00 am for a ritual coffee darshan. This term darshan, as I understand it, means the grace the devotees get from being in the presence of a deity or a saint. In this context it just meant sharing together in a serious and friendly conversation about matters of deep concern. A couple of months later I got a phone call from him and once I agreed to his proposal, Vish handed the whole thing over to Shailesh Shirali, who is the person in charge of the Centre for Continuing Dialogue. Shailesh explained that its purpose was to address contemporary issues in the light of K's teachings. In view of the current state of rising violence in the world, I suggested the theme of 'The Vicious Circle of Conflict'.

The place had been spruced up since last I had been there 20 years ago. The old buildings had been renovated, new cottages had been built and the whole place had been equipped with new furniture made from hardwood trees considered sacred in Africa. They had to put up the new buildings not just to provide more accommodation but to prevent the local government from claiming the unused part as farmland. And then they had the unusual luck that, without their petitioning for it, the national government had declared the KFI compound at Vasanta Vihar a national treasure on account of its historic significance, which

afforded it instant protection from such encroachments. The trees were as magnificent as I remembered, although they informed me that many had fallen in a gale during the monsoon some years ago. One of those that came down had sheltered a family of owls. The owls were gone with the tree. The mongoose, however, walked openly about. They are a welcome presence, as they hunt and eat the snakes, one large one being sighted during my stay. The geckoes were crawling about the walls and over the mosquito screens. And the mosquitoes, with or without their tiger stripes, were everywhere, leaving their mark as they bit my feet between the sandal straps.

My visit coincided with the International Trustee Meetings. As KFI was organising them, they had to come together to deal with their own business before facing the other foundations. That's how I got to meet such old friends as Dr Krishna, Radhika Herzberger, G. Gautama, Shailesh Shirali, Kumaraswamy, Kandaswamy, Dr Dubey, Allok Mathur, Siddhartha Menon, Prakash and KK<sup>5</sup>, and new ones like Vivek Raju, Meenakshi Thapan and Anjali Kambe. They all seemed to treat me as one of their own, which I felt I was, so they invited me to join their meetings. Dr Krishna moved about with the aid of a walking stick and looked visibly frail. Radhika was looking frail too. Kumaraswamy was looking more and more like Mahatma Gandhi's double. After his stroke and fall, Kandaswamy looked physically helpless, but they assured me that mentally he retained a clear archivist memory from which he could retrieve information with the greatest ease and accuracy. KK was his old spritely self, with his total commitment to his editorial work. Gautama was as energetic and enthusiastic as ever and he handed me a copy of the book he had just written, Form, Culture & Change - Meaningful Schooling and Education (Jan 2025). It was a galley proof, and it needed some serious editing. Allok and Radhika were curious about my online course, so I sent them the chapter readings.

<sup>5</sup> KK passed away of a heart attack in Chennai on 7 May 2025. He was a dear friend and will be sorely missed.

One special meeting was totally unexpected and the most touching of all. Mr O. R. Rao and his wife Sita came by expressly to meet me. They had been running Vasanta Vihar during my stay there as a resident scholar between 1993 and 1995. Their kindness and humility had been such an unforgettable blessing. They had aged a lot, without losing those beautiful qualities. Mr Rao told me he was scheduled to undergo a surgical operation the following day. They had found that his neck artery was blocked, causing loss of oxygenation to the brain. And even so he had insisted on coming over. I was moved to tears and, of course, took the opportunity to express my undying gratitude and affection to both of them. I later heard that the operation, which could be fatal for someone his age, had been successful and he was recovering quietly at home.

The ITM was scheduled for January 27–30 and the international trustees started trickling in before that. So I met Wendy and Steve Smith, Raman Patel, Nasser Shamin, Derek Hook and Alastair Herron from KFT. KFA was represented by Cory Fisher, Kristy Lee, Darcy Gray and Pathik Wadhwa. Jaap Sluijter, the KFA Executive Director, had his visa application denied twice and was unable to attend. And then there were the FKL (Fundación Krishnamurti Latinoamericana) trustees Antonio Autor, Marina Audi and Daniel Herschthal, with whom I had worked closely in the past as translator, trustee and international liaison for this foundation.

## K: Only in Emptiness is There Peace

Peace is not to the believer, to the philosopher who specializes in theory. It is not a reaction, a contrary response to violence. It has no opposite; all opposites must cease, the conflict of duality. There is duality, light and darkness, man and woman, and so on, but the conflict between the opposites is in no way necessary. Conflict between the opposites arises only when there's need, the compulsion to fulfil, the need for sex, the psychological demand for security. Then only is there conflict



(photo by Carol Brandt)

between the opposites; the escape from the opposites, attachment and detachment, then is the search for peace through church and law. Law can and does give superficial order; the peace that church and temple offer is fancy, a myth to which a confused mind can escape. But this is not peace. The symbol, the word must be destroyed, not destroyed in order to have peace but they must be shattered for they are an impediment to understanding. Peace is not for sale, a commodity of exchange. Conflict, in every form, must cease and then perhaps it is there. There must be total negation, the cessation of demand and need; then only does conflict come to an end. In emptiness there is birth. All the inward structure of resistance and security must die away; then only is there emptiness. Only in this emptiness is there peace whose virtue has no value nor profit.

*Krishnamurti's Notebook,* pp. 119–120 © 2003 by Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd.

My talk was on the 26th. After Shailesh introduced the event, I sat on the low platform and launched into the topic of the vicious circle of conflict.<sup>6</sup> Naturally, I mentioned the whole issue of violence and the horrors of war. Knowing the Indian tradition of ahimsa, non-violence, made famous by Mahatma Gandhi, I mentioned the long history of violence that has plagued the subcontinent. As it happened, Vish had taken a group of us to see the recently released movie 'Emergency' in which Indira Gandhi, her childhood friend and lifelong confidante Pupul Jayakar, K and other relevant contemporary figures were made to reenact the political dramas of the time. Dr Krishna and Radhika, who were part of this cinematic expedition, agreed that the portrait of Indira as totally committed to India was accurate. The historical events as such were also not in dispute, although the dramatization might have been skewed for narrative purposes. The portrait of K was disappointing, to say the least. He was depicted as a typical guru, conducting meditation sessions with his followers in a gazebo by a lake and confirming Indira's notion that she and India were one and the same. The whole Emergency episode (1975–1977) had in fact prevented K from travelling to India. Freedom of expression had been suspended and K, who would not remain silent, didn't see the point of wasting his time in jail. So I mentioned this film as well as The Book of Manu, one of the canonical texts of Hinduism, where the caste system is described as a hierarchical food chain. So violence was not only an accident of history but lay at the core of the ideological foundations of Hindu society.

