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**THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF COMPASSION:  
A STUDY IN THE TEACHINGS OF J. KRISHNAMURTI**

by

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A Study in the Teachings of Jiddu Krishnamurti"  
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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

I have drunk at the clear and pure waters at the source of the fountain of life and my thirst was appeased. Never could I be thirsty, never more could I be in utter darkness. I have seen the light. I have touched compassion which heals all sorrow and suffering; it is not for myself, but for the world...<sup>1</sup>

Presently, we are facing an interesting paradox concerning philosophical and religious aspirations. On the one hand, a massive abundance of literature on metaphysics, spirituality, and the occult is available to readers, in addition to religious books and scriptures from all faiths which have been translated and made readily available across continents. Despite this profusion of spiritually oriented material, challenging and meaningful questions no longer seem to find satisfactory answers, especially when it comes to modern moral and existential problems. The frustration seems to grow in proportion to the amount of writing produced. Swami Yogananda's remark seems timely: "Silence is what the whole world needs." On the other hand, what this situation shows is the urgency of a psycho-

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<sup>1</sup> Evelyn Blau. Krishnamurti 100 years. New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1995, p. 34.

spiritual longing, as well as a desire to explore modes of communication other than conceptual and verbal. Whoever feels the potential strength of humanness is bound to ask questions at some point, in privacy or in times of crisis, perhaps during what might be a breakthrough, a period when one feels suddenly more conscious. But in the context of philosophy and religion, the word "psyche" does not explicitly indicate whether different modes of knowing exist, or if it might even be possible to access new realms of perception.

Yet, to say that a shift in consciousness is occurring at the turn of the millennium sounds like a publicity for a New Age magazine. Nevertheless, a form of deep scrutiny about the religious needs of our time is what lies beneath tentative statements on the spirit. For example, I find it very revealing that the following sentence would appear in the most widely read journal on education in the United States: "If anything characterizes modernity, it is a loss of faith in transcendence, in a reality that encompasses but surpasses our quotidian affairs."<sup>2</sup> If this were not clear enough, famous television presenter and commentator Bill Moyers is even more convincing: "Any journalist worth his or her salt knows the real story today is to define what it means to be spiritual. This is the biggest story, not only of the decade but of the century."

Besides the pertinence of the philosophical observations brought by postmodernism, even a superficial overview of the

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<sup>2</sup> In "The Chronicle of Higher Education" (Jan. 9, 1978).

current publications on religion, spirituality, parapsychology, modern science, and the healing arts tends to indicate a pressing need for many cultures to contribute to their own psychological recovery from a world shaped and ruled by thought. However discreet this aspiration might be, one might think that it surely deserves adequate consideration and mature sustainment.

a) The Reason for this thesis

My experience of living in eight very different countries over two decades, combined with a non-conformist lifestyle, has been an excellent tool for learning how to be my own source of support in times of deep external and internal struggles. I could report at length about my witnessing, and sharing to some extent, the cruelest aspects of human suffering in remote parts of the world. But I can only say here that all were variations on the forms of injustice and poverty brought about by greed and many unconscious quests for personal self-aggrandizement. My own feelings of perplexity and anxiety arose in the form of negative emotions and reactions to extreme conditions in the world. It seemed obvious to me at the time that a civilization which develops technology to kill human beings for mere ideologies, breeds and slaughters animals for overconsumption of foods, and pollutes air and waters with an outrageous wastage of goods would be willing to find ways to observe itself courageously...

Like we are told in Buddhist philosophy, human suffering is the result of cause and effect. People suffer primarily because

of the limits of the thinking mind; we doubt, fear, and kill not because we are born violent, but because of the struggle involved in seeing ourselves and external conditions as they are.

Paradoxically, there is also a strong, persistent and broad reluctance to accept that there is more than what is seen on this level of reality. Even the world greatest philosophers, with all the insights which transpire from them, rarely mention the possibility of infinity as an actuality. It would seem evident, however, that the finitude of concepts is what might be inadequate to deepen one's Being into Truth.

It finally occurred to me, during occasional experiences of silence, that the rise of kindness (objective and subjective) happens in direct observation unobstructed by thought. This movement of the integrated mind and heart is the way in which compassion manifests itself. From this stage on, what was left to do was finding the means and inspiration to connect the movement with action. During the course of my formal and informal studies in philosophy and religion, I had the privilege to meet several individuals whose life was transformed by the books and talks of Jiddu Krishnamurti. Krishnamurti shows that resistance stops in the movement of a quiet mind. Consequently, after conscientious debating, I have chosen to reflect on these teachings in the context of an academic essay. I find that the mission of a great teacher in any discipline is to convey a practical understanding of the core of humanness; one should be able to find, in the words of a teacher, an inner intensity and a

comprehension which can modify everyday living. For those individuals I know personally, including myself, reading Krishnamurti has been, and continues to be, a life-changing event.

There are other reasons for choosing Krishnamurti besides my own resonance with his work. From the books, Krishnamurti may appear as a contemporary version of the classic mystic, as well as a great humanist. But can the man really be labeled as such, or labeled as anything? Together with a few great ones of the same generation (I would like to mention among others Sri Aurobindo, Karlfried Graf Dürckheim, Bede Griffiths, D.T. Suzuki and Lama Anagarika Govinda), Krishnamurti had a specific message to deliver to humanity. I also find that the essential elements of the wisdom heritage of the East are embodied by Krishnamurti in a distinctive blend of modern, universal insights. Furthermore, it seems to me rather pertinent to show, at a time when the subject of metaphysics continues to be misinterpreted or disregarded, that Krishnamurti is an awakener, a kind of "wisdom activist", at times shocking, but who undoubtedly takes readers and listeners far beyond the limits and conventions of modern intellectual and psychological thinking. On the twentieth century philosophical scene, nobody seems to have, quite like him, gone so far as to eliminate drastically the dependence on religion, spiritual guidance, traditional psychology, and intellectual pursuit.

Seeing the dilemmas of the societies which over-emphasize materialistic achievements and are, more than ever in human history, psychologically conditioned and brutally disconnected from the natural world, it seems crucial to relate a positive message in a language which is coherent, modern, and scientifically sound. But it is also urgent to understand that the demands for peace and sanity go hand-in-hand with the growth of the fully human. Tibetan monks might say that the spiritual pulse of humanity is dangerously low. I feel like saying with many others that "The Age of Reason" has obviously given birth to "The Age of Transition". However, I strongly believe that this period is beneficial and fully conducive to an era of peace, elegance and simplicity.

b) Description of the Theme Explored

It is my premise in this thesis to explain how global psycho-spiritual change would manifest as a source of compassionate well-being; by that I mean that compassion is to become a factual element of life which will transpire as a new form of intelligence. Knowing compassion implies the encounter with consciousness--here encompassing the totality of the human mind--without the pressure to achieve the holy and the spiritual in idealistic ways. Krishnamurti showed that the numinous can be personified as compassion without the organization of a religious dogmatic canvas in the background. The "ontological hierarchy",

an expression used by Huston Smith<sup>3</sup> as being the model for religious thought, seems to have lost most of its relevance in the past few decades. Not only has this happened based on scientific grounds but, more importantly, because the assumptions of various religious doctrines look more and more deceptive to the subjectivity of modern civilization, thereby failing to fulfill the psycho-spiritual needs of peoples eager to share a sense of wholeness behind race and gender.

To express the actuality of the spiritual longing, to describe the nature of compassion as a foundation for personal ethic, and to communicate the significance of psychological freedom as Krishnamurti saw it, is the major attempt of this thesis. It is my opinion that Krishnamurti's endeavor with humanity is a plea for the realization in practice of the non-conceptual mode of being. For almost 70 years, in front of audiences worldwide, he kept raising with astonishing control the questions related to the bondage created by thought. He rarely ever exhausted the patience or the curiosity of his listeners. Nor did he ever impose his ideas in any way. Because the range of his topics is practical and universal, for many they often take the form of psychological healing, an issue he would raise and question with listeners. For Krishnamurti refused vehemently to be categorized as a philosopher or a spiritual guide, much less as a scholar. I personally see him as a human being with an

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<sup>3</sup> Huston Smith. Essays on World Religion, ed. M. Darroll Bryant. New York: Paragon House, 1992, p. 263.

astonishing level of awareness, who continually shared his insights with tremendous grace and passion. In other words, the man was so exceptionally centered in his own being, and so completely devoid of self-interest, that he became a mirror for the ones eager to look and to listen, giving freely and effortlessly what was inherently part of his deepest self.

I also maintain with him that the ability to show openness and the power to connect are the components of the compassion which we want to see spreading in the world. The theme of connection is mostly relevant to this thesis in the sense that it is a crucial component of the energy that human beings can share. Energy as the texture, the very substance of consciousness will appear here in the analysis of mind research which is associated with the non-orthodox, non-mechanistic aspects of the current scientific world view. The days are bound to disappear when the appeal of technology is taking the place of altruistic creativity. Human beings wish to contribute in practical ways to the well-being of their communities; with their whole selves, they want to share and cooperate with each others in maintaining a holistic quality of life.

Many Krishnamurti readers trust that a harmonious future rests for the large part in the dedication of those educators who are willing to bring back into the schools the foundational aspects of learning: the love of wisdom and the love of life observation. Philosophy has been the traditional means given to this pursuit, but in recent time it has become an academic luxury

for wealthy students, or, in the best of cases, the profession reserved to introverted intellectuals. This attitude seems to be mostly caused by the nature of economical and technological demands on modern society. The fear that most economies would collapse should unproductive studying such as philosophy become a larger part of schools' curricula is an important factor behind the loss of motivation for self-knowledge. Fortunately, a considerable amount of technology and business is used to the effect of improving the lives of the ones in need. But as we are learning it everyday, technology on its own cannot substitute for healing processes, healing hands, and listening ears. To stress the point, I would also comment on the unprecedented way in which Krishnamurti lived the truth he had witnessed. Krishnamurti takes the western views of ontology, epistemology, and pragmatism--namely the correspondence theory, the pragmatic theory, and the coherence theory of truth--encompassing and transcending each of them unconditionally. To see truth is to act rightly without having to look for the corresponding event in the act performed. Truth lasts, while what is not true transits temporarily into existence. The numinous, the ontological, the transcendent are all part of existential freedom, in absolute harmony and synchronicity with what the Indian tradition calls "Buddhi": the intuitive intellect, or awareness. This is why Krishnamurti could say that compassion is a form of intelligence, perfectly pure intentionality having practical results.

Sharon Salzberg, co-founder of, and instructor at the Barre Center for Buddhist Studies in Massachusetts, insists on the factual aspect of knowing our oneness, as opposed to visualizing its appropriate occurrence in our lives. Compassion is usually misinterpreted or misconstrued in individual minds. Fear, guilt, anger, or aversion are the unbalanced poles of energy which lead to suffering and unfairness, making of compassion an impossibility. Compassion can only manifest when integration of body, mind and psyche activates intelligence. In the context of Western culture especially, it is of extreme difficulty to perceive situations, intellectually and emotionally, in a non-dualistic way, that is without insisting on the aspects of opposition. The alternative attitude for integration to occur would consist in seeing the causes of suffering through non-judgmental discrimination.

c) The present state of the scholarship on Krishnamurti

Krishnamurti died ten years ago, on February 17, 1986. Over this past decade, only few scholarly essays on his works have been written, whether in the field of philosophy, religious studies, or literature. Philosophically speaking, Krishnamurti followed no methodology, no argumentation, and no academic standards. Therefore, it is understandable that most scholars would not be interested in debating with his ideas. But it is somewhat surprising that little academic work has been undertaken about someone who had specific and unorthodox views about

education. Perhaps a major reason for ignoring him is that an analytical approach to his writings is deceiving, since it contradicts his essential argument of freedom from thought. Another reason for ignoring his work, and a consequence of the latter, is that Krishnamurti raises questions and gives few answers, arguing that most questions contain their own answers. This attitude does not provide the necessary ground for the analytical review which would contain the level of reflection expected from classical scholarly works. In addition to the above, Krishnamurti at times sounds redundant, impatient, or cryptic. To a certain extent, part of what he communicates seems to be that human consciousness can, and should be observed, as opposed to being analyzed. Self-realization cannot be solely intellectual, nor can it be organized and supervised. These comments should not be interpreted as negative criticism on my part of the existing scholarship on Krishnamurti. I simply want to say that mine is an attempt to let go of analysis and academic style for the purpose of demonstrating the possibility of loving-kindness emerging from the non-conceptual. I feel that it would be out of place here to explain which ideologies do not apply and why. Writing about compassion may well be a presumptuous and superfluous endeavor. I accept the challenge, taking into consideration the fact that Krishnamurti continues to bring peace of mind to many individuals near and far.

To my knowledge, at the time of this preparation, there are three major theses written about Krishnamurti, one of which a

Master's degree thesis<sup>4</sup> by Professor Hillary Rodrigues, a major scholar on Krishnamurti and long time student. Dr. Rodrigues is currently Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta, Canada. His thesis is the most penetrating and comprehensive study done on Krishnamurti to this date.

In June of 1969, a doctoral dissertation was written by Mr. Yvon Achard at the University of Grenoble, France, on "The Spiritual Evolution of Krishnamurti and the Evolution of his Language". It was published in 1970 by Le Courrier du Livre in Paris under the title: Le Language de Krishnamurti. Another book by the same author had been previously published by Editions Dervy, called: Krishnamurti, Le Miroir des Hommes, in which the basic teachings were presented. The thesis is a formulation of Krishnamurti's understanding of the barrier of language and the perils involved in using words to convey the essence of questions on the meaning of life, of knowledge, and of ideas. "The word is not the thing," Krishnamurti used to say, concerned that the screen created by words is part of the failure of world organizations--political and religious especially--to communicate the truth.

A third doctoral thesis in the contribution of Louis Nduwumami, from Zaire, has been published under the title of: Krishnamurti et l'Education, by Editions du Rocher, in 1991.

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<sup>4</sup> Hillary Rodrigues. Insight and the Religious Mind. An Analysis of Krishnamurti's thought. American University Studies. New York: Peter Lang, 1990.

Unfortunately, I was unable to obtain more information from the Krishnamurti Archives in California about the specificity of this work.

As mentioned before, because of the reluctance of sympathetic, cautious scholars to make undue interpretation of Krishnamurti's writings, a general tendency seems to exist: non-scholars do most of the writing, whether they are supportive to the content of the teachings or not. As examples of this tendency, one can cite the book by Rhada Rajagopal Sloss<sup>5</sup> concerning the major aspects of Krishnamurti's personal life. In addition to this recent publication, two important, moving biographies came out of press in 1995: the first by Evelyne Blau<sup>6</sup> on the occasion of the centennial of Krishnamurti's birth, with various book signings and presentations in major cities in the United States. Another is a remarkable book of photographs and commentaries<sup>7</sup>. Other publications<sup>8</sup>, while very positive, are comparative studies of religion, or series of interviews with Krishnamurti<sup>9</sup>. At the time I gather this information, another

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<sup>5</sup> Rhada Rajagopal Sloss. Lives in the Shadows with J. Krishnamurti. New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1991.

<sup>6</sup> Evelyne Blau. Krishnamurti 100 Years. New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1995.

<sup>7</sup> One Thousand Suns. Krishnamurti at eighty-five and the last walk. Aperture, 1995.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Powell. The Great Awakening. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1983.

<sup>9</sup> Lakshmi Prasad. Conversations with J. Krishnamurti. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1990.

book is coming out<sup>10</sup>, debating pressing issues in ecology and ethics. One must also mention the various unconventional ways in which Krishnamurti is either taught or quoted by scholars. Like Dr. Rodrigues in Canada, there are approximately a hundred universities in America where Krishnamurti's ideas are introduced within the official curriculum in Philosophy and Religion. During the centennial year, in 1995, it was discovered during several conferences and seminars that a large number of individuals in academic circles, including graduate school students, are using the ideas of Krishnamurti in their courses. This conference, to which I participated, was organized by the Department of Philosophy at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, and was attended by ninety scholars from the United States, Europe, and India. The opening remarks were given by Professor Ninian Smart, one of the most renowned scholars on world religions in the United States. The papers presented at the conference will be published as an anthology, in 1997.

In view of these contributions, my research seems somewhat intriguing. As previously mentioned, Krishnamurti does not, in my opinion, fit in the categories of religious thinker, philosopher, or humanist. He never declared to pertain to one field of studies in particular. To respect his personality, and his desire to deliver his views without intellectual boundaries,

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<sup>10</sup> Questioning Krishnamurti. Krishnamurti in dialogue with leading twentieth-century thinkers including Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, Iris Murdoch, Renée Weber, Huston Smith, David Bohm. San Francisco, CA: Thorsons, 1996.

I deemed it necessary to comment upon the realization in practice of what he touched with outstanding conviction and inner clarity. This explains in part why I chose the topic of compassion rather than other existential issues such as anger, fear, or death:

...There is no path, no system, but a mind that has really discarded every form of human system, human structure, or dogma, or invention, or illusion, or tremendous hope for something and that hope creating complicated illusions. When you have put all that away, and you must obviously, then only you are really honest. What then is that which they have all talked about? You understand, Sir? The real teachers...have always touched on it. Never put it into words. They say it is there. I know it is there. It is there.<sup>11</sup>

d) The Route

Perhaps it is the combination of the anti-conformist nature of Krishnamurti together with my aloofness from scholarly pursuits which dictate the content of this thesis. The point is, the legacy of written and spoken works from Krishnamurti could hardly be examined under the typical academic format. I would go as far as saying that doing scholarly research on Krishnamurti is a contradiction in terms, since academic writing is by all means highly conceptual. Furthermore, my perception of Krishnamurti would not allow to undertake a strictly orthodox theoretical study in full integrity. I simply never thought that I would be capable to communicate the correct message of the teachings with adequate interpretation of the meaning and content. And yet, I

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<sup>11</sup> Transcript of tape-recorded conversations between Krishnamurti and KFA Trustees on January 9, 1972 and March 1, 1972. These conversations were held specifically to question Krishnamurti on his own self-perception.

felt over the years an attraction for the books which compelled me to share the implications of a holistic way of looking at intelligence.