I was not meaning to go too much into the Israeli-Palestinian issue and only mentioned it in passing during the talk, but in the Q & A that followed people kept returning to that kind of situation. As I went into it, I realised that I was introducing an emotional note that might be disturbing for the audience, but I also felt that there was no point in hiding my

<sup>6</sup> Here is the video link to the talk: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GA5R12a6kLE.

strong feelings about it. Knowing the fractured nature of this issue and how sensitive some people in the audience might be about it, I did my best to convey a perspective that transcended this specific outbreak of violence, for ultimately the causes lie in the internal vicious circle in which the consciousness of humanity is caught. After the talk, as soon as I stepped off the podium, I was surrounded by some twenty people eager to discuss further. That could have made for a very expansive and lively dialogue, but there was only time to address a few of their concerns in rather a shorthand manner. A real pity, for there was genuine urgency and intensity in it.

Simultaneously, across the river they were holding the annual The School of the Wisdom event at the Theosophical Society, which this year was being conducted by Ravi Ravindra. My friend Mariël Polman, who is one of the people responsible for the Amsterdam TS Lodge, was taking part and she invited me to attend one of their sessions, so on the day I walked over the Elphinstone Bridge to Adyar. The TS compound is a glorious jungle on the edge of the bustling and multitudinous city. You walk endlessly in the shadow of the trees from the guarded gates at the busy thoroughfare to the sandy beach at the other end. It's a magical place. Something of its old spiritual sparkle is there as the silent witness of a profoundly religious quality that is immanent in the universe and in principle accessible to a free and selfless humanity. It was a joyful visit that culminated in beautiful exchanges over a delicious Indian lunch.

In spite of what I thought to be my measured approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, not everyone was happy about it. One particular person, heavily identified with his Jewish ancestry, many of whom had perished in the Holocaust, held quite different views and had apparently been upset by my comments. This raised the question of identity, which establishes the core division, and therefore conflict, between the me and the not-me. All identity is hurt and the cause of hurt. Whether individual or collective, this trauma becomes part of the nucleus of the self and the justification for the resulting violence. The very separateness

of the psychological entity not only alienates us from others but claims exclusivity in relation to suffering and the subsequent right to retaliate. The suffering self is blind to the suffering of another and denies compassion. But how difficult it is to be free from this psychological delusion!

As another treat, Vish took the western trustees out to dinner at a posh restaurant and invited me along. They supposedly served the best pizzas in town. I found the idea of eating pizza in Chennai rather incongruous, so I did not order one. I looked around the restaurant and had a similar impression as when we went to see the film. The movie theatre was in a multi-storeyed building that was a perfect copy, with some local flavour, of the standard western shopping mall or entertainment arcade, down to the popcorn and the ice cream. The large billboards around town and the newspaper ads depicted a prosperous middle class enjoying the same comforts as their western counterparts. The new prosperity of India was leading the country into a wholesale imitation of the West, from the furniture to the manner and the dress

Time was running out and I must prepare for my departure. It had been a great visit. The tea *darshan* at six in the morning with KK and Vivek had been a great start to the day. At the first cries of the birds, we made our way to the servery and then sat together in the dining room as the gentle light of the Gulf of Bengal came flooding through the darkling canopy of the trees. It had been a wonderful reunion, even a homecoming. I felt so welcome and at ease, confirming, once again, the tremendous meaning and potential of our involvement with the teachings. It was such a heartwarming visit that even after all those years I felt I had never been away.

At the airport the bronze Shiva Natarajan was still frozen in its delicate pose, holding its symbols and surrounded by a ring of fire in the everlasting human endeavour of overcoming self-ignorance and joining in the cosmic dance of creation and destruction. I did my best to

sleep on the long haul to London but was kept awake by my snoring neighbours. We had taken off from Chennai with some delay but had made up for it enroute and landed punctually at Heathrow. Now it was time to locate the terminal and the gate for my connecting flight to Amsterdam. It is one world, one humanity and one consciousness. Indeed!

Javier Gómez Rodríguez
Chennai, 29. 01.2025 - Lelystad, 04. 05. 2025
javier@thebookofyourself.com

#### K: You Are the World

You and the world are not two different entities with separate problems; you and the world are one. Your problem is the world's problem. You may be the result of certain tendencies, of environmental influences, but you are not different fundamentally from another. Inwardly we are very much alike; we are all driven by greed, ill will, fear, ambition, and so on. Our beliefs, hopes, aspirations, have a common basis. We are one; we are one humanity, though the artificial frontiers of economics and politics and prejudice divide us. If you kill another, you are destroying yourself. You are the centre of the whole, and without understanding yourself you cannot understand reality.

Understanding disorder', 25 November 1981 *The Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pg. 1 © 1991 by Krishnamurti Foundation of America

## **BOOK REVIEWS**

### K: Learning is the Highest Form of Discipline

In learning there is no accumulation. Knowledge is different from learning. Knowledge is accumulation, conclusions, formulas, but learning is a constant movement, a movement without a centre, without a beginning or an end. To learn about oneself there must be no accumulation in one's learning: if there is, it is not learning about oneself but merely adding to one's accumulated knowledge of oneself. Learning is the freedom of perception, of seeing. And you cannot learn if you are not free. So this very learning is its own discipline – you don't have to discipline yourself and then learn. Therefore discipline is freedom. This denies all conformity and control, for control is the imitation of a pattern. A pattern is suppression, suppression of 'what is', and the learning about 'what is' is denied when there is a formula of what is good and what is bad. The learning about 'what is' is the freedom from 'what is'. So learning is the highest form of discipline. Learning demands intelligence and sensitivity.

'Discipline' *The Urgency of Change*, pg. 61

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## **A Living Foundation for Learning**

by Geetha Waters (Self-published booklet, 2023)

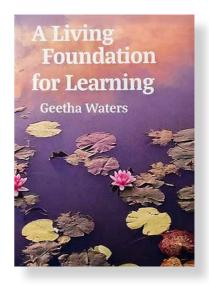
## A Review of A Living Foundation for Learning

by David E. Moody

Geetha Waters was a student at the Rishi Valley school during the 1970s, and at Brockwood Park in 1979 and 1980. She had the rare opportunity to participate in Krishnamurti's dialogues with students, as

well as to observe his conversations with David Bohm. Now, several decades later, she has published a lovely booklet reflecting upon the deep impact this kind of education made upon her life and relationships.

A Living Foundation for Learning consists of eight chapters, each one just a few pages long. Among the chapter titles are "Krishnamurti's Vision," "Liberating Intelligence," and "Creative Transformation."



The title of Waters' booklet is intriguing in itself. We don't ordinarily think in terms of a foundation for learning, much less a living foundation. In a brief Foreword, she suggests that "a compassionate ground for learning" represents the "ethos" that Krishnamurti's approach to education provided. Later in the booklet, she provides another meaning for her title:

It is never too early to enlist a child's interest in serious reflection. Gradually, it provides a living foundation in which his or her intelligence can flourish. It enables children to take a deeply honest look at themselves and the world.

Waters has a special interest in the process of dialogue as an important component of education. She writes that "the frank and serious dialogue" she engaged in at Brockwood Park, "startled me out of my complacency, and the clash of cultures turned my world upside down." She is also highly attuned to the distinction between thought and observation, as they occur in daily life. She acquired a certain skepticism regarding knowledge: "Indeed, I found that I soon began to cultivate a healthy disregard for my own knowledge base, allowing it to lag behind me like an overly curious puppy on a leash."

Waters concludes her reflections by stepping out of her personal experiences and considering the process of education for society as a whole:

Krishnamurti wanted to set us unconditionally free. To do this, he initiated a great revolution in education. He addressed the forces of conditioning in the educational process by encouraging his students to learn to appreciate their intelligence as a whole ... I hope that we will continue to expand on his work and thereby ensure that future generations can benefit from his vision.

The booklet is colorfully adorned with several full-page photographs of scenes from nature, as well as with delightful drawings by "Willow, aged 9."

Waters' work is a testament to the profound effect that Krishnamurti's educational philosophy had upon her as she faced the many challenges of life. His vision evidently transformed her beyond the level of concepts, and shaped her consciousness at a fundamental level. By expressing so clearly what she gathered from her years at Rishi Valley and Brockwood Park, she offers guidance and encouragement for teachers at the several schools that continue to function in Krishnamurti's name. Her booklet is a fine addition to the growing literature regarding a wholly new approach to education.

David E. Moody – April 2025 davidem@west.net

## K: Learning is More Important than Meditation or Action

Meditation is not a state; it is a movement, as action is a movement. And as we said just now, when we separate action from learning, then the observer comes between the learning and the action; then he becomes important; then he uses action and learning for ulterior motives. When this is very clearly understood as one harmonious movement of acting, of learning, of meditation, there is no wastage of energy, and this

is the beauty of meditation. There is only one movement. Learning is far more important than meditation or action. To learn there must be complete freedom, not only consciously but deeply, inwardly – a total freedom. And in freedom there is this movement of learning, acting, meditating as a harmonious whole. The word whole not only means health but holy. So learning is holy, acting is holy, meditation is holy. This is really a sacred thing, and the beauty is in itself and not beyond it.

'Meditation and energy'

The Urgency of Change, pp. 145–146

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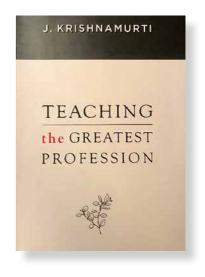
# **Teaching – The Greatest Profession**

by J. Krishnamurti (KFI Publications, Chennai 2024)

## A Review of Teaching – The Greatest Profession

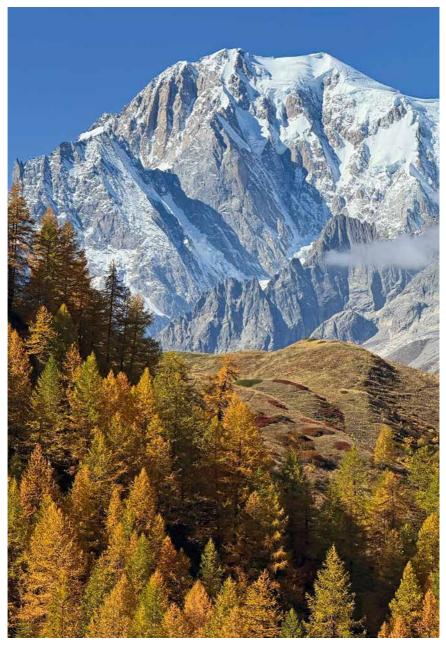
by Javier Gómez Rodríguez

This recent publication contains six discussions with teachers at Rajghat and Rishi Valley between November and December 1984. Throughout, K is concerned with conveying his educational vision and to see that the teachers understand its implications in action. For K teaching is the greatest profession because the teacher is responsible for a new generation of



people who will not be caught in the traditional patterns of life. While one of the principal functions of the teacher has been to impart knowledge, currently this function is being taken over to a great extent by the computer. So the function of such a teacher is not limited to teaching academic subjects but involves the cultivation of the whole human being, which implies understanding the inner or psychological field. The importance of the latter is highlighted by the sharp and dangerous contrast between the extraordinary advances in science and technology, on the one hand, and the enduring barbaric psychological state of humanity after the long night of evolution, on the other. (K has in fact denied that there is any such thing as psychological evolution.) While for K knowledge remains important, it is evident to him that it has not nor will it change man. So while in these schools academic excellence is a must, the greatness of the teaching profession does not lie in that direction but in the preparation of a new generation of psychologically revolutionary people. The students are our future, and our responsibility is to change ourselves, so they also change. That means the educators need to be revolutionary, so they must educate themselves in their relationship with the students, with each other and with the world.