The selection of Krishnamurti's writings among his contemporaries in the field of literature on spirituality is at least threefold. However, this choice is not just the result of scrupulous research of the territory which other great religious thinkers, who had much to teach in terms of the non-conceptual, have touched. These, but also some of Krishnamurti's less known contemporaries, friends and acquaintances, are frequently quoted in the thesis.

1. In order to familiarize the reader with the value of the "no-path" and the importance of self-reliance necessary to understand the connections which are the root of compassionate living, one needs to relate the audacious character of Krishnamurti's proposition to let go of thought as the sole valid system of inquiry, and to investigate into the totality of mind. Krishnamurti is explicit without having to rely essentially on the mystical experience. Rarely in modern days has the nature of freedom been so succinctly debated without ample philosophical jargon. While traditional philosophical analysis is undoubtedly helpful, it is less accessible or pleasing to the general public. One of the major features of freedom is to allow the individual to connect, thereby manifesting compassion. Krishnamurti explains the origin of such freedom. This in itself should be important enough for the legacy of his insights to be passed on.

It also seems to be the case that the work can serve as a canvas for educational purposes, and as a trigger for developing lasting personal ethics.

2. The importance that Krishnamurti's teachings represent as a tool for holistic education is highly relevant today. I was aware, in raising the issue of educating the whole person, that the Rudolf Steiner and the Waldorf schools for example are no futile efforts toward the same goal. However, the argument here is not about the most productive form of education, but rather how to establish a holistic education which would provide durable sustainment of psycho-spiritual sanity over a lifetime. How people can become more conscious, and how psychological change can become universal is what Krishnamurti seems to have appropriately answered in his talks. His many conversations, public and private interviews with leading scientists and educators, are testimonies that a real change is possible in the ways we learn, teach, and support, not only younger generations, but each other, continually. It was Krishnamurti's wish that what he perceived as the understanding of truth should be the foundation for a transformational, transpersonal education. He himself founded a High School system which is now operated by the Krishnamurti Foundation of America in Ojai, California. In 1994, the opening of the Ojai Institute dedicated to the organization of regular retreats and workshops to study the teachings is an opening toward graduate adult education.

3. The universality and the relevance for postmodern society of the issues Krishnamurti dealt with require proper insertion within the framework of New Age introspection into the spiritual domain. Because the content of the talks is as comprehensive as it is non-judgmental, it greatly resonates with the preoccupations of the fastly growing New Age community. Krishnamurti's teachings encompass the spectrum of human life issues in an uncomplicated and straightforward way. His manner of speech was direct, convincing, yet gentle and participatory, even if at times he could be demanding and brisk with his listeners. Krishnamurti could then be seen as a gentle guide or a genial teacher, describing in plain English a transformational state of being.

Based on this description of the teachings, it seems necessary to point out the distinction between traditional philosophy and "philosophical therapy". To this effect, tracing back the cultural roots of Krishnamurti to India and the ancient Vedic philosophy appeared useful. The inclusiveness which characterizes Indian philosophical systems is greatly enhanced by the art of Yoga, which was once practiced as a very refined form of self-knowledge. The purpose of yoga does not admonish to acquire extended knowledge; the purpose of yoga is to know how to live with certain categories of knowledge and memory. Like the ancient Yogis, Krishnamurti says that truth exists prior to all knowledge. If yoga is the practice, compassion is the result. Maybe the new forms which yoga is taking in the western world,

linked to a growing interest in its therapeutic uses, might contribute to the materialization of the change which Krishnamurti expected from a deeper understanding of the psyche. I find that the teachings can have serious applications in art therapy and body-movement therapy by integrating observation and the cultivation of awareness.

As Krishnamurti underlines it, freedom from concepts comes at the very beginning of the journey, not at the end, and it requires no less than total change. Like the person in Plato's cave, freedom comes when one makes a 180 degrees turn toward the sunlight. But Krishnamurti starts where the mystics have left us, because out of psychological change attention, intention, and action will inevitably follow in the world. The formless energy of consciousness materializes into intelligent behavior. For thought is a system grounded in time, and therefore does not provide psychological freedom. Thought is a valid mode of operation on the physical plane, with all the applications it provides to the sciences and the humanities. From postmodern philosophy, we are learning how language, as a product of thought, impedes the possibility of silence, which is a prerequisite for the mind to operate fully: truth and goodness are present in the simplicity of a mind which is empty of thoughts. There is nothing esoteric implied in this statement. A mind at rest, a quiet mind, is authentic and capable of the most intelligent decisions.

In the effort to consciously grow, we have the cooperation of science, especially modern physics, pointing at the need to explore the universe through purposeful and accurate questioning. Nothing in Quantum Physics leads to certainty, nor is any part of the universe made of entirely mechanistic operations. But a renewal of scientific curiosity and inquiry, together with an optimistic sense of adventure, are essential. Concentration on chaos theories presently abound on the scientific scene. If a gigantic step toward the progress of humanity, perhaps sooner than we think, is to be taken, it may appear in the form of a startling discovery concerning the nature of time, and the yet unknown dimensions of consciousness. A discovery of that caliber could shake the world in a drastic way, bringing peoples together across geographical borders and, more importantly, beyond psychological boundaries. It would probably overthrow the current persistent patterns to follow paradigms and models. It feels as though Krishnamurti had wanted to open for us a window to this sense of inquisitive passion which would liberate the world from an unproductive, negative practice of individualism.

The topics of discussion which are chosen by Krishnamurti are very basic in nature, and were covered over a period of approximately 70 years of public speaking. For the purpose of this work, I have selected seven generic themes. In the format I follow, I try to approach each topic in a broad discursive

way.<sup>12</sup> However, the last part of each chapter usually consists of commentaries on the teachings of Krishnamurti, showing how the same questions would be approached from his angle. Each topic is expected to take the reader steadily from abstractness to practicality, mapping a territory which covers the invisible and unknowable domains of consciousness, and eventually takes one toward a realistic, not idealistic, place for compassionate well-being. It should become evident that the transformation of the thinking process has factual consequences for the individual and the environment.

Most of the subjects in the chapters had been part of original dialogues between Krishnamurti and scholars in different fields such as physics, mathematics, neurobiology, psychiatry, philosophy and religion, started on his own initiative, or upon requests of interlocutors and participants. The choice of these topics is based on what I perceive as potential areas of interest for further study in the science of mind in the next decades. However unconscious the desire to become fully human might be, conscious maturity constitutes a legitimate quest for modern societies. We all crave for intelligent forms of creativity, and for compassionate, not co-dependent, relationships in a world psychologically renewed. The momentum and the magnitude of this preoccupation show the urgency to find practical ways for

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<sup>12</sup> If the phraseology I use all along this thesis seems somewhat strikingly similar to Krishnamurti's linguistic style, I can only admit that it is a tendency which has been with me for many years and occurs even during casual conversations with other students of Krishnamurti, and during lectures.

educational reforms, for new directions in science, for sensical commercial and monetary plans, and for the rise of an authentic desire for peace.

e) Overview of the Thesis

It is my intention to limit the scope of the dissertation to the following themes and format:

- Chapter 2 is a description of the philosophical approaches of immanence and transcendence. While the first part describes immanence in a somewhat existentialist way, the section on transcendence leans on its counterpart in spirituality. The answer from Krishnamurti suggests a free and tangible mode of looking at the mind, which rejoins the misconceptualization of an immanent and a transcendent reality. The nature of "What-Is" is Krishnamurti's answer to our relationship with reality.

- In Chapter 3, a major element of the teachings is analyzed: The release from all forms of conditioning and co-dependence on socio-cultural influences without which there can be no lasting personal development. Most psychological fears are grounded in belief-systems which are semi-private, and at times so insidious or covert they can hardly be dealt with emotionally or intellectually. Modern forms of conditioning bring back memories of the Socratic imperative of "Know Thyself" as well as the Buddhist admonition of "Be a Lamp unto Yourself." However, freedom from conditioning is more than a leitmotif in Krishnamurti's talks; as a matter of fact, it is the conditio

sine qua non, the very first occurrence necessary for any work to be achieved successfully. The intention behind facing the "Challenge of Change" is what ultimately leads the individual into a powerful form of intelligence and, consequently, to the realization of global peaceful living.

- Chapter 4 is a depiction of the internal and external tensions inherent to the imperative to reciprocate feelings and ideas through human communication. It is the story of relationships without which nobody can survive, and which consist of a participatory mirroring activity. The distinction between verbal and non-verbal modes of expression, intertwined with the deep unconscious, is a source of conflict which may, or may not, appear clearly. Like belief-systems which are a source of fear, conflicts are a source of anger, guilt, and low self-esteem. All conflicts degenerate in misuse of energy and misconnection with the totality of consciousness. It is then essential to observe how the mechanism of conflictual relationships annihilates the possibility of healthy communication. Krishnamurti sees, in the attempt to achieve harmonious relationships, the very meaning of human existence, bonded as we are by the capacity to see and reflect each other.

- The contents of Chapter 5 retrace the years of interaction between Krishnamurti and Professor David Bohm (a physicist born in Pennsylvania who made his teaching career at the University of London) on the nature of thought: How a deep understanding of the function of thought could result in a form of dialogue, not

simply mere discussion. Most levels of conversation, from the personal, familial, to world political leaders, generally ends in stagnation, emptiness, and/or confrontation. The philosophical tradition does not seem to comment at depth on this idea. Dialogue using the intuitive mind beyond the realm of the conceptual is an endeavor presently pursued by the David Bohm Foundation, and some forerunner organizations in mind research such as The Institute of Noetic Sciences located near San Francisco, California. Dialogue beyond words, or the pursuit of new modes of communication which encompass the totality of mind, is part of the discovery of new areas of consciousness, an endeavor currently neglected by the major part of the scientific community, the corporate establishment, and unfortunately education.

- Chapter 6 describes Krishnamurti's insights about education. Transforming children's schooling was considered by Krishnamurti one of the most pressing world issues. While traditional schooling can be expanded to include certain methods of psychic awareness, the evolution of the human mind rests entirely upon the foundation that each individual is going to accept and welcome change. Children's education could become a tutoring and sharing activity between parents and a child. The activity of parenting should no longer have to be the exclusivity of biological parents, or of the nuclear family. By rethinking education in a holistic way, the entire human network would benefit. Smaller communities would be able to enjoy a new

closeness with the environment they share and cultivate. A new vision of education would be a fruitful attempt to build a road to solidarity based on the understanding of the real quality of intelligence.

- Questions raised by modern science, especially the new physics, are discussed in chapter 7. Consciousness is a slippery word approached apprehensively by the scientific scene.

Nevertheless the term is used in this thesis, and particularly in this chapter, to indicate that the quality of human awareness which uses the totality of mind is specific to the present scientific definition of space, time, and energy. Another feature of modern scientific research emphasized here is a sensitivity toward mind/science to become the very foundation of our participatory action with the universe. The science of mind brings a serious new outlook at a deeper sense of reality.

Perhaps science in general is becoming the victim of a preoccupation with conformity which utilizes modern technology without a steadily growing passion for adventure and peace. While intensified research, in astrophysics particularly, is definitely linked to the budgeting of considerable financial investment, the lack of consensus between scientists of various schools and trends seems to be more detrimental to research than a scarcity of funds. Doors have opened before when passion and determination have been directed toward one meaningful goal. Krishnamurti talked to the effect of seeing "What-Is" prior to categorizing and shutting down opportunities for change. The

dialogues mentioned previously between Krishnamurti and David Bohm were at the edge of the debate about the nature of time in the current system of thinking. These dialogues brought useful suggestions to the effect of combining new fields of scientific research with deeper consciousness studies.

- Compassion in action is addressed in Chapter 8 as the core of the discussion of the means through which one could individually cooperate to world harmony and to a connecting movement with the environment. While Krishnamurti rarely spoke of art or the healing arts, he always talked about the beauty of nature as the great awakener. Art has traditionally been a major sustainer of religious faith, primarily because artistic creativity liberates the mind and pulls it toward a vast center of highly conscious and harmonious activity. Personally, as an avocational dancer and yoga teacher, I see art as a means of healing body and mind, bringing both into a vortex of energy where beauty and compassion abound. I do not think that special funding or sophisticated knowledge are essential prerequisites for natural, artistic healing. Many communities and establishments have spontaneously undertaken this goal, motivated by the desire to connect with, and support people in recovery.

Harmonious character and loving-kindness constitute the very essence of every person. Krishnamurti saw the lack of realization, deep in the individual's psyche, of the nature of the human predicament. Perhaps this is too much of a repetition of the Buddhist way, but it looks as though we continually need

to be refreshed in our psychological memory. We keep treading on the wrong paths, not because we lack anything in essence, but because we fail to be truly human. I may sound terribly optimistic, but it is because of messages like the one Krishnamurti offered that I see tremendous possibilities for people to share, beyond the tricks of mind, both their essence and their potential:

But there is sacredness that is not of thought, nor of a feeling resuscitated by thought. It is not recognizable by thought nor can it be utilized by thought. Thought cannot formulate it. But there is a sacredness untouched by any symbol or word. It is not communicable. It is a fact.<sup>13</sup>

With this quote I close the introduction, hoping to take the reader to where the joy of living and the fear to die have become one peaceful, authentic event.

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<sup>13</sup> Krishnamurti's Notebook, 28 June 1961.

## CHAPTER 2

### The Nature of "What-Is"

...Reality is not in the distance; the unknown is not far off; it is in "What-Is". As the answer to a problem is in the problem, so reality is in "What-Is"; if we can understand it, then we shall know truth.<sup>1</sup>

#### I - The Perception of Immanence

To question the nature of what is felt as being immanent is somewhat similar to asking why we are self-conscious. Or better yet, what is it that is self-conscious? We are not looking here at an existential issue such as: "Why am I here, and who am I" but we are going to ask, along the line of Krishnamurti's investigation: "What do I feel inside which I call the "me"?" From this point of departure, we are going to study if what is immanent might be identical to what Krishnamurti has been calling "What-Is" and why it seems to be necessary to make a distinction between two states of consciousness identified as immanence and transcendence. Why is subjectivity an important facet of human existence? Where and whence does it come from? How subjectivity

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<sup>1</sup> The Book of Life, Daily Meditations with Krishnamurti., ed. by R.E. Mark Lee. San Francisco, CA: HarperSan Francisco, 1995, August 22.

has become a criterion for the way we measure progress in the evolution of consciousness?

From the standpoint of philosophical analysis however, and to a certain extent, of scientific inquiry, there are different values attached to subjectivism and different reasons why these differences have been criticized. The following statement from Erwin Schrödinger is eloquent:

"The reason why our sentient, percipient and thinking ego is met nowhere within our scientific world picture can easily be indicated in seven words: because it is itself that world picture."<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, the way of the mystics, and to a certain extent some aspects of mainstream religions, are responses to the call of the inner world, to the internal experience of a reality which is labelled as transcendental or divine. Quite often, religious beliefs grounded in soteriological and eschatological positions imply that we objectify, with the totality of the ordinary mind, the material world perceived physically in space and time. Beyond these dichotomies, Krishnamurti insists that something should allow for an undivided way of seeing reality, which is intimately linked to the perception of the non-duality of opposites.

But at the very start, what is called the self deserves clarification. Spirituality is not necessarily at odds with psychology when defining the role of the ego or of the

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<sup>2</sup> Erwin Schrödinger. What Is Life?. Cambridge University Press, 1967, p. 128.

personality, the seat of emotional and mental activities. However, modern psychology usually stumbles where metaphysics, and what is often called spirituality, start to claim another concept such as: Soul, Spirit, or the Higher Self. Trying to reach consistency, Krishnamurti calls all differentiations by one name: the consciousness which includes body, mind, soul, psyche. Therefore, there seems to be a reality which is felt as a direct experience, is in the domain of consciousness and has the quality of what we call life. Krishnamurti himself is not very consistent in his use of vocabulary. He calls the persona sometimes the "me", at times the ego, and refers to the experience of perceptual consciousness as the "I" itself, but having lost the value of psychological appearance:

Most of us have an idea that the "I" is a separate being, divine, something that is enduring, becoming more and more perfect. I do not hold with any of this. Consciousness itself is the "I". You cannot separate the "I" process from consciousness. There is no "I" that is accumulating experience, which is apart creating its own limitations, through its own self-sustained wants. When you discern that there is no "I" apart from action, that the actor is action itself, then gradually there comes a completeness, an unfathomable bliss. (Ojai, 1936).<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, we have an answer from Krishnamurti about various levels of human consciousness which are reduced to one sole experience of total presence in action. But what happens during his conversations concerning the nature of time? For Heraclitus and Parmenides, as well as for modern philosophers such as

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<sup>3</sup> "Excerpts from J. Krishnamurti's Talks and Writings." Krishnamurti Foundation Trust. Reprinted July 1991, p. 13.