Relationship is thus of the essence. Not only is relationship at the core of existence but at the heart of the educational process, for such an education is aimed at the whole and wholeness of life. In such boarding schools, the students are guests and the teachers are their hosts, so the teachers' function is to make the students feel welcome. comfortable. secure and at home. They do this by watching them without judgement, without comparison, with care and affection, by being honest, clear and steadfast in their meaning concerning themselves and the nature of such an education. In this there is no personal influence or sense of reward and punishment, of the imposition of rules through compulsion and fear. Education is about learning and in learning there is no authority. This implies that the teachers are not there to help the students (for K helping another psychologically is a crime) by telling them what they should or should not do, by prescribing what is right and wrong, but to learn together. In such a relationship there is no need for discipline in the traditional sense. Discipline, etymologically, means learning and this is the only sense of the word that K will accept. This is something



South face of Mount Blanc, from the Aosta Valley

(photo by Marc Péchère)

sacred, a law, for K, namely that discipline means learning and love is inherent in freedom (etymologically freedom means love), and where these are order naturally follows. K shows them what clarity is, so they become clear. But it is not a matter of what the teacher says but of what he is. This is part of the educational, psychological and social revolution he is proposing.

The added dimension of the approach to education in these schools lies in the concern with self-knowledge. Relationship is, again, central to this, for it is the mirror in which we learn about ourselves. To see what we are we need the freedom and clarity of awareness and attention, not the narrowing resistance of concentration. When we so observe, we discover that we are conditioned and that this conditioning is common to both the teachers and the students. To investigate it together, they need to be very honest with each other so they can talk things over with a sense of affection and trust, free from fear. Their concern is to understand themselves, so they look into the mirror of relationship to see whatever they are inside.

The mirror reveals our self-centredness. Self-interest goes with the feeling of separateness and the desire to fulfil, which leads to competition, indifference and violence. The nation is an idea we identify with in our pursuit of security. This creates division, from which conflict necessarily follows. This is K's universal law of conflict. The function of education is to change this whole tribal, fragmened, conflictual psyche of mankind. These schools imply building a community of mutual care and cooperation, having a global outlook, being aware of what's going on in the world in terms of knowledge and violence, and having a feeling for the whole of humanity. It is the responsibility of the teacher to bring this about, to be aware that we are self-centred, and to realise that this divides and creates conflict. Such self-interest is carefull hidden, so it must be searched out, leaving no stone unturned. The awareness of the danger of self-interest puts an end to it and brings about freedom, cooperation and right relationship.

## K: Two Kinds of Learning

We are saying that there are two kinds of learning – one, acting through the accumulation of knowledge and experience, and the other, learning without accumulation, but learning all the time in the very act of living. The former is absolutely necessary in all technical matters, but relationship, behaviour, are not technical matters, they are living things and you have to learn about them all the time. If you act from what you have learnt about behaviour, then it becomes mechanical and therefore relationship becomes routine.

Then there is another very important point: in all the learning which is accumulation of experience, profit is the criterion that determines the efficiency of learning. And when the motive of profit operates in human relationships then it destroys those relationships because it brings about isolation and division. When the learning of experience and accumulation enters the domain of human behaviour, the psychological domain, then it must inevitably destroy. Enlightened self-interest on the one hand is advancement, but on the other hand it is the very seat of mischief, misery and confusion. Relationships cannot flower where there is self-interest of any kind, and that is why relationship cannot flower where it is guided by experience and memory.

'Learning' *The Urgency of Change*, pg. 126

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We also see that thinking and suffering are the common consciousness of mankind. Thinking is the response of memory, knowledge and experience, of the past. As the past is necessarily limited, so is thought. For K this limitation makes thought inherently divisive and therefore the very source of fragmentation and conflict. So thinking cannot change the social and moral structure of society. But we do act instantly when we see the danger of something. When we see that nationalism is dangerous, we stop being nationalists. When we see that the self, the thought

that we are something or someone, is dangerous, we stop being anything or anyone, which means emptying the brain of all accumulated psychological memories. Psychologically thought is dangerous, but we do not seem to see the danger, so we don't act and nothing changes. K indicates that working at this means being aware of our blockages, breaking them down and moving on from there. For that we must have the needful energy, which we don't have because, as K puts it, we are drugged by ideologies, attachments and wishful thinking.

The perception of the total danger of these factors of thought, time and self-interest in human existence is the action that precipitates change and transformation, the key to the inner, psychological revolution. This revolution is essentially religious. The cultivation of the whole human being brings about the flowering of goodness, which is the essence of the religious mind, the key to which is the perception of the destructive nature of self-interest and the inherent limitation and divisive nature of thought. So while thought has its place in the field of technical knowledge, it has no place in the psychological field, no place in relationship, for it makes for conflict and where there is conflict there is no love. The religious mind comes about with the ending of psychological time, which is the ground of identity. All religions are the product of thought, constitute divisive identities and thereby have lost their meaning. They have cultivated hope and security. Hope means time, the future, which is a postponement of action, and there is no absolute security in the things thought has created.

The brain, however, must have absolute security, otherwise it becomes neurotic, psychotic. The brain, with its desires, attachments, fears and sorrows, is conditioned to live in turmoil, so there is no order or security in consciousness as we know it. For K absolute security, clarity, freedom and order exist when there is no psychological conflict, which is the outcome of conditioning. This conditioning, K maintains, breaks down when there is deep listening, with its intelligence, love and compassion. Then time, which is the movement of the past through the present to the future, comes to an end. Then life is a movement without beginning

or end. This timeless mind is the essence of the religious life as K understands it. This is of the greatest importance, for only such a religious spirit can bring about a new humanity, a new culture and a new world.

This attempt to trace the thematic threads in this series of dialogues naturally leaves out a great deal. However, the published text reflects the difficulty that K had in conveying his holistic vision to the educators. At times it was a bit painful to realise the clever way the latter tried to dodge the questions in order to avoid giving an honest answer. As K was addressing the teachers in the way they must in turn communicate with the students, the fact that they were resorting to such diversionary tactics was a sign that what K proposed was not that easy to accomplish. The depth of perception and subtlety involved in the whole educational process, but especially in the area of discipline and self-knowledge, might appear daunting enough. His rejection of any rules, authority and compulsion in the area of so-called discipline and his radical refusal to help the students by setting up any such patterns must have felt rather disruptive in terms of the standard school practices. All that he suggested was to establish a close relationship of affection and trust based on honesty and clarity from which order would naturally follow. People's experiences with classroom teaching might have raised some serious questions about it.

Relationship stands out as the living ground of existence and of any education that might claim to be holistic. When relationship is whole, life is whole, for life is relationship. But our relationships and our consciousness are the two sides of a pervasive state of fragmentation and conflict. Relationship is the reflection of our conditioning and inner states and in its mirror we can begin to see what we actually are. This deepening self-awareness reveals our universal self-centredness and its false pursuit of security in such dangerous creations of thought as nationalism, religious belief and ideology. The deeper insight K puts across is that thought itself is inherently divisive and therefore not the factor of transformation and wholeness. For him the perception that the factors of fragmentation are the inherent limitation of thought and its endemic

psychological pursuit of self-interest, brings them to an end, thus allowing consciousness and relationship to become whole. This wholeness is goodness, which is the essence of the religious mind such an education is intended to awaken, for only the true religious spirit can bring about a profound cultural transformation in the world.

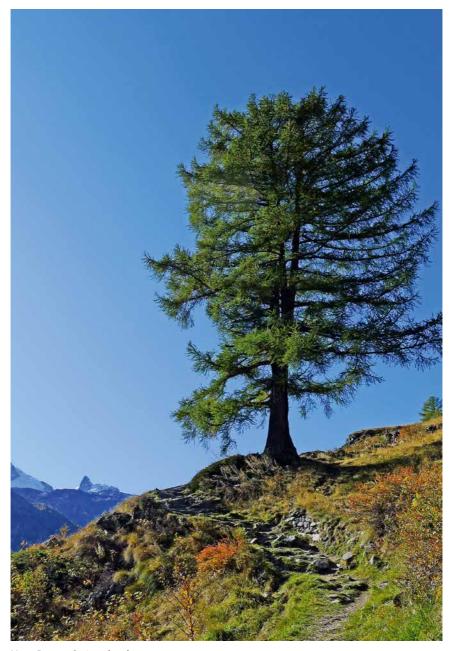
This fundamental challenge is not only at the core of K's holistic approach to education but is an urgent matter for the whole of humanity. And maybe that is a good place to start, namely the realisation that we are the world and K's teachings are an education for mankind.

Javier Gómez Rodríguez – October 2025 javier@thebookofyourself.com

#### K: The Nature of 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.

'Understanding disorder', 25 November 1981 Commentaries on Living, First Series, pg. 96 © 1993 by Krishnamurti Foundation of America



Near Davos, Switzerland

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

#### K: Division Denies Freedom and Love

You must start from freedom. Where there is freedom there is love. This freedom and love will show you when to cooperate and when not to cooperate. This is not an act of choice, because choice is the result of confusion. Love and freedom are intelligence. So what we are concerned with is not the division between organisation and freedom but whether we can live in this world without division at all. It is division which denies freedom and love, not organisation. When organisation divides, it leads to war. Belief in any form, ideals, however noble or effective, breed division. Organised religion is the cause of division, just like nationality and power groups. So be concerned with those things which divide, those things which bring about division between man and man, whether they be individual or collective. The family, the church, and the State bring about such division. What is important is the movement of thought which divides. Thought itself is always divisive. Thought cultivates prejudice, opinion, judgement. Man in himself, being divided, seeks freedom out of this division. Not being able to find it he hopes to integrate the various divisions, and of course this is not possible. You cannot integrate two prejudices. To live in this world in freedom means to live with love, eschewing every form of division. When there is freedom and love, then this intelligence will act in cooperation, and will also know when not to cooperate.

'Organisation' *The Urgency of Change*, pg. 70
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# **Update on an Educational Journey**

16 September 2024

#### Dearest Friedrich,

I apologise for the delay in replying to your emails from early August. It was a very busy time for both Loic and me, as we were packing up and leaving our beautiful home at La Mahaudiere in France. We then drove to the UK to see Jean-Loup – sadly, for the last time – and after that, we made our way to Budapest, which took us three days in our semiconverted van.

We arrived in Budapest just the night before we were due to join the REAL School team for two intense and interesting weeks of professional development with the educators and catalysts. Jennifer joined us for three of those days to introduce my team to the 'play of painting' room I've managed to implement at the school. As you know, this room is not just about painting; the discussions that arose, particularly regarding the impact of praise, judgment, and evaluation – thanks to Jennifer's wonderful facilitation – have sown the seeds for a deeper relationship with the children.

REAL School is an incredibly dynamic place with a very caring team. I initially came last October for a temporary position, but I became too attached (and appreciated) to leave. One of the founders, Barna, and his brother Zoltan, were Green School parents from the days when Loic and Yoel were there. Both wanted to start a 'Green' school in Europe. Zoltan stayed with us at Gardener's Cottage while visiting Brockwood and Inwoods some years back. Both were also interested in Krishnamurti's work. Although Zoltan is not involved in the school, Barna is deeply committed to educating children to 'dream and build a better world'. You can see him speak about his mission in this TED talk: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFpNjLNvAd4

Loic and I are committed to staying for the year. I will be working with the lower primary team to implement several pedagogical changes and support good relationships with children and parents. So far, things have been going very well. Loic will lead the nature day sessions for the children on a small local island in the river Danube. The school has secured a site that we can use as a basecamp for the children once a week. Our aim is to deepen the children's relationship with nature while restoring some of the site's natural features and attracting more wildlife to the land. It's an exciting development for the school, which we hope to document over the course of the year.

Sadly, Jean-Loup passed away on August 12<sup>th</sup>. He was incredibly frail when we last saw him, hardly eating, so it wasn't a surprise. We are just sorry that we couldn't be close by at the time. Loic has written a beautiful post to announce his passing, which has already received many touching responses. He will share this post with you shortly.

I will be in Switzerland in October, so perhaps there will be another chance to pop by.