Heidegger and Bergson, the concepts of time, change, and impermanence are at the center of the description of consciousness and of the immanence of the nature of being. In the introduction to Being and Time, Heidegger has a brief section which reduces the nature of being to these few lines:

But are we today perplexed because we cannot understand the expression "Being"? Not at all. And so we must first of all awaken an understanding of the meaning of this question. The intention of the following treatise is to work out concretely the question of the meaning of Being. Its provisional goal is the interpretation of Time as the possible horizon of any understanding of Being whatsoever. [emphasis mine.]<sup>4</sup>

Henri Bergson makes a link between time and memory:

...This imaginary homogeneous time is, as we have endeavored to show elsewhere, an idol of language, a fiction whose origin is easy to discover. In reality there is no rhythms which, slower or faster, measure the degree of tension or relaxation of different kinds of consciousness and thereby fix their respective places in the scale of being. To conceive of durations of different tensions is perhaps both difficult and strange to our mind, because we have acquired the useful habit of substituting for the true duration, lived by consciousness, an homogeneous and independent Time...<sup>5</sup>

While Krishnamurti would comment on time in the following manner:

One may not have had any immediate sorrow, but one sees the enormity of the sorrow of [hu]mankind--the global sorrow of [hu]mankind. If one responds to that according to one's conditioning, according to one's past memory, then one is caught in action that is always time binding. The challenge and its response demand no time interval. Therefore there is instant action.[ ]...So, in the same way: is the root of sorrow time?--time being the movement of thought. And if there is no thought at all, when one responds to that

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<sup>4</sup> Martin Heidegger, Basic Writings. Ed. David Farrell Krell. HarperSan Francisco, 1977, p. 40.

<sup>5</sup> Henri Bergson. Matter and Memory. Tr. N.M. Paul and W.S. New York: Palmer Zone Books, 1991, p. 207.

challenge, is there suffering?<sup>6</sup>

Based on the above, we want to find out if there is anything related to the consciousness of self which is not grounded in time? Should one take as an example the fear of death, the question would be: is not the anxiety a result of the idea that another moment in time is not to be felt any longer? Immanence is then reduced to what is felt as a physical presence in time and space; immanence is a sensation: I may say that no one else can feel what it is for me to be "me" here and now. But is this "me" the witness of the totality of reality? Another approach to the immanence of reality comes out of the distinction between the form and the formless. What is immanent seems to require to have a form and shape in space and time. Immanence therefore implies having the nature of the material (what is made of matter). Consequently, what is form (material and immanent) is subject to change, decay, death, and finally dis-appearance. But time necessarily means change, while timeless energy is constantly moving. Feeling time the way we ordinarily do, physically and psychologically, means that consciousness is felt as incomplete. The timely sense of duration makes for the possibility of many events to superimpose on the thinking mind. But what Krishnamurti calls "What-Is", which is perceived in the totality of consciousness, is necessarily not static. "What-Is" is part of the movement creating change beyond mental interpretations and

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<sup>6</sup> Krishnamurti. The Wholeness of Life. HarperSan Francisco, 1979, p. 187.

abstractions. Or, like Plato said: "Time is a moving image of eternity."

That is what I want to investigate--whether this dualistic attitude towards life has come into being because the mind has not been able to solve actually 'what-is'.<sup>7</sup>

Or, should one ask with Krishnamurti if there is anything to the fact of being self-conscious which is not going to change and pass into oblivion? Bypassing this question would mean that life could become nothing more than a commerce between the nature of the self and the outside world as it is perceived. Psychologist Gustav Grof shows that rational capacities set important limits to what one might want to expect from mental health:

A person functioning exclusively in the Cartesian mode may be free from manifest symptoms but cannot be considered mentally healthy. Such individuals typically lead ego-centered, competitive, goal-oriented lives. They tend to be unable to derive satisfaction from ordinary activities in everyday life and become alienated from their inner world. For people whose existence is dominated by this mode of experience no level of wealth, power, or fame will bring genuine satisfaction. They become infused with a sense of meaninglessness, futility, and even absurdity that no amount of external success can dispel.<sup>8</sup>

We now need to stress that at the root of compassion, which is the center of this study, is the approach to consciousness through realization of psychological freedom. Krishnamurti, who has been criticized for presenting a facade of arrogance,

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<sup>7</sup> Krishnamurti. Exploration into Insight. HarperSan Francisco, 1980, p. 116.

<sup>8</sup> Stanislav Grof. Uncommon Wisdom. Fritjof Capra. New York: Bantam Books, Simon & Schuster, 1989, p. 122.

cynicism, or aloofness, managed to give pertinent answers to many justified, bitter questions, such as the following:

Question: The only weapon you give to the victims of social injustice is self-knowledge. This, to me, is derision.

Krishnamurti: This is a question that comes up at every meeting. People say: What is the good of your being a World Teacher if you cannot give me happiness, if you cannot give me my bread for tomorrow? I say that by altering the attitude of mind and heart, you will create conditions which will be lasting. All social workers are now feeding people, helping them to be different and so on and on and on. But they will never solve the question of selfishness, brutality, envy, jealousy and the gnawing of the heart and the disturbance of the mind. And with that I am concerned, because if you solve that, you will solve everything else. (International Star Bulletin 1928).<sup>9</sup>

Not to devalue the actions of individuals and organizations who provide concrete relief from violence and poverty across the world, one can grant Krishnamurti the credibility that the first place to start is with one's own belief system. No matter what levels of motivation and seriousness of intention compel one to help humanity, personal knowledge and personal change must occur prior to pursuing worthy tasks. The solidity of the foundation of the compassionate attitude rests in where it originates: in a psychological breakthrough made possible by the integration of body, mind and psyche:

...When you realize that you are the rest of [hu]mankind, it brings a tremendous energy, you have broken through the narrow groove of individuality, the narrow circle of me and you, we and they. We are examining together this extraordinary movement in time that has been going on in consciousness for millions of years.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> "Excerpts." p. 10-11.

<sup>10</sup> Id. p. 10-11.

This, Krishnamurti made particularly clear because his insistence was always on the mind. If we look at ourselves as a system made of bodily parts connected to a brain, the problem faced is that the observer, the "me" being itself part of the system, cannot acquire complete knowledge of this system:

...It is this separation of the observer from the observed that makes the observer want more experience, more sensations, and so he is everlastingly pursuing, seeking. It has to be completely and totally understood that as long as there is an observer...there is no immediate contact with "What-Is".<sup>11</sup>

...Ideation and the formula are escapes from "What-Is".<sup>12</sup>

Staying with this idea, if we acknowledge the fact established by modern science that being part of a system restricts the possibility of direct knowledge, we can keep asking, however, if there is an area of consciousness which is mostly unknown. We then see that what remains unanswered is the fear of humanity for this unknown territory. It is a fear which is universal, a fear of investigating the formless, the invisible, the intangible. Why is the fear of the unknown "immanent" to self-consciousness? What is it that, being revealed through fear, might be investigated precisely for the awakening of the totality of consciousness? For lack of being able to observe deeply from a subjective, quasi-contemplative angle, dualism has to rest on the concept that objectivity is necessarily one-sided. Nevertheless,

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<sup>11</sup> The Book of Life, Daily Meditations with Krishnamurti. Ed. R.E. Mark Lee. HarperSan Francisco, 1995, August 21.

<sup>12</sup> Id., August 23.

a personality needs to be grounded, be it in the world of phenomena, or in a more subjective manner:

"The world is a construct of our sensations, perceptions, memories. It is convenient to regard it as existing objectively on its own. But it certainly does not become manifest by its mere existence. Its becoming manifest is conditional on very special going-ons in very special parts of this very world, namely on certain events that happen in a brain. That is an inordinately peculiar kind of implication, which prompts the question: What particular properties distinguish these brain processes and enable them to produce the manifestation? Can we guess which material processes have this power, which not? Or simpler: What kind of material process is directly associated with consciousness?"<sup>13</sup>

I want to question whether the 'I' exists at all. It may be totally verbal, non-factual. It is only a word that has become tremendously important, not the fact. The Holistic State.<sup>14</sup>

Regardless of the position taken, mental activity has always been a trap. "Be there, but be aware", says Krishnamurti. This brings back the quintessential definition of "What-Is". But first one must seek change very seriously. Krishnamurti juxtaposes change to the notion of ending and asks: What is ending? Is it possible for anything, including self-consciousness, to end? How do we know when something ends, or when something has simply changed? Does a situation ever end, or does it change into another form, another concept still grounded in time? The mind recreates at will, but with a will which is weak because it pertains to brain memory and to the complicated

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<sup>13</sup> Erwin Shrödinger. What Is Life? Cambridge University Press, 1967, p. 93.

<sup>14</sup> Krishnamurti. Exploration into Insight. HarperSan Francisco, 1980, p. 170.

nature of the personality. This may be why Krishnamurti never insisted on the importance to study dreams or brain activity during sleep. For him, dreams are simply more clutter added to the ordinary chatter of the mind in its routine activity. It is challenging for the many eager readers to admit that the dream world is devoid of interest. The subconscious considered as just another area of consciousness makes dreams themselves fall into the category of conceptual thinking. In contrast, a puzzling aspect of the contradictions of a personality caught in the struggle of opposites is illustrated in the following quote from Carl Jung:

...The psyche of the individual acquires heightened importance. It is not only the seat of his well-known and socially defined ego; it is also the instrument for measuring growth of consciousness as this inner confrontation of opposites. The ego becomes ambivalent and ambiguous and is caught between hammer and anvil. It becomes aware of a polarity superordinate to itself.<sup>15</sup>

We are then left with the fact that what is immanent is what can be observed objectively and subjectively: the physical reactions of the body; the patterns created by the repetition of emotional reactions; the reasoning which is the result of mental activity; all can be observed by the "me" in defilement. Psychological dualism sees the mind as highly susceptible to disorientation; lack of control over emotions; intellectual confusion leading to disintegration and alienation from society; immoral and destructive conduct; and at times suicide. In the

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<sup>15</sup> C.J. Jung. Memories, Dreams, Reflections. Ed. Aniela Jaffé. New York: Pantheon Books, 1973, p. 345.

opinion of Krishnamurti, dualism generates more disorder than it contributes to resolve, due to its failure to see "What-Is". To divide consciousness between spiritual, intellectual, and emotional levels is to separate it from itself as the essence which is present in every living thing. Plotinus, when describing his concept of knowledge and the dimension of consciousness, also brings the observer and the observed together:

Knowledge has three degrees--opinion, science, illumination. The means or instrument of the first is sense; of the second, dialectic; of the third, intuition. To the last I subordinate reason. It is absolute knowledge founded on the identity of the mind knowing with the object known.<sup>16</sup>

Lama Anagarika Govinda says:

Intuitive knowledge is free from partiality or dualism; it has overcome the extremes of stressing subject or object.<sup>17</sup>

While Krishnamurti presents it this way:

The most important thing is to observe; to observe and not to have a division between the observer who is the total summation of past experience as memory and the observed, that which is--so the past observes. The division between the observer and the observed is the source of conflicts.<sup>18</sup>

In this first section, we have been focusing on the philosophical aspects of dualism and non-dualism and their interaction in the way we picture reality. With this in mind,

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<sup>16</sup> Plotinus. The letters to Flaccus. In Lama Anagarika Govinda, Creative Meditation and Multi-dimensional Consciousness. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1976, p. 233.

<sup>17</sup> Id. p. 233.

<sup>18</sup> Krishnamurti. The Wholeness of Life. HarperSan Francisco, 1979, p. 203.

could one try to perceive transcendence, not only as an important part of the inquiry into the unity of consciousness, but also as a means to feel this unity in relation to "What-Is"?

## II - The Encounter with Transcendence

To uncover the tactics and manipulations of the ego is done through undertaking the observation of safety zones within the personality, the ways in which the ego protects itself against external events and emotional impacts. However, through practice of mindfulness and observation, desires and attachments which are out of proportion progressively collapse, and one touches a space in the mind where there is "less me". This state of mind is the beginning of a meditation which Krishnamurti explains leads to the absolute unity of all there is. This is also when "What-Is" appears more clearly:

...What is the religious mind which can understand what meditation is?"

Meditation is the capacity of the brain which is no longer functioning partially--[ ]By partially is meant to function in a particular specialization or particular occupation that makes the brain narrow in accepting beliefs, traditions, dogmas and rituals, all of which are invented by thought...Meditation is different from contemplation in the sense that meditation demands that the brain acts wholly and is no longer conditioned to act partially. That is the requirement for meditation, otherwise it has no meaning.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Krishnamurti. The Network of Thought. HarperSan Francisco, 1982, pp. 75-77.

When emotional waste not conducive to calmness is released, a space in the brain is made available for the right circumstances--which are already in place--to surface. The complete freedom inherent to this mind/space has been called the Ground of Being by ancient and modern philosophers and by Krishnamurti too, in different terminology. This foundational feeling of freedom makes manipulations and desires from the ego become irrelevant in comparison to a direct experience of reality. Sri Aurobindo, in his explanation of "the psychic" describes the experience of "seeing":

By its very nature, the psychic is calm, quiet and luminous, understanding and generous, wide and progressive. Its constant effort is to understand and progress. The mind describes and explains. The psychic sees and understands.<sup>20</sup>

But how does one establish permanence in a psychic feeling of freedom? Surely, if we listen to the mystics, meditation is the answer. But as Krishnamurti says it, meditation does not consist in periodical, quiet sittings. Meditation has to be extended to no less than the total observation of life in its mundane, ordinary events. Such is also the point of the mindfulness meditation practiced in Buddhism. One argument in defense of the proper use of meditation under both forms is that they absorb our emotional needs and relieve mental stress from body and mind. The benefits of meditation for the relief of mental stress are, I think, overly emphasized, to the expense of the physical

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<sup>20</sup> The Mother. In The Psychic Being, compiled from the works of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother. Wilmot, WI: Lotus Light Publications, 1990, p. 42.

knowledge of self it provides. One does not mean the imposition of dietary restrictions and ascetic practices--which Krishnamurti never suggested--nor the temptation to experiment with subliminal trances. Meditation is the art of balancing physical presence in action with a stabilized, quiet and alert mind. When both states are present, it is the sign that meditation has become a lifestyle:

What is necessary to register and what is not necessary to register? The brain is occupied all the time with registering, therefore there is no tranquillity, no quietness, whereas if there is a clarity as to what is to be registered and what is not to be registered then the brain is quieter--and that is part of meditation...This is a tremendous thing to understand in oneself; it means that the brain is no longer the accumulating factor of the me.<sup>21</sup>

However, we may ask if it is possible to experience the transcendent in unconventional ways, that is, through mystical states of rapture, altered states of consciousness (usually involving drugs), or contemplative awareness. Krishnamurti says that any shortcut is by definition shortlived and highly detrimental to the mind. Isn't this the proof that the unconscious, the other terrain in the vastness of consciousness, is used as a reservoir to tap into for fast enlightenment? While it is helpful to understand the formless energy of consciousness, one sees why it is not necessary to induce altered states of consciousness to experience it. Nevertheless, it is a fact that earlier civilizations, be they of India, Egypt, Persia, ancient

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<sup>21</sup> Krishnamurti. The Wholeness of Life. HarperSan Francisco, 1979, p. 200.

Greece, Mexico, Peru, or Aboriginal lands, used substances freely and regularly (from cocoa and coffee, to peyote or cocaine) to induce altered states. Needless to say, in the vast majority, the attitude of these groups of initiates was fundamentally different from the one dictated by the escape from despair which characterizes twentieth century drug users. The point being made here is that, with the exception of certain forms of mysticism<sup>22</sup> and meditation, altered states seem to be the only ones which procure the sensation of the expansion of consciousness. That would tend to indicate that the link between immanence and transcendence is experienced in the totality of the physical self with an enhanced capacity to expand from the diaphragm toward the brain. That is equivalent to saying that consciousness inside the human body is the instrument for channeling two aspects of reality: the non-visible, non-material aspect made of pure energy, and the form taken by the energy in the things that we see. Krishnamurti suggests that we try to make contact with the unknown dimension of consciousness, and that doing so does not require spectacular esoteric or occult powers. There is nothing to conquer for the sake of "becoming spiritual". This is where all the stories about consciousness converge in their meanings and objectives; this is where mystics, scientists, shamans, and artists meet on common ground:

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<sup>22</sup> By mysticism, I mean here the approach to theism or non-theism which does not rely solely on the rational conviction that the supernatural exists.

The constant struggle whether to become, or to be, is the same. But when one is trying to become, in various directions, then you are denying being. When you try to be you are becoming also. See this movement of the mind, of thought: I think I am, and being dissatisfied, discontented, with what I am, I try to fulfill myself in something; I drive towards a particular goal; it may be painful, but the end is thought to be pleasurable. There is this constant struggle to be and to become.<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, with this attitude in mind, the purpose of meditation is a search for truth and personal ethos, as opposed to following a teacher or teachings. As such, it often leads to finding one's mission in life since it remains necessary to design one's life meditatively. By that is meant the sort of ordering one's existence toward more silence, solitude, and stillness in order to attain the space of inner calm. Such is the purpose of Yoga. However, what seem to be mandatory prerequisites are far from being a set of rules and principles firmly established. The richness of the subjective life consists in not dissipating one's energies. To illustrate how this sort of change operates in ordinary life, one might give several examples showing how it is possible to encounter stillness:

- 1) Sensory desires decrease without falling into asceticism or lethargy;
- 2) The mind remains fully alert and conscious, but thoughts slow down in rhythm and intensity;
- 3) Inspiration comes from seeking beauty consciously, as well as from a realization that unconditional love comes, not through prostration and adoration, but out of a silent mind. Krishnamurti definitely

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<sup>23</sup> Krishnamurti. The Network of Thought. HarperSan Francisco, 1982, p. 31.

disapproved of shortcuts and of conventional forms of meditation using the breath, or mantras. His own explanation of meditation is that life itself is meditation. Uninterrupted attention to living breaks psychological tension in the brain leading to liberation from thought. As Simone Weil<sup>24</sup> said it: "Absolutely unmixed attention is prayer". The free mind is then the one that sees "What-Is". But the challenge is to be conscious of the desire to "become free" or to "become spiritual". The point is to see reality as it is, until the connection between the visible and the invisible is clear. There is not a third type of reality located between immanence and transcendence, but the one reality is one because of no dichotomy caused by an observer wanting to see what he/she is a part of. Mind cannot see itself with mind.