With much love, Mary-Ann Mary-Ann Ridgway maryannridgway@gmail.com

#### K: Meditation is the Action of Silence

Meditation is the action of silence. We act out of opinion, conclusion and knowledge, or out of speculative intentions. This inevitably results in contradiction in action between what is and what should be, or what has been. This action out of the past, called knowledge, is mechanical, capable of adjustment and modification but having its roots in the past. And so the shadow of the past always covers the present. Such action in relationship is the outcome of the image, the symbol, the conclusion; relationship is the outcome of the image, the symbol, the conclusion; relationship is the outcome of the image, the symbol, the conclusion;

tionship then is a thing of the past, and so it is memory and not a living thing. Out of this chatter, disarray and contradiction, activities proceed, breaking up into patterns of culture, communities, social institutions and religious dogmas. From this endless noise, the revolution of a new social order is made to appear as though it really were something new, but as it is from the known to the known it is not a change at all. Change is possible only when denying the known; action then is not according to a pattern but out of an intelligence that is constantly renewing itself.

Intelligence is not discernment and judgment or critical evaluation. Intelligence is the seeing of what is. The what is is constantly changing, and when the seeing is anchored in the past, the intelligence of seeing ceases. Then the dead weight of memory dictates the action and not the intelligence of perception. Meditation is the seeing of all this at a glance. And to see, there must be silence, and from this silence there is action which is entirely different from the activities of thought.

*The Only Revolution,* pp. 154–155 © 1970 by Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd.

# **A Warm Sharing from Canada**

Tuesday, 7 January 2025

### Dear Friedrich,

What a delight to hear from you and to see how well you are doing from the photograph in your 2024 Newsletter. I had been meaning to write to thank you for your wonderful 2024 calendar, and your *Memoir at 93*. But clearly, I haven't learned that if I don't reply to a letter immediately, the windows of opportunity to do so seem to become more elusive. Thank you for the 2025 calendar, and the Newsletter. The

obits to Mark Lee and Michael Krohnen triggered fond memories and sadness that we won't again be graced by their warm and welcoming energy.

I thoroughly enjoyed your memoir, which I pick up periodically to read a section or two. What a fascinating life you have lived. Although I was named Hillary after Sir Edmund, my interest in mountains never extended beyond backpacking (mostly in New Hampshire's White Mountains, and the Adirondacks in New York State), perhaps because I have an irrational fear of heights. Naturally, I found your stories and photographs about technical climbing intriguing, while they simultaneously caused my palms to sweat. In 1978, I did have the good fortune to hike in the Himalayas, most notably for a month from Kathmandu to Everest Base Camp and back, with the help of a two-dollar map. I imagined I would continue backpacking when I moved to Alberta, since the Rockies are so close by, but that never materialized. It's inspiring to see you maintaining a healthy component of physical activity in what is clearly an emotionally and mentally stimulating life. Can you at 95 again walk 900 m, or has the heavy snow made it impossible to test that out?

Although I've been retired for a year and a half, I've been busier than ever with academic writing. I co-authored a second edition of *Introduction to the Study of Religion*, and my 3rd edition of *Introducing Hinduism* is now in the pre-production phase. I just submitted a manuscript (a few hours ago) of the first volume of my study of the Hindu goddess Durga (I am about to turn to the second volume), and I am working on a book on the modern Nondual Spirituality Movement (strongly "influenced" by K). I also managed to travel to Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon (between the most difficult periods of bombing), because my partner Michelle's daughter was getting married there. Michelle sends her greetings. I spent the month of September as a resident facilitator of study retreats at the Krishnamurti Educational Centre of Canada on Vancouver Island. Such natural beauty there! Also, Ashwani Kumar edited a special issue of the *Journal of Unschooling and Alternative Learning*, with a focus on K. It is available here: https://jual.nipissingu.ca/current-issue/

Thank you for sharing the video and lyrics of that song by children about the pointlessness of war. In my teens and early adulthood, my generation grew up with the Rolling Stones' *Gimme Shelter*, Marvin Gaye's *What's Going On*, and of course, Bob Dylan's *Blowin in the Wind*, and *Masters of War*. Perhaps those Dylan songs may reach a few new young people if they go to see that Timothee Chalamet biopic on Dylan (I haven't seen it yet). Although my generation missed the horrors of WWII, it seems that our capacity for violence did not abate in the subsequent decades, and peace is as elusive as ever.

Your letter introduced me to two more new things: the term Silvester Spruch, which I had never heard before, and the poet/writer Erich Kästner, whom I also hadn't heard of, though I now know he had been nominated several times for the Nobel Prize in Literature. It seems my only connection to his work was through two Hollywood film versions of *The Parent Trap* (both of which I had seen and enjoyed), which were based on his children's novel *Lisa and Lottie*.

I do like the idea of the Silvester Spruch, especially the one you shared by Kästner. It seems that here we simply tend to pass along the formulaic greetings. If I might try one, not in the least bit truly poetic:

"May time-worn thoughts be far and few, And this year's days be timelessly new."

All the best, Friedrich.

With affection, Hillary Hillary Rodrigues rodrigues@uleth.ca

### K: The Energy of Silence Breaks the Conditioning of the Past

When the mind is silent that silence is a new dimension, and when there is any rampant pettiness it is instantly dissolved, because the mind has now a different quality of energy which is not the energy engendered by the past. This is what matters: to have that energy that dispels the carrying over of the past. The carrying over of the past is a different kind of energy. The silence wipes the other out; the greater absorbs the lesser and remains untouched. It is like the sea, receiving the dirty river and remaining pure. This is what matters. It is only this energy that can wipe away the past. Either there is silence or the noise of the past. In this silence the noise ceases and the new is this silence. It is not that you are made new. This silence is infinite and the past is limited. The conditioning of the past breaks down in the fullness of silence.

'Tradition' *The Urgency of Change*, pg. 111

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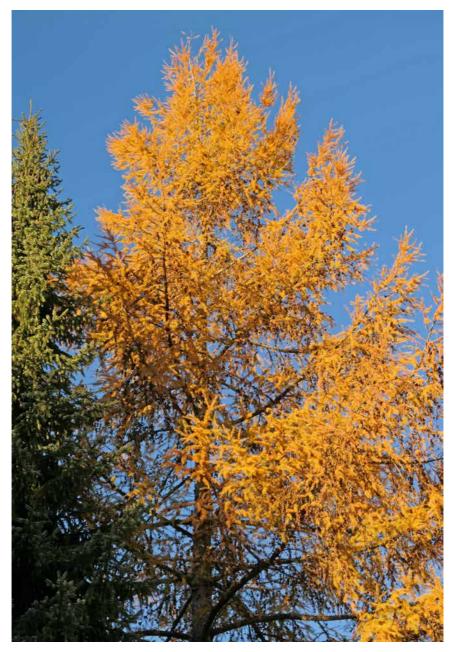
# **Meeting and Photographing K**

Monday, 27 May 2024

# Dear Friedrich and friends,

I've been digitizing the pictures I took of Krishnamurti in London, Saanen, India and Brockwood between 1968 and 1972. Black and white prints and duplicate transparencies were of course circulated to the Foundations soon after I took them. I have now scanned a wider selection of pictures at these locations.