Krishnamurti is not really introducing any novelty with this description. The process of unification described in the Vedic Hymns as "Tat Tvam Asi" (Thou Art That), or perhaps in the Bible as "I am That I Am" are narratives about the Oneness of Reality, of all that there is to know:

When we dig a well, we go to a certain depth and there is water. Most people are satisfied with that little water. That little water might evaporate on account of the heat of the sun. You have to dig deeper for a permanent water source. You have to have the capacity to dig deep. It deepens on you...And when you do the homework, the digging, it is not the well that gives you more water. It is your

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<sup>24</sup> In my modest opinion, this definition of prayer would probably not satisfy the criteria of orthodox Christian theologians. Perhaps it would be accepted under the category of "contemplative prayer". But I tend to think that Simone Weil had in mind something very close to Eastern forms of meditation.

homework, you digging, that gives you the water.<sup>25</sup>

But Krishnamurti emphasizes the looking inside and outside of self with a quality of attention which brings cognizance of all there is to know as the truth of "What-Is". It is clear to him that intuition is the highest function of the rational, balanced and centered mind. Intuition is the act of intelligence brought about during a moment of connection with the wholeness of consciousness felt in an act of total attention. Such occurrence may sound overly irrational, but is, in this very paradox, the means to see beyond the rational level. The use of reason, Krishnamurti explains, is a tool under the command of the self, to be exercised with caution and reservation, but absolutely essential to adequate functioning in a necessarily dualistic environment. Karlfried Graf von Dürckheim has his own version of the use of reason and the supremacy of the rational mind to direct consciousness in action:

Each of us has focused thus far on being a "personality"-- self-reliant, productive, and consciously dedicating our energies and virtues to objective ideals and social values. But the time has come to move on and concentrate on becoming a real person, permanently open and faithful to the way, taking on form and accepting it in others only when it allows Being to show through, when it leaves room for further change...The old illusory ideals are being rejected and the sober truth of Being is coming into view.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> In Conversations with J. Krishnamurti, The Man and the Message, by N. Lakshmi Prasad. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1990.

<sup>26</sup> K.G. von Dürckheim. Zen and Us, tr. Vincent Nash, E.P. New York: Dutton, 1987.

Nevertheless, only the silent mind can experience intuition. Silence is the key to the opening of the connections at work in the understanding of transcendence. It is in the silence that the source of the most genuine expression of intelligence is thus touched. This perception of intelligence and the quality which is inherent to it are of extraordinary importance for the potential growth of social relations. If the power of the media and information network is to continue to develop to a considerable extent, the responsibility to preserve the silence is going to become an enormous challenge. Social crises are due in great part to a total loss of the capacity to be silent. Or else, no experience of peace is found other than in some very occasional and exceptional contacts with nature, or through the practice of prayer which, in its traditional aspects, Krishnamurti would still consider a form of "mind chatter". If it is the case that human consciousness draws a great part of its most brilliant inspirations precisely from a center in the mind where silence has become a fact, evidence of it should come through a global experience. Insights come out of a peaceful and quiet mind, contrary to most decisions which follow impulses originating in the ordinary activity of the brain. Intuition is often experienced as a sharp flash about what action needs to be accomplished. Intuition usually provides immediate and unconditional solutions to difficulties, unpleasant states of mind or moods. Only when cultivated through meditation does intuition develop, else one tends to remain mechanically

dependent on patterns, phobias, and comfort zones in the mind. We have a powerful example of this practice in the life of Sri Aurobindo as related by Satprem, particularly in the following passage:

...Day after day, as his consciousness concretises itself, he has hundreds of tiny experiences, almost imperceptible, which spring forth from this Silence above: he is thinking of nothing and suddenly a thought crosses him...and he knows exactly what must be done, how it must be done, in the least details, like the pieces of a puzzle which fall into their place in the twinkling of an eye, and with a massive certitude...And gradually he sees that all his acts, the very least, can be sovereignly guided by this silent source above, that all his thoughts come from there, luminous, beyond dispute, that a sort of spontaneous knowledge is born in him[her].<sup>27</sup>

The philosophical study of consciousness is a courageous attempt, especially when it comes to the scientific aspects. Not only does consciousness study require discipline, perseverance, and sometimes clairvoyance, but it can hardly use any artificial means to its inquiry. Krishnamurti never encouraged, and often vigorously criticized, the methods of psychology involving analysis, therapy, or clinical treatments. In his opinion, the mind is both the instrument and the discovery. This fascinating point has been debated by Krishnamurti, David Bohm, and recently by the Dalai Lama, Sogyal Rinpoche, and transpersonal psychologists like Stanislav Grof, as being related to the questions about the observer and the observed, the one and the same. If seeing truth seems too abstract and ineffective, one is

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<sup>27</sup> Satprem. Sri Aurobindo or The Adventure of Consciousness. The Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust. Pondicherry, India, 1970, p. 173.

still often left with the fear of lacking something inherent to existence itself. Ordinary consciousness is unlimited in its creative power of image-making. The archetypal imagination creates a somewhat attractive synthesis of what it perceives in the phenomenal world, but mostly in order to cover up the confusion which comes out of the processing of external stimuli. The fancy pictures of the imagination combined with mind tricks in order to achieve the illusion of happiness join together as "the tormentor" which governs the will and the actions of the will. Meanwhile, one of the major incentives for meditation is the experience of a silent mind which has let go of psychological fear and anxieties. A silent mind is a most natural, perfect state of being, not to be feared as a form of alienation. But meditation, in the sense Krishnamurti describes it, is not a version of daydreaming or prayer. These activities are good and have their own purpose and context. Meditation is a way back to naked simplicity, a steady and rustic way to increase self-knowledge.

To discard insinuations of selfishness, charges of narcissism, or even idolatry associated to knowledge of the self, one would argue once again that order and peace start in one's own garden. Clear intention as a result of profound meditation necessarily has to lead to right action of the social kind. Meditation is an expansion into a state of freedom which leaves no chance for even the possibility of choice: Krishnamurti calls this "choiceless awareness", answering both questions of

selfishness and of estrangement:

Aloneness does not mean isolation, it does not mean one is withdrawn and has built a wall around oneself. Alone means that one is all one. Then one is a total human being representing all humanity, one's consciousness has undergone a change through perception, which is the awakening of intelligence.<sup>28</sup>

and,

To go into this question of bringing about a total revolution in "What-Is", one must have an extraordinary sense of awareness. You must know what it is to be aware...just to be aware; and to be aware so choicelessly that you know very well that you can't change it. But when we are aware of "What-Is", we want to transform it; we are endlessly active about it; and there begins sorrow.<sup>29</sup>

The mind becomes automatically unselfish as a result of that expansion. It opens to the necessity of bringing comfort and peace to all beings, which is the start of the correct understanding of compassion and of its value. In simple terms, meditation is the creation of a perfect balance between personality and the spiritual. It is not a void, much less a request for aspirations to be fulfilled. It is not a withdrawal from worldly activities, nor is it a selfish solitary practice. Meditation is a bridge, an awakening, a service to the human network, a very important aspect of the science of mind. Moses, Patanjali, Plato, Plotinus, St. Paul, and all the mystics practiced meditation, openly or not. Meditation helps the evolution of consciousness because it is a physically purifying,

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<sup>28</sup> Krishnamurti. The Wholeness of Life. New York: Harper & Row, 1981, p. 148.

<sup>29</sup> Ojai, 1966.

cleansing act. When pushed to its utmost potential, it becomes a sacred, blissful act of extraordinary intelligence: the experience of the whole consciousness of being:

"To be integrally intelligent means to be without the self."<sup>30</sup>

An important question to raise at this point, connecting the above to the topic of compassion, is why has meditation become obsolete in the modern world? Secondly, one may ask why is it that many want to rediscover it, often through New Age guidelines, sometimes on their own initiatives? The immediate answer, which I believe is superficial, is that meditation fills imperative needs to release stress in a naturalistic way, avoiding costly, traditional medicine. As a matter of fact, more physicians start to recommend meditation and physical exercise as valuable modes of preventive medicine. But back to the point of compassion. It looks as though a message has come across in recent years concerning personal and social priorities, as well as moral concerns. The stories of convicts in prison finding relief in meditation and reshaping their lives are not uncommon. Moreover, it is relatively easy to observe that meditation provides a holistic view of the state of the world. Far from escaping civic responsibilities which the church establishment is so concerned about, meditation shows the urgency of what has to be practiced, of what has to change, or be accepted as part of a morally grounded, social attitude toward decision-making.

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<sup>30</sup> Krishnamurti, Madras 1952.

Small groups, as well as individuals, have started to work on their own, indifferent about any form of criticism from mainstream society. For finding the root functioning of fear, anger, guilt, and desire means reaping the benefit of a discrimination process which is cultivated through the practice of meditation. Particularly among younger generations, the evidence that education is no longer synonym for employment, added to a disgust for self-protective materialistic aspirations give rise to the aspiration for a sound, welcoming social environment. In the coming years, one would hope that this attitude might bring about the non-violent change the world needs. It is unlikely that meditating would produce a society in which the defenders of the wrong forms of individualism, seeking satisfaction in materialistic goals, would still be the influencing majority.

Inevitably, the chief consequence of a weak modern psychology being out of touch with emotions is an increase of violent imbalances in people and in the organizations led by them. When, in the depth of their own being--perceived in the meditative state--people realize the poverty of not being able to help others conflicting with their authentic needs to be of help, some inspiration for right action can arise. The steps which are part of a true social evolution all strive toward unity, by keeping the mind still and in balance outside the pull of opposites. That is why kindness is tied to self-knowledge and can only come through personal experience, not from an outside

source of information, or through training. All myths, metaphors, or symbols are aspirations to describe a personal human encounter with the wholeness of "What-Is". In addition, the discovery of authenticity goes through reconnecting with body impressions. We can tap into the mind at any moment, but this would still leave one at the edge of the conceptual consciousness which is limited and incomplete. The noises of the external world are only mirroring a modest aspect of the mind, simply because the mental plane is only one mode of being in touch with existence. Silence, however, is more like the music of the fullness of consciousness. To use an analogy, flowers bloom, and such is the nature of their movement into consciousness. But where the eye of consciousness is reached is where reality is contained, in the uninterrupted movement of a flame that is life. That metaphor is used by Krishnamurti as "The Flame of Attention". It relates to the experience of "What-Is" and it is synonym to the presence of intelligence:

When one touches this flame in the center of oneself, one sees What-Is. "That presence is here, filling the room, spilling over the hills, beyond the waters, covering the earth."<sup>31</sup>

Hopefully, it is possible to now see that the experience of transcendence becomes immanent in an act of creativity in the world. Self-knowledge and seeing "What-Is" are part of the formation of character. Therefore, touching reality means

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<sup>31</sup> Krishnamurti's Notebook. In, On God. Harper San Francisco, 1992, p. 155.

infinitely more than staying grounded in subjective thinking. A thorough understanding of the dynamics of wicked patterns in our brain is part of seeing "What-Is". Only this form of subjectivity, in conjunction with the flame of attention, prepares one for a conscious constructive participation in the world. What other purpose is more authentically craved by human beings than the quality of their physical presence in the world? The result of true transformation is more than the surrendering of the ego to, say, the revelation of Scriptures or to devotional acts of prayer in the felt presence of a personal God. Transformation creates a space where there is such amount of psychological freedom as to make the necessity of choice irrelevant. Such free actions can eventually take place. For Krishnamurti a fully conscious act is non-conceptual. It manifests through the activity of the totality of consciousness. As such, conscious actions are exceptional, but many achievements can approximate a high level of awareness. Such is the way in which we may want to reconcile the approach of Krishnamurti with philosophical arguments recently developed for or against the use of conceptualization. For example, David Weissman, Professor of Philosophy at SUNY, explains how Plato's intuitionist philosophy might have set further limits to the mind by ignoring the role of self-consciousness, or considered it an obstacle rather than a tool in the experience of Being. Here is what Professor Weissman has to say about intuition:

Intuiting mind is more than a self-perceiver or faculty of judgement, and more than a will. Intuition requires that self-consciousness should supply the conditions for our having access to the matters we perceive, judge, and desire. It requires that we be literal about mind's self-sufficiency. Mind is cause of itself...Intuitionist psychology requires that we acknowledge the existence of that self-conscious agent who supplies all the conditions for observing, or even making, the given.<sup>32</sup>

Later in the same book, when Weissman talks about the intuitionists' view as being relevant and acceptable within the domain of what he calls "Systematic Metaphysics", he comments briefly on his own concept of Unity as follows:

Three kinds of unity are described to the world. First are its spatial and temporal relations. Second, individuals are related dynamically as causes having effects. Third, events are related nomologically, meaning that there are laws which coordinate their relations...The problem of the world unities is, therefore, only the one of telling how mind provides for the relatedness of the phenomena perceived.<sup>33</sup>

From such assertion about the perception of Unity, it seems to me that an adequate answer is found in the "What-Is" of Krishnamurti. The phenomena which are perceived are neither a mirroring of the subject or of the object doing the thinking, but the reality of things and situations as they are prior to interpretation by the object and the subject: the observer and the observed. In other words, there seem to be on one side a world of phenomena, and a dimension beyond the mind which modern philosophy accepts to consider, under the terminology of

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<sup>32</sup> David Weissman. Intuition and Ideality. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1987, p. 190.

<sup>33</sup> Id., p. 255.

intuition. But granted that one sees "What-Is" as it is, no self-consciousness or pure consciousness can be said to stand in the way of experience. Another context in which Krishnamurti has been blamed for is that of a skepticism bordering the edge of nihilism, the latter being probably felt more directly by readers unfamiliar with the Zen Buddhist approach. Krishnamurti's concern was about bringing psychological issues back into the perspective of the practical factuality of daily life. In the following excerpts, one sees that accusations of nihilism would be rather unjustified, at least on the ground of the possibility of personal change, and the inclusion of transformation into the practice of living:

To understand oneself profoundly, one needs balance. That is, one cannot abandon the world, hoping to understand oneself, or be so tangled in the world that there is no occasion to comprehend oneself. There must be balance, neither renunciation nor acquiescence.<sup>34</sup>

Therefore the things that we use become all important because, without them we are lost...And yet, that which we are, we have never understood. And it seems to me, as long as we are seeking psychological security, we shall never understand ourselves.<sup>35</sup>

Love demands, really, that we see the actuality of our daily life.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> "Excerpts from Krishnamurti's Talks and Writings." Compiled for distribution at the Annual Gathering 1990 of the Krishnamurti Foundation India, p. 18.

<sup>35</sup> Id., p. 22.

<sup>36</sup> Id., p. 24.

### III - Krishnamurti and "What-Is"

As we have seen earlier, "What-Is" is the bridge between an immanent sense of self and the transcendent aspect of reality. "What-Is" might be explained as the reality we see physically, consciously, and enveloped in a non-visible container. In such a sense, touching reality is no longer a metaphor. It is a tangible event felt at the very center of consciousness, when totally aware. The way in which Krishnamurti introduces his own form of mysticism is through a psychologically-oriented approach which tends to project what we would call the mystical as a shattering, awakening, and highly conscious experience. Otherwise, how would Krishnamurti's lectures differ from the traditional descriptions of mysticism, if not because of his own free mind liberated from conceptualizations? The way of doing psychology for Krishnamurti is to evidently reject all the clinical aspects as well as the experimental approaches, since they are overly insisting on the role of the imagination and therefore the personality. So, Krishnamurti creates his own psychological domain which has no limits, because it starts when the brain is silent. The physical becomes the tool, the medium, and the repository of what inhabits it, namely consciousness as a sacred nature and as the seed of life.

Earlier in this chapter, one tried to demonstrate that the mind itself creates the separation between the immanent and the transcendent. In many instances of mystical experiences, there is a strong inclination to insist upon the sense of mystery and

the sense of reverence for the ordinary world which result from the occurrence. If such should be the case, the experience has indeed brought about a complete transformation, for the major characteristic of living through the transcendent dimension means that one feels a potential to act from the heart. In other words, "transcending immanence" must lead to the highest form of compassionate drive. Krishnamurti, having undergone a sort of mystical experience himself, shows, in his compelling need to communicate the facts of life which he could clearly see, the phenomenology of the experience. Answering questions about what he could have done with his life, he used to answer that "he could have been a gardener" but that he could not do anything else than writing and talking to people, sharing the meaning, the impact, and the applications of the vision he had gone through. Starting with "What-Is", one is led to nothing less than true metamorphosis of a lifetime.

In a remarkable book on mysticism, Dr. Martin Israel talks about the issue of moral action in the world, and the ways in which mysticism relates to it:

"The fruits of mysticism are understanding, perspective, and intelligent commitment to the world. The mystic understands the world he lives in, and is able to assess people accurately".

And,

..."There is also an accelerated integration of the personality. This is the most important fruit of the mystical life. It manifests itself in a more radiant presence, greater harmony in personal relationships, and an enhanced creativity, either intellectual, artistic, or social. Mystics have a healing presence, and I believe that

a gift of healing follows illumination".<sup>37</sup>

Consequently, acting from the heart means that there is total freedom to answer a calling from consciousness, the sacred essence within. For even if a certain form of piety were to resurface in modern life, it may not bear quite the same results, probably because piety is not necessarily encountered experientially within the root of consciousness. Pious folks do good deeds, but are they always free to create them consciously? For isn't the action which is the product of reasoning upon a set of passively accepted beliefs a kind of somewhat unconscious attitude?