The copyright to the pictures was assigned to the Krishnamurti Foundations many years ago. I will send the high-resolution files to Brockwood when they are all scanned, retouched and captioned.



European larch, autumn

I understand these will be available to all the Foundations on the shared Foundation server.

I first photographed K at the Saanen Gatherings in 1968. I had just left Guildford School of Art where I studied photography, so this was my first assignment. Later that year, at Mary Lutyens' request, I photographed K in London at the White House Hotel. She wanted a portrait of him for the first Bulletin which she and Mary Cadogan were working on.

Krishnamurti was in the lobby when I arrived; I noticed that he looked surprised to see me. I learned later that he had asked Alain Naudé to cancel my appointment due to many urgent meetings arranged that day to establish the Krishnamurti Foundation Trust and discuss starting a school in the UK. Alain rang my home, but because I have a lifelong horror of being late, I'd already left.

Despite being cancelled, K very kindly took me to the lift. When the doors closed, he looked at me in complete silence. I felt him observe every aspect of my nature. I understood that I could 'close the curtains' if I didn't want to let him see me. This invitation to close the curtains was not imaginary, it was palpable. I chose to remain open to this extraordinary, perceptive man. This will be familiar to everyone who met K. I was to experience his silent, unchallenging look many times over the years when I met him. It was always a remarkable experience.

I was 21, enthusiastically caught up in the 1960s youth movement which was busy sweeping away the grey, post war world we had grown up in. At that time, K was very much a part of the cultural landscape in the UK and young people were increasingly drawn to his talks. He was pointing to something beyond the exciting changes we were exploring. His message was beyond our grasp, but we felt the truth of what he said, and that kept us returning to his talks. One thing that registered with me was the profound limitations of the reforms and changes we were agitating for. That was a lesson of great value; it opened the door to a deeper understanding to the challenges we were facing.

I was able to take a few photographs of K and his associates at the White House Hotel in between the meetings. As I was preparing to leave, he came up to me and held my wrist very gently: "What are you going to do Sir?" I told him I had left Art School and was planning to drive to India. He replied very quietly, his words were breathed rather than spoken, "That would be a very good thing to do". All the anxiety about this huge journey from London to India in a very old Land Rover evaporated. Then he asked a friend visiting from India, Mrs Jayalakshmi, to come over, "Ammaji, Mark is coming to India, and he is going to need your help. Can he stay with you when he comes to Madras". She very kindly agreed but it would have been hard to refuse K. He told me very seriously to write her address down and keep it carefully.

Fortunately, I did because I really needed her help when I got to Madras in April 1969. A postal strike in the UK meant that I could not get money owed to me. When I arrived in Madras, I had just enough change to get to her home in Adyar. Being penniless abroad is always terrifying, and I was on the edge of my seat on the way to Mrs Jayalakshmi's address. I'd written asking if I could stay with her, but I didn't know that she never wrote letters. I had no idea if the door would open. My relief when she welcomed me into her beautiful home was overwhelming – I was deeply touched by her kindness. She showed me to the guest bedroom, but I couldn't understand that I was to sleep there. I'd been living in very, very cheap accommodation for six months, so to find myself in a beautiful clean room, being cared for by this shy, very kind lady was too good to be true.

In the evenings we sat together in her living room, and she talked about K, his capacity to heal people and the deep insight he had into the men and women who visited him for help with their problems. His sensitivity extended into what seemed like magical realms. Her own story of meeting K illustrated this. They became friends and on one occasion he told her to sell her jewellery, her only financial security, and buy a plot of land opposite Vasanta Vihar. When he returned to Madras, she had bought the land but had no money. "Don't worry," he said, "You will see what

happens". A few days later she was approached by a representative from the US Consulate who wanted to buy a quarter of the plot of land she had bought. He was prepared to pay the price she had paid for the whole plot. "Now you must build a house" K told her. He marked out the perimeter, where the doors and windows should be, and explained all the details of the building. Then he left India for the next stop on his journey, leaving her to get planning permission, find workmen, and solve all the practical problems involved in building a house. When K returned, it was finished. That year K was not able to stay in Vasanta Vihar because the ownership was in dispute. Rajagopal was claiming it as part of KWINC assets, but K was able to stay across the road as her guest.

In December of that year (1969) I joined a small group of people, mostly about my age, but it included Donald Ingram Smith, a well-known Australian radio broadcaster, to travel with K on his talks in Delhi, Rajghat, Bombay, Madras and Rishi Valley. It was a wonderful experience. K found time to meet with our small group every few days for more personal discussions.

I also want to acknowledge a debt of gratitude to Pupul. She asked me to take photographs of K during this tour of India. It would not have been possible if she had not arranged it. But she helped me in another way; she played a vital role in the development of handwoven textiles and crafts in India. She commissioned me to take photographs in remote parts of the country with an artist who had cycled from Assam to the southern tip of India – a five-year journey. He discovered handicrafts never seen before and became a close friend. Those assignments helped support me financially and took me to fascinating parts of India.