The problem is always a problem of relationship, there is no other problem; and to meet the problem of relationship, with its constantly varying demands--to meet it rightly, to meet it adequately--one has to be aware, passively; and this passivity is not a question of determination, of will, of discipline; to be aware that we are not passive, is the beginning.<sup>38</sup>

The power of the encounter with the totality of consciousness, of seeing "What-Is", is a release from the imperative necessity to create beliefs, which is based on fear. The freed spirit is the result of a completed physical and psychological change--which involves serious care of body, mind,

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<sup>37</sup> Martin Israel, M.B. An Approach to Mysticism. Six Lectures delivered at The College of Psychic Studies in 1968. Published under the joint auspices of the Mysticism committee of the Churches' Fellowship for Psychical and Spiritual Studies and of the College of Psychic Studies, 1968. Both quotes on p. 41.

<sup>38</sup> In Excerpts from J. Krishnamurti Talks and Writings. Madras, India: KFA, 1990, p. 37.

and psyche. But moreover, it is a step away from the risk of developing strong ideological ties, or of considering spiritual growth as a form of compassion. During the experience of "What-Is", the "me" is confronted with the vision of truth. "What-is" acts as the neutralizer and purifier of opposites. This process is the result of the liberated function of intuition. It is not metaphysical, and it is more than religious, in the ordinary sense. Intuition is the effect of a thorough practice of attention which allows for the encounter with the unknown.

One would gather from Krishnamurti's talks that the entire endeavor of modern psychology should, and could be, to create, out of this dualism between immanence and transcendence, a productive and functional awakening. But no one ever seems to ask how to go beyond the existentialist mode and to explore the value of seeing "What-Is". Doing so would revive a sensitivity to reality which has been lost in the dullness of modern life and its materialism. The description of "What-Is" and the terminology itself come out of a personal event in the life of Krishnamurti, namely the transformation which happened in his late twenties in California, and which was to constitute the turning point in his entire life. This peculiar event was followed by a year of extreme physical pain and weakness, and has been called the "process" by observers in the proximity of Krishnamurti at the time. Mary Lutyens explains the term for us:

In 1922, Krishnamurti underwent a spiritual experience that changed his life and which was followed by years of acute and almost continuous pain in his head and spine. The manuscript shows that "the process", as he called this

mysterious pain, was still going on nearly forty years later, though in a much milder form.

"The process" was a physical phenomenon, not to be confused with the state of consciousness that Krishnamurti variously refers to in the notebooks as the "benediction", the "otherness", "immensity". At no time did he take any pain-killing drugs for "the process". He has never taken alcohol or any kind of drug.<sup>39</sup>

Based on this incident, Krishnamurti is able to testify that, between the immanent sensations of the ego and the realm of the transcendent, there exists a specific state of being which is the ground for an altogether phenomenological and transpersonal encounter with reality. In addition, Krishnamurti makes it clear that being able to see "What-Is" constitutes the first step for what he has called "the awakening of intelligence", and for that matter is the major ingredient of a totally balanced conscious health.

As soon as active participation takes place between the different layers of the personality, change is noticeable at the behavioral and sometimes physical levels. What in Buddhist terms is called mindfulness generally translates into a more peaceful demeanor, tone of voice, a feeling of relaxation, a sharper intellect, which all become conducive to altruism, creativity, and empathy. Therefore, the motivation for the practice of goodness is much less of an inductive, tedious absorption of moral rules and principles governed by a personal code of ethics (religious or philosophical), but more like an alert

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<sup>39</sup> Krishnamurti's Notebook. Foreword by Mary Lutyens. Harper San Francisco, 1984, p. 6.

participation with the body to the richness and depth of life in harmony with the totality of the mind.

Krishnamurti's intent is to indicate a standpoint where the seat of the personality is no longer reinforced, and where a daily routine and practice of observing self-centeredness establishes itself without effort. In accordance with the more typical mystical journeys, the reversal of the darkness which pertains to mental conditioning gives place to an extraordinary form of energy, a sense of continuity with the propensity for well-being which, for Krishnamurti, means that the vastness of psychological freedom has been touched. One sees how "What-Is" becomes the bridge crossing toward that higher state of consciousness. Consequently, "What-Is" clarifies the nature of meditation par excellence in the philosophy of Krishnamurti, which is the cessation of all movement of thought and judgment:

To live with "What-Is" completely implies the ending of conflicts in their very sight. Therefore there is no future as transforming it into something else. The very ending of it is the gathering of supreme energy which is a form of intelligence.<sup>40</sup>

However, it is interesting at this stage to make two extensive remarks. The first has to do with the nature of Krishnamurti's particular experience. As related by Mary Lutyens in her book, Krishnamurti underwent a tremendous physiological shock.

Undoubtedly, the description of this dismay brings memories of mystical states of awakening, and represents an interesting and

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<sup>40</sup> The Wholeness of Life. HarperSan Francisco, 1981, p. 149.

detailed addition to various perspectives on forms of initiation.

Interestingly enough, over the past few years, it has been surprising as well as unexpected to hear it mentioned that Krishnamurti had perhaps awakened "Kundalini" which, in the ancient tradition of Tibetan and Indian Yoga, means that the life energy has started to circulate freely through the centers, or "chakras" located along the spine<sup>41</sup>. To describe here all the methods, ancient as well as modern, which have been followed with the hope to stimulate and arouse the current of energy from the bottom to the top of the spine would be tedious and somewhat irrelevant. Nevertheless, one wants to suggest that there is much evidence that Krishnamurti might be only one of many individuals who had this sort of awakening; and secondly, that there is no reason to envelop the event with the secrecy and aura reserved for supernatural powers. If nothing else, this would be highly contradictory with the message of Krishnamurti's teachings. In fact, it is rather satisfying to note that what belonged to the domain of strange occultism up to the beginning of this century is now positively uncovered, and one should say seriously investigated by medical science. This is accomplished with the purpose that mind and body development, and healing might be enhanced substantially and constructively through

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<sup>41</sup> This comment was made by Evelyn Blau during the opening lecture of the 1995 Krishnamurti Gathering in Frederick, Maryland.

knowledge of Kundalini. To summarize on this topic, let us quote the eminent mythologist Joseph Campbell who, during his long friendship with Krishnamurti, most probably related to him his research on Kundalini: "The deepest levels of the cerebro-spinal system are involved in the process of spiritual transformation."<sup>42</sup> Reference should also be made to a volume recently published on Kundalini research which compiles descriptions of this ancient scientific Yoga, clearly restated by modern thinkers<sup>43</sup>. However, the topic is still highly controversial for three major reasons: 1) Possible damage to the body itself, especially brain functions; 2) The quality of intention which should prevail prior to undertaking this experiment, namely renouncing the development of personal psychic powers; 3) The consequences which empirical knowledge of Kundalini would have to the understanding of cosmic intelligence, and the use which would be made of this knowledge. Out the text itself, I wish to quote from main authorities on yoga and meditation, past and contemporary. The first person is Alice A. Bailey, a major figure in the history of occultism and of the Theosophical Society in the 1900s:

This process of ordered meditation, when carried forward over a period of years and supplemented by meditative living and one-pointed service, will successfully arouse the entire system, and bring the lower man under the influence and

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<sup>42</sup> In Gene Kieffer, The Evolution of Joseph Campbell and America. Darien, CT: The Kundalini Research Foundation, Ltd., 1988, p. 23.

<sup>43</sup> John White, ed. Kundalini, Evolution and Enlightenment. Paragon House, NY, 1990.

control of the spiritual man; it will awaken also the centers of force in the etheric body and stimulate into activity that mysterious stream of energy which sleeps at the base of the spinal column.<sup>44</sup>

The second source is Sri Chinmoy, Indian sage and musician:

The Kundalini power is the dynamic power in us. When the dynamic power and spiritual knowledge go hand in hand, the perfect harmony of the universal consciousness dawns and the conscious evolution of the human soul reaches the transcendental self.<sup>45</sup>

Thirdly, a concluding note by Roy Eugene Davis:

It is not really necessary for one on the path to become overly fascinated by the subject of Kundalini and the workings of the chakras. As we rest more and more in the awareness of our true nature, whatever reorganization of physiological and psychic processes which is necessary will automatically take place.<sup>46</sup>

The major reason behind raising the issue of Kundalini in relation to Krishnamurti is to show that, regardless of one's chosen path, or no-path, events, empirically or not, may happen spontaneously. It looks rather evident that the physical components inherent in the awakening of Kundalini are analogous to the phenomenological aspect of Grace which Christian mystics have described. One might agree that Krishnamurti had reached a stage of conscious development and compassion which made him the recipient of a quality of energy, or a "state of Grace" which permeated his life, inspiring him for talks and written works.

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<sup>44</sup> Alice Bailey. "Ordered Meditation and Loving Service." In Kundalini, Evolution and Enlightenment. Ed. John White. New York: Paragon House, 1990, p. 459.

<sup>45</sup> Sri Chinmoy. "The Two Paths of Kundalini." In John White, p. 455.

<sup>46</sup> Id. p, 466.

Keeping in mind that right action is a prerequisite for the possibility of compassion, it is essential to understand non-attachment as referring to the dictates of the personality as opposed to non-attachment to the actions themselves. In other words, the formless shape of consciousness becomes concretized in virtues which are no longer related nor dependent on psychological possessions. The practice of transcendence starts in the invisible, perfect stillness of the mind which is self-observing and highly concentrated. If a feeling of bondage is present, it is usually characterized by forgetfulness and inattention to "What-Is":

Being virtuous comes through the understanding of "What-Is", whereas becoming virtuous is postponement, the covering of "What-Is" with what you would like to be. Virtue is not the becoming of what is not; virtue is the understanding of "What-Is" and therefore the freedom from "What-Is".

This, Krishnamurti has also phrased and summed up in his saying that "The first step is the last step", meaning that the total and immediate decision which consists in seeing "What-Is" liberates consciousness toward total intelligence, making other decisions irrelevant. The result of a good practice, of an experience of living more consciously between immanence and transcendence could be described as synergy between mindstates-- synergy being the processing by the entire organism of the experience of immanence and transcendence perceived simultaneously. Sri Aurobindo says it in the following terms:

The psychic being is always there, but is not felt because it is covered up by the mind and the vital; when it is no longer covered up, it is then said to be awake. When it is

awake, it begins to take hold of the rest of the being, to influence it and change it so that all may become the true expression of the inner soul.<sup>47</sup>

So, in accordance with the Buddhist tradition, seeing the wholeness of self is the first step to seeing unity in and among others. This sounds like a logical proof for the existence of the compassionate life. But between here and there, there can be hard work. And in addition to the homework, a relative amount of doubting is essential in order to obtain good results. It is only through a questioning and a regular assessment of belief systems that the real work can start, as will be emphasized in the next chapter.

If it is the case that one wants to find out what can possibly survive the physical and material state, falling into blind belief in the supernatural is likely to just cause more brain programming. Unless a fusion of the questions is achieved in the mind through permanent attention, immanence and transcendence remain two divided concepts about reality. Doubt is what leads to the possibility of insight. In relation to brain activity, thinking comes first, then attention, then silence. And out of the silence comes the visibility of "What-Is":

We are in conflict with each other and our world is being destroyed. There is crisis after crisis, war after war; there is starvation, misery; there are the enormously rich clothed in their respectability, and there are the poor. To

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<sup>47</sup> Sri Aurobindo. The Psychic Being. Compiled from the works of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother. Wilmet, IL: Lotus Light Publications, 1990, p. 105.

solve these problems, what is necessary is not a new system of thought, not a new economic revolution, but to understand "What-Is"--the discontent, the constant probing of "What-Is"--which will bring about a revolution which is more far-reaching than the revolution of ideas. And it is this revolution that is so necessary to bring about a different culture, a different religion, a different relationship between man and man.<sup>48</sup>

Therefore, on the mental plane, only one picture at a time can be seen. Unfortunately, this one-sidedness is generally considered a genuine conscious thought. Once it becomes relevant that thoughts are only mental projections produced by external impressions on the mind, one welcomes the possibility to be silent in meditation. The undivided mind connects external images to each others and relates them to the larger picture. Such is the function of global consciousness: the sense of wholeness. What reason is there for being a self-reflective creature? It is hard to disagree with the thought that living an entirely materialistic existence while trying to achieve spiritual growth is a delusion. Not obsessed with the idea of an irreparable fall from a mythical ancient past, nor resigned to the belief that past mistakes have to be "purged" through other lifetimes, Krishnamurti points to the fantastic potential of the actual energy of awareness awaiting at one's disposal. This is what existence in and with matter is all about: in and with the personality, conscious evolution wants to awaken, grow, and reach its completion. Perhaps such evolution cannot be completed in

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<sup>48</sup> Collected Works of J. Krishnamurti. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing, 1991, 1992. Vol. 1, VII, p. 212-213.

the duration of one lifetime, perhaps it can. Krishnamurti does not deem it useful to spend time finding out if reincarnation exists or if it is necessary. The greatest reaches of consciousness which are here to inspire humanity are the ones we have already seen realized in other human beings, on this plane of reality. Besides, we do not know how nor what other levels of consciousness can be reached in an unforeseeable future. What sense is there in establishing a criterion, a standard of measurement, a limit to reach? This would mean falling again into a standard trap, looking for reassurance and security.

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In closing on the question of immanence and transcendence, one realizes that there seems to be a tremendous amount of passion involved in becoming more aware. This desire is neither selfish, nor is it unsafe, and it should not become a goal. What Krishnamurti calls the Sacred, he felt within himself as pure energy, and therefore truly could say without uncertainty that it is felt inwardly. This energy can be tapped into ceaselessly once it has been experienced on the physical plane, in the vitality of the quiet mind. The fluids of life flow inside our bodies, irrigating the brain which attentively tunes to their rhythm. Some daring, passionate individuals let go of their belief systems without apprehension, to start a new life. To the extent that those fearless endeavors are conducive to acts of

compassion, the growth in consciousness is steady and lasting. To feel wholeness necessarily implies touching another heartfully. Touching each others' energy with respect for private boundaries creates the conscious phenomenon of compassion.

There is no place where the immanent disappears and where the transcendent shines supreme in isolation. One of the benefits of understanding "What-Is" is the discovery that the quality of the energy which is sacred is not separated from matter. It is there to demonstrate that "what is above" and "what is below" are to be felt as one identical state of consciousness. Perhaps the reason for consciousness to inhabit a human body is to make that realization an alive, lasting state, not an effulgent mystical occurrence without practicality. Sri Aurobindo, in his depiction of the "Superconscient" makes it clear that we have dug a very large gulf between Life and Spirit because we oversee that "All Is One":

The state of integral mastery, this is the goal we pursue, not the state of a spiritual marmot, and this mastery is possible only in a continuity of consciousness: when we go into an ecstasy, we lose the 'someone' who would form the bridge between the powers above and the impotence below.<sup>49</sup>

...For the highest truth, the integral self-knowledge is not to be gained by this self-blinded leap into the Absolute but by a patient transit beyond the mind.<sup>50</sup>

...To change one's ideas is not to progress, it is to spin round one more pirouette in the midst of the same

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<sup>49</sup> Satprem. Sri Aurobindo or The Adventure of Consciousness, by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust. Pondicherry, India, Feb. 1970.

<sup>50</sup> Satprem, p. 178.

environment. This is why Sri Aurobindo spoke of the change of consciousness.<sup>51</sup>

Therefore, it is not only because of a few pioneers, perhaps like Krishnamurti, that one can witness how the evolution of consciousness is real. It is uncovered, not out of unrealistic struggles and superhuman efforts, but out of a willingness for letting go and developing great curiosity and receptivity for what is organically alive. This feeling can become constant, it can endure the worst vicissitudes as well as devastating negative emotions, because once wholeness has been felt, it can no longer disintegrate nor disappear into mental imagery. Probably, there is still a long way to go before consciousness can substantially evolve. However, there is encouragement from the individuals who have wanted to share the vision. Walking passively on the road seems to be only one way to go. Krishnamurti, like many others, tries to demonstrate that jumping without fear into the waters of life brings about the strongest connection with the reality which is "What-Is".

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<sup>51</sup> Satprem, p. 50.

## CHAPTER 3

### The Prison of the Known

You may remember the story of how the devil and a friend of his were walking down the street, when they saw ahead of them a man stoop down and pick up something from the ground, look at it, and put it away in his pocket. The friend said to the devil, "What did that man pick up?" "He picked up a piece of truth," said the devil. "That is a very bad business for you, then," said his friend. "Oh, not at all, the devil replied, "I am going to let him organize it."<sup>1</sup>

The problem of conditioning was, for Krishnamurti, a much deeper issue than is currently described in modern psychology. "Freedom from the Known" as he named it, meant for him the capacity to go beyond dualism in all instances of life. Moreover, we shall see with him how fear stands at the door of all our misconceptions about the nature of knowledge. But of the utmost importance, we will try to learn the way in which Krishnamurti integrates the capacity for psychological freedom into the complete framework of human intelligence without any preconceptions about the value of so-called different forms of intelligence, such as intellectual or emotional. That the heart brings what the mind wants is the ultimate demonstration of the

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<sup>1</sup> In Evelyne Blau Krishnamurti, 100 Years. New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1995, p. 85.

one potential accessible to all in total freedom and total intelligence, itself a definition of compassion.

I - Conditioning, Belief Systems, and Fear

Without psychological freedom, there is no truth. Without the personal experience of freedom, there is no feeling for truth. "Truth is a Pathless Land" is the leitmotif of Krishnamurti, who has indeed been mirroring a sense of truth for persons sensitive to his ideas. Krishnamurti knew how to empty the content of his own personality so that someone could be reflected onto him. This is an experience often desired: seeing oneself, without interference, as the human being one is. Liberation from anger, fear, and greed, from limitation of the outcomes of success or pleasure and the psychological illusions they bring, is the goal which drives people to specific teachers willing to provide help and support, because a good teacher is capable of reflecting their shadows to the students. Because there is an enormous sense of freedom in seeing that we are not different from "What-Is", the awareness of the totality of self, of undividedness between observer and observed, or thinker and thought, is precisely the psychological freedom which Krishnamurti urges us to seek:

We sometimes experience a state of tranquillity, of extraordinary clarity and joy, when the mind is serene and still...When a machine is revolving very fast, as a fan with several blades, the separate parts are not visible but appear as one. So the self, the me, seems to be a unified entity but if its activities can be slowed down then we shall perceive that it is not a unified entity but made up of many separate and contending desires and pursuits...Thus

when the mind is tranquil and free of its own activity and chatter, there is supreme wisdom.<sup>2</sup>

But the attempt to reach psychological freedom starts with an observation of mind itself and its state of conditioning. What is the content of this "I", an invisible instrument activated by brain mechanisms believed to be part of the unfathomable totality of consciousness? Describing the contents of this mind-brain is like telling the story of the "dark night of humanity" similar to the way in which a mystic would describe his/her "dark night of the soul". So invasive is the power of impressions drawn from existing belief systems that human beings can not even at times envisage the possibility of a mind being freed from them. In this respect, the content of the conditioned mind is superficial and useless compared to the totality of consciousness.

Krishnamurti seems to suggest that only what provides for the essential operations of daily living is what deserves to remain part of brain memory. Any other form of systematic thinking should drop from the mind in order not to be stored as brain memory. Naturally, this attempt is an impossibility due to the importance of the functions of the brain which is designed to sort, categorize, and accumulate memories for survival. However, the mind is more than a refined computer housed in an organism made of DNA and cells. In the terminology of the Dalai Lama:

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<sup>2</sup> Krishnamurti. "Authentic Reports of Sixteen Talks given in 1945 & 1946. Ojai, CA: Krishnamurti Writings Inc., 1947, pp. 99-100.

"We cannot call that subtlest level of mind the human mind because "human mind is a relative term used only in relation to a human body."<sup>3</sup>

And if this prison-like mind has its limits, then Krishnamurti suggests we go out of its boundaries. But, contrary to traditional teachers, Krishnamurti affirms that there is no way, no method, and no spiritual path to fulfill this purpose. To liberate the mind is based on an irrevocable decision for change, a "first and last step" toward freedom. This is to say that change in consciousness cannot be enforced, regulated or generated by anything or anyone.

We can therefore see that radical change has unlimited power because it happens independently of circumstances, within a movement of the mind which cannot be perceived externally. Yet, this movement toward conscious living through awareness is the very phenomenon which we are attempting to study here with Krishnamurti:

I think that man[woman] has come to a point where he[she] feels that one must have a new mind...Is it possible before man[woman] destroys himself[herself] completely, to bring about a new mind? That is the major question that is confronting most serious and thoughtful people. One has rejected completely the notion that any system, institution, dogma, or religious belief is going to save man[woman]...Is it possible for human beings to bring about a totally different category or dimension of the mind?<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The Dalai Lama. MindScience. Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications, 1993, p. 35.

<sup>4</sup> Krishnamurti. The Way of Intelligence. Madras: KFA India, 1989, p. 135.

Mind conditioning is in great part a continuation of the inherent duality between consciousness and visible matter. Unfortunately, in order to get the whole picture of reality at all times, it would be necessary to experience consciously that reality with the totality of one's body/mind during multiple activities. That is equivalent to saying that, should there be no experience of duality by the mind--therefore no resistance--human beings would be closer in nature to the animal kingdom for whom everything is as it is and undivided, however unreflected.

Under different circumstances, human beings might be able to reach a level of superconscience where they would live in the perfect unity of the divine, or what is meant by such image. Possibly, this is the sole purpose of humankind as Sri Aurobindo described it in his writings: The Life Divine, or The Integral Yoga. However, what Krishnamurti suggests is not the state of a supermind, or of superhumanhood. Evolution has little to do with superior knowledge, power, or genius. That is why the mind can often delude us because it is, by the very nature of its functioning, a mechanistic, divisive principle which hardens the self, or most of the time, remains an arid field of investigation. Krishnamurti would agree that even the greatest social and intellectual accomplishments originate in the realization of a state beyond the mental rather than on the highest form of intellectual inquiry. Krishnamurti uses a rough analogy to convey his message on this form of mind activity. He says that the mind is like a drum which should be used only when

appropriate, and within the concert of other activities. Like a drum, the mind resonates with the thoughts that the external world is feeding it with. To create such resonance inadvertently is indeed the cause of loud disturbing noise:

Our minds are not simple, but to recognize complexity is to be simple. If you would understand yourself, your complexity, there must be open receptivity, the simplicity of non-identification. But we are not aware of beauty or complexity and so we chatter endlessly.<sup>5</sup>

"We do not use the mind, we are wearing it".<sup>6</sup>

While one may think that thoughts are utterly privatized and personalized, it becomes obvious, through some degree of observation, that thoughts are extremely ordinary and repetitive in their commune uniformity. Each and every thought is the result of an impact from the outside world of events. Contrary to illusions of such sort, there is nothing personal to anyone's thoughts. Until one taps into a different potential of the mind, that is, another level of conscious aptitude to intuit and discriminate, there is no presence of anything related to truth in the content of a mind that incessantly thinks. Since part of the mind is used as an instrument designed to analyze and organize, it is incapable of seeing the totality of anything that enters itself. Therefore, if one wants to understand the totality of an experience, or the truth behind a fact, one needs to rely on a state of consciousness of a completely different

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<sup>5</sup> Krishnamurti. "Authentic Reports of Sixteen Talks given in 1945 & 1946". Ojai, CA: Krishnamurti Writings Inc., 1947, p. 106.

<sup>6</sup> Krishnamurti. Collected Works XI: 75-76.

quality. This state pertains to the domain of the silent mind, the meditative mind. When the mind is highly developed, it becomes very sensitive and receptive; it becomes a refined medium which can respond more perfectly to conscious intuition. This is a way to say that the mind, if seated in deep grey matter, can also be the expression of the spirituality and sacredness of truth:

So you can observe all this and find out the beauty of living, and there is such beauty, in which there is no effort but living with great ecstasy, in which pleasure and thought and fear don't enter at all.<sup>7</sup>

The human propensity to overuse mental activity more than often results in the most awesome discoveries and progress in medical science, astronomy, and industrial technology, in the twentieth century especially. On the other hand, political and economical achievements during the same period are distinct examples of the dominant conquering power of the mind. External forms of power expressed in the manufacturing of machinery, weaponry, and scientific gadgetry is a somewhat naive demonstration of the inability to express those same powers internally. Meanwhile, we are trying to demonstrate that if the mind can experience a certain degree of silence away from thought, the vital, physical elements of the mind are in a definite state of relaxation, a state of being where harmony can be felt at all levels. This is the first step, and the only one

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<sup>7</sup> Krishnamurti. On Mind and Thought. HarperSan Francisco, 1993, p. 33.

necessary, toward the quality of intelligence described by Krishnamurti. In this conscious step is the key to perceiving the difference between storing information in memory, and knowing through understanding experience:

That's it. We can only come into contact with it when the self is not. To put it very simply, when the self is not, there is beauty, silence, space; then that intelligence, which is born of compassion, operates through the brain. It is very simple.<sup>8</sup>

Ordinarily, major life decisions are based on the capacity to use reason, or rational thinking, according to one's goals. But reason is only the storage of information inside the memory of the brain. And memory, in turn, is organized by thoughts. This operation is limited, it is a non-sophisticated function compared not only to the full potential of the brain, but to the vastness of consciousness itself. There is no need to question the nature of belief systems to see that they are sporadic and inconsistent.

In the preceding chapter, we stressed the value of an immanent reality, and how a sense of that same reality comes about when we are open to "What-Is". We can also see that acting, which usually implies the use of language, or verbalizing, is what reveals meaning to us. Traditionally, meaning used to be represented through myths directly coming from the imagination, as opposed to mere linguistics. But through history, what human beings say and do continues to be infinitely more revealing than what is unconsciously dictated by the shifts

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<sup>8</sup> Id. p. 130.

in belief systems. Most of the time, no one ever questions the extent of the belief systems those actions are based upon. Furthermore and evidently, the experience of reality is different for each one of us. Reason is constraining in the sense that it cannot describe adequately all the modes of perceptions experienced psychologically. We also know that too much insistence or dependence on myths is ignoring the fact that awareness means higher intelligence, less reliance on images which become irrelevant over time. It is clear to see that in many religions, mythology and imagery not only have not kept up with historical change, but have degenerated in wrong integration of principles such as the nature of the feminine, of time, or of the union of opposites...

The individuals who were very aware like the great discoverers, artists, and sages, have always been ahead of their own historical time. In the modern era, the physical dimension of time produces a sense of linearity which manifests itself in the concept of history, in turn responsible for many kinds of fragmentation. But why should we be exclusively historical beings? For example, esotericism, gnosticism, and mysticism have all emphasized a global view of the life of the spirit in order to compensate for the weakness of psychic meaning found in exoteric religions, too overly grounded in historical time. One cannot deny that there is still a great deal of subliminal superstition pervasive in modern religious denominations, due primarily to a split between esoteric and exoteric

interpretations, and the fixations built on such divisions.

In short, fear is the enemy which must be profoundly understood in order to be overcome:

If I am torn away from everything I know and believe, I want to be reasonably certain of the state of things to which I am going. So the brain cells have created a pattern and those brain cells refuse to create another pattern, which may be uncertain. The movement from certainty to uncertainty is what I call fear.<sup>9</sup>

Since fear comes out in great part through subjective analysis, the activity of mirroring oneself in the outside world can add to misconceptions about fear itself. An analogy can be made by looking at the nature of romantic love. Lovers start identifying with the ecstasy of bringing pleasure and affection to each other, and their union often collapses in psychological bargain and manipulation of the very source of affection which came out of the spontaneity of their feelings for each other. But as a civilization, becoming mature would mean being able to acknowledge the manipulations and dependencies upon common ideologies and economies, and being able to give back what is being received socio-culturally--without fear. Not just one religion can do the giving, but the religious heritage of humankind might be able to pursue it; the same could be applied to political systems. Like Krishnamurti was trying to convey, all the major steps in civilization, and especially the religious steps, have gone through the same phases in their aspirations to

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<sup>9</sup> Krishnamurti. On Fear. San Francisco, CA: HarperSan Francisco, 1994 , p. 7.

undo an unconscious struggle with worldly existence. A very brief example of this can be seen in the western world with the following periods in the history of religions: 1) the Seeking period of Judaism; 2) the Receiving period of Christianity; 3) and if we extrapolate slightly, the Giving period of the New Age we seem to be entering. Because he visualized religious and social growth beyond those steps, Krishnamurti thought it was helpful to move from the rational features of the mind to the depth of consciousness, including the so-called subconscious:

I hope you and I see the same thing, understand not only verbally but also non-verbally that for these problems, whatever they be--economic, social, religious, personal--we need a mind and heart that is not put together by thought. Thought is not going to solve our problems, because these problems have come into being through the activities of thought. And to bring about a fundamental, radical, revolutionary, psychological change is our main problem.<sup>10</sup>

The issue of fear is understandable in Buddhist terminology where the nature of darkness is named nothingness. The experience of nothingness generates a great awakening. It is a powerful path to awareness: to be suspended in no-time with no belief system. At last, an understanding comes about that there is no such thing as a self which we keep calling by our name: the ego is impermanent and illusory. But it takes tremendous courage to stay within the darkness and ignore the fear of the unknown, especially at times when there are no guides or teachers available, like the no-path suggested by Krishnamurti. The

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<sup>10</sup> Krishnamurti. On Mind and Thought. HarperSan Francisco, 1993, p. 55.

consciousness of being and non-being in the emptiness of the Nothing where all potential is concentrated in its purest, invisible form is not to be feared. For only through this visualization of existential fear a vital change can occur. Nothingness is a dynamic whole which includes all things in their compact essence, beyond concepts and objects. Freedom means going beyond the duality in all things: this could be a way to sum up Krishnamurti's exposition of freedom:

One must be aware of oneself neither introspectively nor analytically, but actually be aware of oneself as one is and see if it is at all possible to be entirely free of all those issues that seem to clog the mind.<sup>11</sup>

But is the experience of emptiness or of fear liberating or not? From a Buddhist standpoint, yes. From a western standpoint it must be further interpreted for correct communication. Therefore, how much of its purity, simplicity, and non-ambiguity is left? In the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta for example, the divine is in and out of one's self; in Christianity, the divine is externalized in the humanity of Jesus; in Buddhism, the divine is encountered in nothingness which is an experience, not a concept. Therefore, it remains crucial, for a correct observation of the mechanisms of conditioning, to exercise prudent usage of the emotional and intellectual centers. Remaining anchored to the known, in fear of the unknown, cancels out the possibility to distinguish between needs, desires, and

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<sup>11</sup> Krishnamurti. The Flight of the Eagle. New York: Harper & Row, 1971, p. 9.

instincts which are coming from the ego. Therefore, it is through lack of discrimination that we oversee the necessity to comprehend the nature of what we call knowledge. We only see good and bad, personal God or transcendence, conflict or harmony, simply because there is little incentive given to self-reliance, which would otherwise lead to discrimination.

The notion of knowledge and why we compartmentalize what we learn relates in large part to the notions that we have about communication. Of course, we must adopt a common language, but it need not become limited. It is precisely because of the fear of certain limitations and delusions brought about by daydreaming that all is covered with excess of verbalizing and the various acts which ensue. Lama Govinda, who did not sympathize with Krishnamurti's teachings, however abounds in the same reflections about delusion:

To live in a body is what we do, until we realize that truth is very much about understanding the mind. Individuals who have reached a high level of conviction or passionate interest in their lives are the ones who usually have little or no space in their daily activities for conventional religious rituals. They go out in the world on their own private resources looking for truth, without negativity or delusions, conscious of their own personal limitations.<sup>12</sup>

Krishnamurti also says that the struggle with fear has to do with distinguishing between ordinary events and the relevance of "What-Is". One creates private little tortures through identification with each thought. Human beings create angels and

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<sup>12</sup> Lama Anagarika Govinda. Creative Meditation and Multi-Dimensional consciousness. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1984.

paradise, but also hells and plots, combined with many names and images for God, primarily in order to find relief from the damage they do to themselves. Nothing changes unless we continue to trust that life itself holds all the opportunities:

...The things of the mind are still idolatrous. One may not worship a statue--considering that idolatrous, silly, superstitious--but one does worship, as most people do, the things of the mind. That is also idolatrous. To be devoted to a picture or an idea, to a master, is not meditation. Obviously, it's a form of escape from oneself. It's a very comforting escape, but it's still an escape.<sup>13</sup>

At about the same time, we have it expressed by Father Bede Griffiths, who also criticized Krishnamurti, while apparently thinking on the same level:

Every form of priesthood and sacrifice, of ritual and sacrament, belongs to the world of 'signs' which is destined to pass away... Today, more than ever, we are being called to recognize the limitations of every form of religion... All their outward forms are destined to pass away... Idolatry consists in stopping at the sign; true religion is the passing through the sign to the Reality.<sup>14</sup>

It is the instinct toward energy which guides us to the essence of the conscious fullness of life. But when it comes to understanding fear truly, doubting and questioning are the crucial elements making a well-balanced intellect. This is different from skepticism because the endeavor of questioning is a positive, optimistic form of inquiry. More importantly, it is a precaution against dangerous or detrimental forms of

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<sup>13</sup> Krishnamurti. On God. HarperSan Francisco, 1992, p. 83.

<sup>14</sup> Bede Griffiths. The Marriage of East and West. Templegate Publishers, Springfield, IL, 1982, p. 149.

conditioning and belief systems. Inquiry is inherent to human nature, it is the reason behind cause and effect; and a decent education should be based on the development of these natural processes of the mind, thereby becoming more than the mere gathering of information, as we will see later in this thesis.

And as we already know, modern psychology and behavioral science are more ambivalent than ever about the nature of mental states: are they just constructions of the mind and is the mind simply a machine? How does classical science describe the mind, what efforts have been made in researching the nature of the mind? In the eagerness to describe mental activity, models and paradigms are constructed of a perfect mechanism which would fit into the "real" mechanism. Psychology tells us that, indeed, a great deal of information processing is made out of symbolic interactions which constitute habitual forms of private actions. But from the symbols which go beyond words, we learn that intentionality and normativity are part of the speech act, of the language game (as the early Wittgenstein would put it) creating the necessity for elocution. Nevertheless, privatization of language, or of emotions means more than having a concept of their being grounded in the mind. Perhaps, we may ask with Krishnamurti if religion is a form of dependence or a self-emptying, and if humanity really needs myths? Should myths depict the future or ground us in the ancient past, and for what purpose in terms of awareness? What is it that is real about the future? Are myths re-enactments of deep levels of the psyche? Should not

philosophy be more than a language game if it is to serve the betterment of humanity? Unfortunately, in view of much confusion and a weak foundation, accepting doctrines often means the only way for people to become integrated into their own community.

All of the above is mentioned as a long parenthesis to show that freeing the mind is a very uncomfortable enterprise. It implies much more than placing oneself in a state of contemplative openness toward an ideal of being in touch with the divine, or attaining a stable condition of enlightenment. Having a free mind means that one has to plunge into the abyss of darkness created by the bond of the emotions and desires we cling to:

You say you can face these fears intelligently. I question whether you face them intelligently. I question whether you can have intelligence before you have resolved fear. Intelligence comes only when fear is not. Intelligence is light and you cannot deal with darkness when light is not. Light exists when darkness is not. I am questioning whether you can deal with fear intelligently when fear exists. I say you cannot. You may rationalize it, you may see the nature of it, avoid it or go beyond it, but that is not intelligence.