All best wishes,

Mark

Mark Edwards

mark@hardrainproject.com

## **OBITUARY**

### K: There Is No Flowering if There Is No Ending

Every thought and feeling must flower for them to live and die; flowering of everything in you, the ambition, the greed, the hate, the joy, the passion; in the flowering there is their death and freedom. It is only in freedom that anything can flourish, not in suppression, in control and discipline; these only pervert, corrupt. Flowering and freedom is goodness and all virtue. To allow envy to flower is not easy; it is condemned or cherished but never given freedom. It is only in freedom the fact of envy reveals its colour, its shape, its depth, its peculiarities; if suppressed it will not reveal itself fully and freely. When it has shown itself completely, there is an ending of it only to reveal another fact, emptiness, loneliness, fear; and as each fact is allowed to flower, in freedom, in its entirety, the conflict between the observer and the observed ceases; there is no longer the censor but only observation, only seeing. Freedom can only be in completion, not in repetition, suppression, obedience to a pattern of thought. There is completion only in flowering and dying; there is no flowering if there is no ending. What has continuity is thought in time. The flowering of thought is the ending of thought, for only in death is there the new. The new cannot be if there is no freedom from the known. Thought, the old, cannot bring into being the new; it must die for the new to be.

> Rishi Valley, 17 November 1961 *Krishnamurti's Notebook,* pp. 244–245 © 2003 by Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd.

# Friedrich Grohe (1929-2025)

ans Arthur Friedrich Grohe, who, like his father, was called Friedrich, was born in the Black Forest town of Schiltach, Germany on 22 September 1929. He was the first child of Ruth Reymond Grohe and Karl Otto Friedrich Grohe. His father was the founder of GROHE ARMATUREN, the company that grew to become GROHE (for a brief time it was called FRIEDRICH GROHE). His father's father had earlier begun building up the company known as HANSGROHE. Friedrich spent his first five years playing beside the HANSGROHE factory, becoming familiar with its noises and smells.

During the Second World War he was sent to study in Davos, Switzerland, where his favourite 'subject' was skiing. But at home during school holidays, he experienced another reality: hundreds of bombers thundering overhead and the occasional bomb exploding nearby. At night the horizon would be on fire, a hint of burning cities. Such glimpses of the horror of war made a deep impression on him. The larger reality of the war became known to him only later.

A few years after the end of the war, his immediate family – including younger siblings Yvonne and Bernd – moved to South Africa, where another brother, Charles, would be born. There, with the help of local and German workers, a new branch of the family business was established near Johannesburg. Repelled by apartheid, Friedrich stayed less than a year.

For a while he studied economics at St. Gallen and Cologne. More suited to practicalities, he soon began training at GROHE ARMATUREN, learning over a period of five years, from the ground up, the workings of each department. He joined the company officially in 1954, and in 1959 his father appointed him, aged 29, to head the newest branch of the business, GROHE THERMOSTAT. Within three years it had grown larger than the parent company. At 33, he was appointed head of all of GROHE in Germany, with 2,000 employees.

As GROHE flourished, so did disagreements between father and son. Eventually Friedrich was made to move to Vienna to head a newly acquired factory there. It developed rapidly. He began collecting art, befriending artists such as Hundertwasser, Ernst Fuchs and Arik Brauer of the Vienna School of Fantastic Realism. In 1968, his father sold a majority stake in GROHE to ITT, a move that ushered Friedrich out of the business world.

At first dismayed, then relieved, he relocated with his own family – Inge and their two young sons, Christoph and John – to Switzerland, home of his mother's family. There he spent years climbing and highmountain ski-touring. After this period there were long, daily hikes in "glorious nature". He took to landscape photography, delighting in the ever-changing light on mountains, trees and water.

In 1980 a friend handed him a Krishnamurti book that would speak to him profoundly. He met Krishnamurti in 1983 and was made a trustee, remaining actively involved with the foundations, centres and schools until he could no longer travel. In one of his final letters he wrote, "Recently I dreamed that I lived in a wonderful country with hills and lots of snow. It was a peaceful place without conflict between 'what is' and 'what should be'. This reconfirmed to me that the only solution for the world is to educate human beings to be free and non-selfish."

He wrote two memoirs: *The Beauty of the Mountain – memories of J. Krishnamurti* (in several languages) and *Memoir at 95*. Both can be found at friedrichgrohe.com. What he wrote in these books, and in years of Newsletters and prolific correspondence, came from a deep, life-long interest in bringing people together. Perhaps this is why he was especially drawn to these observations by Krishnamurti:

"Love is not at the end of time. Either it is now, or it isn't."

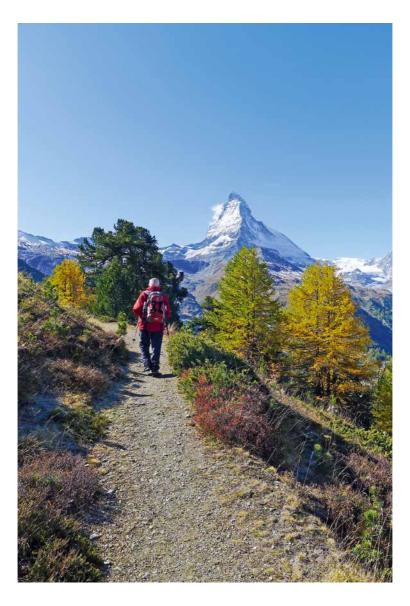
and

"Love has no cause."

#### K: That Which Is, is Sacred

So there is that sacred thing, not in the things that man has put together, but which comes into being when man cuts himself off entirely from the past, which is memory. This does not mean that man becomes absentminded, he must have memory in a certain direction, but that memory will be found to be part of this whole state in which there is no relation with the past. And that cessation of the past can only be when you see things as they are and come directly in contact with them – as with that marvelous sunset. Then out of this order, discipline, virtue, there comes into being love. Love is tremendously passionate and therefore it acts immediately. It has no time interval between the seeing and the doing. And when you have that love you can put away all your sacred books, all your gods. And you have to put away your sacred books, your gods, your everyday ambitions, to come upon that love. That is the only sacred thing there is. And to come upon it, goodness must flower. Goodness can only flower in freedom, not in tradition. The world needs change, you need tremendous revolution in yourself; the world needs this tremendous revolution (not economic, Communist, bloody revolution that man has tried throughout history, that has only led him to more misery). But we do need fundamental, psychological revolution, and this revolution is order. And order is peace; and this order, with its virtue and peace, can only come about when you come directly into contact with disorder in your daily life. Then out of that blossoms goodness and then there will be no seeking anymore. For that which is, is sacred.

*The Awakening of Intelligence,* pp. 216–217 © 1973 by Krishnamurti Foundation Trust Ltd.



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