Is it that the whole structure of the cells is frightened of not being? That exists in every living thing. Even the little ant is afraid of not being. We see fear is there, part of human existence, and one becomes tremendously aware of it in a crisis. How does one deal with it at that moment when the surge of fear comes about? Why do we wait for the crisis? I am just asking.<sup>15</sup>

Another aspect of the difficulty lies in the fact that there should be no motivation or impulse to react against emotions.

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<sup>15</sup> Krishnamurti. Exploration into Insight. Harper & Row San Francisco, 1980, pp. 95-96.

Emotions should be accepted for what they are: pleasant or unpleasant states of consciousness. This acceptance is not a passive mode of observation, because only from acceptance comes the possibility of letting go for progress toward conscious living. The purpose of observing emotions is not to suppress them, for doing so would contradict healthy behavior. We cannot avoid entering the spectrum of emotions. But there is a possibility to step back and view them from a space in the mind where there is freedom. This is what Krishnamurti means when he insists on being free from the known. Not only can we view emotions from this sort of privileged space in the mind, but we can see any object entering the mind, be it intellectual or emotional. This observation of emotional and mental states is called acceptance, because it is not contemplative (subjective) or judgmental (objective). In extreme cases, the same principle applies to certain levels of physical pain. One can decide mentally to accept physical pain without the fear attached to the feeling, and pain eventually becomes tolerable to a great extent. Very often, anger, fear, anxiety, boredom, jealousy, greed, or lust are not distinguishable from other mental deviations and illusions about the personality. The traps from the mental are like contractions in the body when it is confronted to something dangerous or painful, while a state of mental or muscular relaxation makes attention possible.

In closing section I, let us say that, from Krishnamurti's point of view, freedom is what is real in existence, moment to

moment, not belonging to either the immanent or the transcendent. To see in one's mind means that the full content of consciousness becomes visible. Freedom is pure observation, pure experience, in the sense described by Japanese philosopher Kitaro Nishida:

To experience means to know facts just as they are, to know in accordance with facts by completely relinquishing one's own fabrications. What we usually refer to as experience is adulterated with some sort of thought, so by pure I am referring to the state of experience just as it is without the least addition of deliberative discrimination.<sup>16</sup>

To see in one's mind means that the container of thought becomes visible. The psychological and the transcendental are no longer divided; the observer and the observed have become one.

## II - Freedom and the Nature of Knowledge

Krishnamurti keeps asking the following question: "Is thought a valid mode of cognition?" In other words, one owes to find out what is the proper role of thought beyond the functional aspects, since thought is generally neurotic and erratic, producing the "me" and the "not-me". There seems to be a split between thought and action, between the need to act--be it in ordinary actions, or acts highly reasoned--as thought arises into the mind, and before action itself takes place. For Krishnamurti, as for most who are familiar with the Buddhist tradition, there are many ways to study the mind. Let us look at just two of them. Conceptually, the individual can see reality objectively with sensory perception, and subjectively through

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<sup>16</sup> Kitaro Nishida. An Inquiry Into the Good. Tr. Masao Abe and Christopher Ives. Yale University Press, 1990, p. 3.

analysis by the mind. In the end, the understanding of reality belongs to the individual and nothing else; then, there is the storage of memory in the mind which is what Krishnamurti calls conditioning and is consequently limited and unreliable for seeing truth. In this approach, one can also see that the difficulty is between the sort of knowledge brought by thinking and the nature of action itself. For if knowledge is stored in memory, it can never be of the present moment. Whether it be turning the ignition key in the car, or remembering one's place of birth, all knowledge pertains to brain memory. One is faced with the actual impossibility of the brain to have a fresh insight into the present moment in order to act adequately, instantly, with total intelligence. Finally, Krishnamurti restates what the Buddhists have always suggested in terms of practice: a piece of mind observes the mind. It is only once subjectivity and objectivity are experienced simultaneously that we have awareness. Mind being aware of itself is therefore not a topic to approach conceptually, hence the support of Krishnamurti's suggestion to revisit knowledge, practice meditation in action, and perhaps eventually see the roots of compassion.

Mind-study is a very sensitive topic in western philosophy, but remaining somewhat stagnant. It is continually discussed further in modern branches of Buddhism. Is this the very reason why Krishnamurti abandons the conceptual approach? I think that he cannot do otherwise if he cares to maintain and share the

integrity of his vision of truth. It is impossible to be self-aware within the duality brought about by intellectual analysis: for the mind which studies the object it has created continues to study a projection of itself... Consequently, what Krishnamurti understands by meditation is a solution to act in the present or in "no-time", and by doing so totally conquer some of our deepest conditioning. It is within the meditative mind that valid knowledge, or the knowledge of what is true, can arise unplanned. For intuition is unmediated, standing at a level external to thought. In a way, Krishnamurti is anticipating the work of the deconstructionists... In his wish to make things simple and unadulterated, he would say that language is obviously of no help, the psychological mind in the present state of evolution being a stumbling block to any form of meaningful understanding, and memory being barely an instrument of operation for survival:

Meditation breaks down the frontiers of consciousness; it breaks down the mechanism of thought and the feeling that thought arouses. Meditation caught in a method, in a system of rewards and promises, cripples and tames energy. Meditation is the freeing of energy in abundance; and control, discipline, and suppression spoil the purity of that energy...Meditation is danger for it destroys everything, nothing whatsoever is left, not even a whisper of desire, and in this vast, unfathomable emptiness there is creation and love.<sup>17</sup>

If the state of human consciousness were to change substantially, it is more than likely that modes of referring to models and ideologies would progressively disappear. At this

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<sup>17</sup> Krishnamurti. On Fear. San Francisco, CA: HarperSan Francisco, 1994, p. 99.

time already, doors can be open by anyone, and adherence to a religion, except in very specific regions, is a free choice; nor is occultism the privilege of Mystery schools. Relativism is a science from which we are learning that nothing is permanently written in stone, to start with the size of the universe, or the survival of the species, or the ways to stop war and population growth... But one thing which continues to be clearly perceived in the history of spirituality is that if freedom is at the beginning of anything, it is not to be found somewhere in paradise or nirvana. Physical freedom might still unfortunately remain a privilege in certain parts of the world, but the psychological freedom which Krishnamurti is describing is an individual internal act. Krishnamurti would ask questions such as: Is there freedom gained in changing the borders of a nation if that means opening the door to newly defined forms of conditioning?

For only confronting authority within oneself is the key to total freedom: freedom from the known, but also freedom from what could lead to further entanglements of the mind. The possibility to question is the operation which propels the desire to be free from the known and from the pervasive influence of perspectives which would not be adopted out of one's own free doubting, questing, and testing. We may belabor the point by saying that testing means verifying the state of compassion within oneself. For that purpose questioning is indispensable, because it is essential to avoid negative forms of skepticism. Truth brings

freedom because it moves with the movement of life itself, meaning that there is no truth without compassion... Inevitably, for someone or some entity to supposedly hold the truth is to establish a form of superiority which is incompatible with the subsequent position of inferiority of the one who needs to accept it and live by it without any possibility of testing, without any chance to question the known, nor to experiment with the unknown in his/her own life and self. As Krishnamurti said matter-of-factly: "The superior and the inferior cannot share the same chamber!" Is it then a coincidence if many who saw the truth, consciously or not, and vehemently tried to tell the world around them were killed for it?

One powerful remark came out of the symposium at Harvard University during which the Dalai Lama commented about the state of mind in today's world: establishing a fixed residence for the truth through dogma, instruction, and rigid laws is doomed to failure, when mentally and emotionally the world is still struggling with the law of opposites:

But dogmatism cripples any science, including psychology, the inner science. Dogmatism ensues where hypothesis hardens into ideology. It puts blinders on the observer, whose narrowed vision overlooks enormous amounts of evidence. And who is challenging this dogmatism of modern science? From within the West, we do not see any credible challenge.<sup>18</sup>

...[His Holiness] mentioned overcoming the innate, naive absolutism that makes cling to our conceptual structurings of reality and so come into conflict with others who do not agree with them, and giving rise to greed and anger over it. This is a reprogramming task on the level of an educational

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<sup>18</sup> Mindscience, An East-West Dialogue. Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications, 1993, p. 59.

process that employs contemplative methods.<sup>19</sup>

Of course, it can be said that the challenge of freedom is located in the neuro-physiological system. But as abstract as Krishnamurti's teachings seem to be to a lot of people, they are meant to be applied to daily activities. The challenge consists in the demand that is imposed on brain cells to be exposed to the fire of intelligence. This challenge we learn individually, without teacher or teaching, through attention, meditation, and awareness. Standing still before our thoughts is what protects the mind from its own impetuous tricks. The re-alignment of one's being implies going beyond the fear of letting go of these tricks. Like we saw earlier, reality on the earth plane is a shifting ground which offers no certainty, and at times brings disillusion because of our interpretation of events through thought. But the possibility to see "What-Is" does build a solid foundation from which to question and quest goodness and truth, not necessarily happiness and spiritual contentment, since challenges and resistance are allied in the process of becoming conscious. Predictions, premonitions and revelations will always present themselves to human perception, making no belief system right or wrong, but rather irrelevant. Only imposition, or the state of dependency on these beliefs prevents the greatest number of people from seeing "What-Is".

The source of "Freedom from the Known" may be found in

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<sup>19</sup> Id. The Dalai Lama, pp. 64-65.

Krishnamurti's decisive lecture given in 1929 at the age of thirty-two upon his decision to dissolve the organization who was responsible for making of him a spiritual idol, to the point of fomenting reverence toward him as a "World Teacher". "Truth is a Pathless Land" is the title given to a speech in which Krishnamurti officially declares his life's goal to set people absolutely free from belief systems, including the one he would have made of himself as a spiritual guide. By acting in such manner, Krishnamurti was setting himself up to being abandoned by most of his wealthy, devoted followers, members of the influential Theosophical Movement (the then called "Order of the Star") which had placed immense hope in his bringing enlightenment and peace to the world. He was thereby taking the responsibility to be on his own, loosing the opportunity to share widely a vision of the ultimate truth. The force behind the words Krishnamurti used during this stunning presentation in front of an arrogant religious elite affirms his courage to leave everything behind and follow his own integrity, also showing the intensity of the realization he had gone through over the previous years:

I maintain that no organization can lead man to spirituality. If any organization is created for this purpose, it becomes a crutch, a weakness, a bondage, and must cripple the individual, and prevent him from growing, from establishing his uniqueness, which lies in the discovery for himself of that absolute, unconditioned Truth. I have only one purpose: to make man free, to urge him towards freedom, to help him to break away from all limitations, for that alone will give him eternal happiness, will give him the unconditioned realization of the

self.[Emphasis mine] <sup>20</sup>

In this declaration we see that if there is no specific way to truth other than one's own, it is in great part because socio-cultural and psychological language represent the core taken by a form of knowledge which is totally alienating to the comprehension of compassion. Pushing the idea of liberation as being grounded in the issue of language, one soon discovers the value of silence as a bonding tool of communication for the sharing of truth. Such was the conviction of Krishnamurti, that over sixty years of public speaking, he did not use new vocabulary or any elaborated rhetoric. This feature of the talks has driven many readers, and especially scholars, to criticize his use of language as being limited and at the edge of redundancy or obscurity. Even if the general message looks pallid to some readers, it was undoubtedly Krishnamurti's constant preoccupation to bring the meaning of simple words to the level of the truth he was trying to communicate. Each word aims to splatter into genuine understanding. Words as simple as: anger, fear, death, time, love, suffering, pain, conflict, etc. should ring as true to an attentive listener as the sight of a stunning landscape: the view not from the intellect, but the total grasp which comes from a free mind. Krishnamurti destroys

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<sup>20</sup> "Truth Is A Pathless Land." The Order of the Star in the East was founded in 1911 to proclaim the coming of the World Teacher. Krishnamurti was made Head of the Order. On August 2, 1929, the opening day of the annual Star Camp at Ommen, Holland, Krishnamurti dissolved the Order before 3,000 members. The full text of the talk is available from the Krishnamurti Foundation of America, P.O. Box 1560, Ojai, CA 93024.

language, not with a nihilistic purpose, but in order to build silence into a public, collective language providing total, authentic understanding from the perspective of truth:

Words are only a means of communication but the word is not the thing. The word, the symbol is not the actuality, and when is caught up in words, then it becomes very difficult to extricate oneself from the symbols, the words, the ideas that actually prevent perception. Though one must use words, words are not the fact. So if we can also be aware, on guard, that the word is not the fact, then we can begin to go into this question very deeply.<sup>21</sup>

But where, within the depth of such language, does one start to be moved toward a passion for change, for transformation toward the realization, in actual life, of a free psychological state of being both lasting and enhancing? In his early writings of 1929<sup>22</sup>, Krishnamurti described the free individual as: "A tiger ready to leap, an eagle about to soar, the bow, as the arrow is flying out." [my translation from the French]. Such would be, in his eyes, the quality of a life fully lived in perfect attention to "What-Is".

In 1930, shortly after his brother's death, Krishnamurti said that no experience can be considered true if it does not provide a change in awareness. Let us underline that the word mind, when used by Krishnamurti, normally means the totality of the experience of consciousness--including the subconscious, the intellect, and the emotions. Sometimes Krishnamurti uses the

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<sup>21</sup> Krishnamurti. On God. HarperSan Francisco, 1992, p. 6.

<sup>22</sup> Now out of print. Mostly written originally for the "Order of the Star" publications.

term mind/heart to make sure that one understands that knowledge is acquired through the emotions but with the mind, and that one needs to go beyond the mind in order to understand the truth in a way that is constant. Before his audiences, Krishnamurti undoes the mechanism of the mind and interferes with the defilement of thoughts which impede heart, mind, and intelligence to unite. If there is never any trace of persuasion or authority in his tone of voice over the decades, it is not just in order to be consistent with his own view of truth, but probably because compassion is inherent to truth. In his lectures, one hears the sharing of facts and the pursuit of truth as incentives for every one to learn. Even if Krishnamurti found the time to write journals and notes, he gave preference to talks through which the meaning of words could be made possible as a direct experience for listeners.

At the same time, bringing the "flame of attention" to mind/brain activity is a demanding aspect of the meditation as a lifestyle suggested by Krishnamurti. Evidently, the key to freedom is not to relate thought to past or future, which would create more mental patterns. It is clear that there is no freedom where there are habits. And it is stressful to control habits, it is essential to see their structure. Fighting anything, be it habits, thoughts, emotional patterns, only brings more energy to their activity in the mind, while watching their arising provides a release from the impulse to react against them.

It is a source of joy when freedom is felt as an unlimited capacity to sense immediacy without any obstruction by impulses or reactions. The unattentive mind which clings to its own thoughts gives way to the alert mind which is captivated with curiosity for the energy of life around itself. Free from thinking, the mind/brain enters a state of peaceful attention which is the ultimate act of communion with the external world. In a more mundane sense, communion is usually felt as an emotional need to be with others, to transfer some of one's personality for the sake of communication or necessity, as the case may be. But communion based on emotion does not have the clarity nor the quality of a silent mind. A freed consciousness being freed is in perpetual communion with the totality of life.

However, the challenge for Krishnamurti was to show, through the use of language and the difficulties associated with it, that non-dependence, non-reliance on outside authorities is not a state of rebellion, and is not to be feared as a potential threat to the tissue of the social network. Krishnamurti explains that the difference between letting go of undesired conditioning, rejecting morals and established authorities is to be found in the experience of one's own internal, reliable source of authority. He explains that habitual rebellion means wishing to discard what is embarrassing or disruptive to one's contentment, will, or pleasure. But constructive, intelligent rebellion against conditioning is the act of observing limitations and seeking transformation at the personal level. Therefore,

positive rebellion is the act of observing limitations, embracing them, and remaining passionately curious for conscious living. To eliminate what does no longer belong to the essential discovered on one's own means starting to be acquainted with the real causes of conditioning and suffering. There is no higher authority, in the sense Krishnamurti declares it, than the essential, timeless law discovered in oneself, which is owned through intense labor and the cultivation of attention:

So, attention is of primary importance, but it does not come through the effort of concentration. Attention is a state in which the mind is ever learning without a center around which knowledge gathers as accumulated experience.<sup>23</sup>

All forms of human conditioning are like the branches of one big tree. Religion, science, politics, law, psychology and philosophy are branches of the tree of life cut and trimmed to bring new growth. But Krishnamurti considers that the only value to anxiety is the one that dares going deep into the roots of the tree, since it is characteristic of life that it does not want to stop and remain absorbed in one sort of emotion or the other. The energy of the life principle demands freedom from prisons, starting with those created by one's own personality. In this view, attention is eternal, unlimited, and creative. It has a living quality, an energetic feeling to itself, whereas thought is: "a product manufactured by the brain", an imitative, cumulative, therefore static object. The creative mind is free,

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<sup>23</sup> Krishnamurti. Life Ahead. New York: Harper & Row, 1963, p. 17.

while the mind/brain can only act and react in sequence. The key to attention is to let go of the words produced by thought, and to follow the aliveness of the still movement of the mind.

### III - Freedom and Integral Intelligence

Freedom without authority is far from being a new concept, but it may very well be a contemporary realization. In a subtle way, Krishnamurti suggests that each one of us be his/her own priest, each person as captain of his/her own self-consciousness. Like truth, intelligence in Krishnamurti's sense is the perfect leveler of human equality. Like truth, intelligence is a free domain which does not belong to anyone, and does not remain fixed. We are all equal within the meeting point of intelligence, available through perfect attention. Truth will appear when the mind stops dissecting the positive from the negative in everything it needs to decode. As a matter of fact, in Krishnamurti's ironical version, to "be in a state of sin" is to consciously postpone the ending of the internal conflict created by the mind in its necessity to separate. In other words, to divide mentally is failing to realize that such is the very nature of the limited mind. Seeing how the mind separates permits to go beyond the limits. It is the awakening of intelligence which is accessible to all, but not through forms of education which do not seek any interest into the study of what it means to be fully human.

It is obvious that Krishnamurti questions very vigorously traditional views about intelligence. Intelligence as a quotient

is not even to be mentioned. Even if still very much in use, IQ tests are to intelligence what pulse rate is to the heart rhythm: it can change abruptly depending on the circumstances and the environment! But to acknowledge this misconception is honestly accepting the fact that a measurement of intelligence still defies scientific grasp. And why is it so? The beginning of an answer could be found in the research currently done on yoga and western psychology. The reason why there is no equivalent to yoga in the western tradition of philosophy or psychology might well be the cause of a weakness created by the obsession to consider reality as the external phenomenon called the physical world around us. At the end of the twentieth century in the West, we are still left with the assumption that reality can only be observed from the inside out, but that observing from the outside in is an intellectual luxury, a narcissistic occupation, the sort of thing which mystics or religious loonies have time for. As we will see in later chapters, modern physics tends to approach the study of consciousness without apprehension, primarily because of the impact of quantum mechanics in the past two or three decades. But when it comes to a mere definition of intelligence agreeable and sensical to popular demand, why not try to demonstrate that intelligence can be a phenomenon? It is very much to this point that consciousness integrated into body and mind, as shown by Krishnamurti, becomes the phenomenon of compassion in ordinary life. Consciousness has a physical element to itself which is the result of integrating the various

features of the mind. But consciousness could continue to exist after disappearance of the physical:

The I is the result of the world, the you is the result of the world. And to the man who sees this deeply with a profound insight, there is no you or I. Therefore that profound insight is compassion--which is intelligence. And the intelligence says: If you want a result I can't give it to you, I am not the product of a result. Compassion says: This state is not a result, therefore there is no cause.<sup>24</sup>

To a traditional observer, this assumption goes much too far; therefore, it is unacceptable to science. That the self could be something immaterial not contained within the physical form is almost taboo in the West. That the mind could just be a system which operates back and forth between the self (the observer) and reality (the observed) belongs more to the domain of physics than metaphysics, which are not usually considered part of a functional education. In the eastern tradition however, where the science of yoga has always been part of an education which consists primarily in developing the mind with the idea of stimulating full development of the intelligence, we find more capacity for integration in mature life. In the Sutras of Patanjali (140 BCE) for example the steps toward this development are clearly exposed. In their synthesis, and in modern language, they sound as the following:

Having adduced certain proofs for the existence of the self as apart from the mind, Patanjali goes on to speak of the true function of the mind as a factor in consciousness. The

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<sup>24</sup> Krishnamurti. The Wholeness of Life. HarperSan Francisco, 1979, p. 254.

mind is a link between the seer and the seen. It is the lens through which external objects are registered, and also through which the seer is enabled to make himself effective in waking consciousness. "The mind reacts both to the seer and to the seen." [IV, 23.]<sup>25</sup>

We could therefore analyze the situation as follows, taking into consideration the meaning which Krishnamurti suggests we bring to intelligence. First of all, let one agree that intelligence can be synonym to either wisdom, or discernment. With no intent to confuse the reader, it might be useful to address this distinction carefully, because as one will see, there must be considerably more to intelligence than what modern education is responsible for. Part of the inadequacy to understand or define intelligence dwells in the tendency to divide it into pragmatic and fixed categories. This seems to have been the most satisfactory overview of intelligence since the first inception of IQ tests in the 1920s. And it is perfectly tangible that most individuals, regardless of their cultural and physical environment, obtain results in the development of several "categories" of knowledge. What might be totally overlooked is that the same individuals possess great levels of integration of intelligence. While this is less measurable, it is precisely what makes them flourish into awareness. This is when it becomes crucially important to review our current educational and scientific purposes with a high level of integrity in defining the nature of intelligence and of consciousness:

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<sup>25</sup> The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali. An Interpretation by William Q. Judge. Los Angeles, CA: The Theosophy Company, 1987.

I mean by that word flowering that nothing hinders us, nothing blocks or prevents us from actually growing deeply, inwardly. Most of us hardly ever flower, grow, bloom. Something happens in the course of our life which stultifies us, deadens us, so that there is no deep inward nourishment.<sup>26</sup>

If we look at extreme examples such as the case of the homeless, or the survivor in Ethiopia or Calcutta, we might be able to visualize the point which Krishnamurti was trying to make. The personal attitude which determines the success of the outcome in the life of the unemployed, the refugee, or the starved, cannot be based strictly on skills and reactions, but on the combination of all subdivisions in the seat of consciousness. To see "What-Is" and not be vanquished by the power of hunger, despair, or injustice is to make a leap of faith into consciousness, and to be able to grasp the energy which is there for the taking. The mind which constantly navigates between the conscious self and the external circumstances (as negative as they might be) is not the mechanism which is going to act intelligently. What Krishnamurti repeats in his own words, after Patanjali, is that the pure energy of the conscious self provides for an intelligent act. Perhaps this intelligence will dictate that accepting death is the only choice for someone who is ill or persecuted, but as repulsive as it looks, it will be a conscious realization. In less extreme situations, what we see activated here is the energy of consciousness itself when it comes from the observer without

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<sup>26</sup> Talking with students and staff at Brockwood Park School on "Inward Flowering." London, 1977.

active interference from the mental field:

First of all, there is tremendous energy, boundless energy, not energy created by thought, the energy that is born out of this knowledge; there is a totally different kind of energy, which then acts. That energy is compassion, love. Then that love and compassion are intelligence and that intelligence acts.<sup>27</sup>

These ideas are unwelcome in western philosophy because they sound overly idealist and abstract, whereas the aim of eastern philosophy was in fact to study the mind in order to simplify action and make it more likely to become moral and ethical.

The purpose of studying one's own mind prior to reaching out in the world with hopeful intentions to remedy to its injustices is not as selfish as it seems a priori. Out of one's personal analysis and experience of suffering is born an irresistible and foundational appeal to transfer conscious energy to heal others. Such was the purpose of the Tibetan yogis in the Himalayas, so-called fakirs, and other celibate monks who retired from the world. How are we to judge, in the twenty-first century, the value and pragmatism of their methods in comparison to our fairly recent study of consciousness? This is a deep issue, which Krishnamurti tackled into very seriously: what could be more important than the development of the mind toward a form of intelligence which will integrate all human capacities for movement, emotions, and intellect? Probably, the emphasis should be to extend western horizons toward other cultural and

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<sup>27</sup> Krishnamurti. The Way of Intelligence. Madras: KFA India, 1989, p. 60.

psychological approaches. Observing how Asian, African, or Native American populations have addressed the issue of education, might be as useful as implementing from a distance on the validity of making changes into systems already in place. In a technologically designed world, the greatest comfort might be that there will be less to analyze and memorize, and more to develop and harmonize. Learning precise technical skills in communication may become sufficient to feed the mind. But the techniques of observation, discrimination, synthesis, and choiceless awareness, which relate to the core being of the observer, should have priority in the process of educating.

Similarly, it is interesting to see, but not very convincing, that in our determination to classify intelligence, we have divided it into specific and peremptory sorts such as spatial, logical, artistic, or linguistic. But what significance does this categorizing provide to the question of finding the observer? American philosopher Richard Rorty, currently teaching at the University of Virginia, makes a positive claim in saying that the mind is the instrument which reflects nature for the observer to look at and learn from:

The next stage is to think that to understand how to know better is to understand how to improve the activity of a quasi-visual faculty, the Mirror of Nature, and thus to think of knowledge as an assemblage of accurate representations. Then comes the idea that the way to have accurate representations is to find, within the Mirror, a special privileged class of representations so compelling that their accuracy cannot be doubted.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Richard Rorty. Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature. Princeton University Press, 1979, p. 163.

This attempt is somehow in tune with the view of knowledge and conditioning of Krishnamurti, however it does not necessarily suggest: a) that the observer is part of consciousness (immortal and insubstantial); or, b) that nature is the totality of reality. In the oriental tradition, the universe is not limited to what human beings see empirically. And as we now know from the New Physics, a lot of what we see in the universe is a projection of the observer who is doing the observation.

It might be helpful to come back for a moment to some of the teachings of the Buddhist schools, particularly the Tibetan, to stress the importance given to the many levels of the mind and to the various degrees of subtlety the mind entails. The work of the Yogi/Yogini is to discover these levels successively, until the light of intelligence comes out of the void at the end of journeying from one subtle ground to the other. Not that this enterprise relates to modern living, but it is important to the effect of reminding motivated people that the physical-emotional process of growing has its rewards; we see this very clearly described by Robert A.F. Thurman, Professor of Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Studies at Columbia University in New York City:

And then the final goal is to bring that non-duality into every aspect of daily life so that one becomes a walking manifestation of clear light, absolute voidness and great bliss. One is love and compassion in every gesture. This is why the Dalai Lama has such a wonderful feeling about him and why it feels so empty when he leaves; because he is a

master of this tradition. <sup>29</sup>

Therefore, continuing in that tradition of "East and West", one major element of investigation is that of ignorance.

Krishnamurti does not mention ignorance as much as he underlines the validity of insight over knowledge, which he defines as this moment in timelessness when perfect integration of body and psyche leads to seeing the truth in ordinary events. What Krishnamurti may not describe at length, in my opinion, is the density and quality of energy which is present in that moment, and where its source is grounded. As we will see in the next chapter, a great part of this energy is usually occupied in trying to resolve personal conflicts and the circumstances surrounding them. And in order not to digress at this stage, let us simply keep in mind the fact that consciousness, wisdom, intelligence, and energy have the same origination. Finally, we may dare to ask: What is the purpose for this intelligence which we all want, and on which we base our identity, pride, status, comfort, and all kinds of other sentimental, touchy feelings? If we observe the personality of the Dalai Lama for instance, the purpose--far from identification--seems to be that of compassionate bliss (an enticing feeling indeed) but hard to attain precisely because of the emptying it unavoidably necessitates. There, one faces again the fact that the observer is the beginning and the end; it is all that there is, but

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<sup>29</sup> Mindscience. Ed. Daniel Goleman and Robert A.F. Thurman. Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications, 1993, p. 73.

nothing more than a channel through which the energy of consciousness travels momentarily.

It seems important to remember that there is not so much to accomplish after all. Of course, the bliss which Krishnamurti may refer to is the result of intelligent behavior. Bliss is completely altruistic and practical, but does not require particular efforts or demonstrations of goodness. However, if there were more possibilities to be daring, curious, and attentive, one might think that the level of intelligence would raise and that education would have a different flavor. Krishnamurti's dream of reforming and inventing new schooling is visible only in modest instances (primarily in California and India) but it has a high potential for development. When it comes down to psychic research and consciousness studies, the hope would be that East and West would unite their efforts, particularly toward the cause of Tibetan refugees, so that the wisdom of many centuries would not disappear into oblivion. It would also be inspiring to integrate the psychological aspects of the main religious traditions together with some of the practices which involve physical healing to the benefit of students of all generations. Integrating the natural world and the direct information it provides for holistic education should be an extremely important element of what the new classrooms should look like. Part of the psychological change which would bring beauty back into life is teaching students to find out what their

passion is. Teaching participation and awakening to life's pure quality; not learning to separate beauty from ugliness, but embracing all for the sake of understanding undivided mind takes considerable expression of conscious energy. When it comes to discovering one's life task, there should not be any conflict of acting for success, for passion and determination should absorb the pull from the ego. Unfortunately, it appears as though what we teach primarily is this fixation with being successful as synonym to being educated, and consequently intelligent. If such has become the aim behind education in general, then is there any sense in even questioning why morals, alertness, and compassion are vanishing from people's conceptualization and existence? With a tremendous emphasis placed on the development of the mind/brain to benefit the personality, as opposed to a cleansing of the mind through meditative attention, the time has come when we have indeed started to loose contact with reality. This is the urgency which Krishnamurti was signaling when he talked about a psychological revolution:

Be concerned with radical change, with total revolution. The only revolution is the revolution between man and man, between human beings. That is our only concern. In this revolution there are no blueprints, no ideologies, no conceptual utopias. We must take the fact of the actual relationship between men[women] and change that radically. That is the real thing. And this revolution must be immediate, it must not take time. It is not achieved through evolution, which is time.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> The Second Penguin Krishnamurti Reader. Ed. Mary Lutyens. Penguin Books, 1973, p. 316.

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From these three chapters, it should become apparent that Krishnamurti's message is similar to a modern version of Buddhism. This is what makes it possible to study the teachings as conducive to events of compassion. The great schools of psycho-spiritual development, especially the Tibetan, have the potential, not only to help the study of intelligence and the mind, but more importantly, to alert us about the crude type of reality which we are creating in governing the world from a limited area of our minds. To be told that the free mind is as pure as clear light and bearing the same quality of energy is the greatest gift we could expect for the building of a compassionate society. All peoples are encompassed in the neutral space of pure mind, individually expressed in what they see as deserving energy in their own life.

## CHAPTER 4

### Can We live without Conflict?

"We do not live with our heart. We have filled the world with our minds. That is why the world is full of conflict."<sup>1</sup>

The presence of internal conflict is of the same nature as the presence of violence. Without honest acceptance of this fact by the individual, it is unlikely that conflict resolution can take place. That is to say that there is no escape from inner conflict and violence except through the vision of them. Therefore, taking life seriously means that one tries to understand emotions without judgement. And within this journey, once a feeling of self-acceptance comes to the surface, the road to intelligence is widely open. We will try to see in the next three sections that violence and conflict, and their inter-relational aspects have less to do with the nature of evil than with the workings of the mind. To that effect, it will be useful to study the ways in which the Buddhist tradition looks at anger conceptually and psychologically. In the end, we will try to

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<sup>1</sup> Krishnamurti. The Mirror of Relationships. Ojai, CA: Krishnamurti Foundation of America, 1992.

relate the origin and mechanism of conflicts to the meaning of relationships, a great preoccupation for Krishnamurti.

## I - The Roots of Personal Conflict

Who is free from conflict? When and how do we succeed in observing conflict in ourselves or others? Krishnamurti says that the answer is undoubtedly found in the inspiration brought by meditation. When there is no movement from the mind, when the mind is meditative, there is observation of the conflict and the mere observation is the cessation of the conflict(s). Tension, chatter or gossip are characteristics of the restless mind, the discursive mind. Conflict is frequently internalized, but that only means that the discourse inside the mind has become the more intense. It is easy to observe from the behavior of overly active persons and the societies they form that to be in a state of conflict, disagreement, or confrontation is perceived as an indication of being alive, of being assertive, of building self-affirmation, a sense of permanence in the world. All of these attributes of the personality are associated with conflict to provide a concept of aliveness. When asked if conflict is not simply part of the natural order of things, Krishnamurti answered:

If one accepted that, one would have to accept everything society stands for: wars, ambitious competition, and aggressive way of life--all the brutal violence of men, inside and outside of his so-called holy places. Is this natural? Will this bring about any unity? Wouldn't it be better for us to consider these two facts--the fact of conflict with all its complicated struggles, and the fact of

the mind demanding order, harmony, peace, beauty, love?<sup>2</sup>

Evidently, it is impossible to deny that the roots of personal conflict are entirely linked to interaction with people. For example, when my automobile breaks down, my degree of irritation will vary depending on how fast I can get assistance to repair it, or how much money I can spend, both having to do with who I know, and what I do in the world. I am normally not angry at the vehicle itself. Or, if it is discovered that I have cancer in my body, a great amount of tension will relate to how much time I can save to be with my family, or the sort of things I want to accomplish before I die. It is in fact nearly impossible to be in conflict about a situation which does not involve other human beings and interaction with them.

As the case may be, it is clear that the mind is in the same state of corruption and anxiety as the external world it feeds itself upon. The mind is a system which deteriorates like any other mechanism which is not properly and cautiously used. The mind may be diminished in its physical capacity if the brain degenerates, such as to loose memory and coherence, but that situation may not necessarily reduce the presence of conflict. As long as life energy flows inside a person, the mind will generate emotions which will have to be submitted to awareness. Without vanity, one ends up compelled to say that when there is desire to perceive the totality of the nature of being human,

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<sup>2</sup> The Second Penguin Krishnamurti Reader., edited by Mary Lutyens. London: Penguin Books, 1973, p. 197-8.

there is less incentive to reap the benefits inherent to the feeling. There needs to be a priori a re-alignment of considerations about what it means to let go of the dissolution and temptations which occupy mental space. Temptation is not a word which Krishnamurti might have used. If he did, it would have been under the meaning of "trap" which has the connotation of being caught, overtaken by the tendency to respond to tension outwardly, by having a re-action. As mentioned before, delusion about one's actions is a re-acting of some event or circumstance which was not duly completed in its first occurrence. Analyzing these reactions a little further, it is possible to see that they might belong to a condition of fear, of mental discomfort building on itself through the impression of having failed in doing something or other. Is this fear not involved with the apprehension of the future--which is the unknown--the emptiness in the depth of the mind, and ultimately distress about one's lack of meaningful activity in the external world? It follows that the correct question to ask here is whether fear might stand primarily at the base of internal violence:

A life that is lived in fear is a dark, ugly life. Most of us are frightened in different ways, and we shall examine whether the mind can be totally free of fear. Nobody wants to be free of pleasure, but we all want to be free of fear; we don't see that both go together; they are both sustained by thought. That's why it is very important to understand thought.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Krishnamurti. On Fear. San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994, p. 105.

To the sense of fear, one needs to add attachment to belief systems, to various cravings for acquisition and possessions, as well as an insidious tendency to ignore the truth of facts, a most pernicious form of ignorance. The state of confusion between will, self-will, intention, a correct interpretation of oneself, as well as the fear of solitude, are linked to the fear of understanding the difference between autonomy and dependence. Krishnamurti invokes the role and power of cultural imagination from which the concept of guilt has been invented, consisting in accusing oneself, God, or the rest of society for the circumstances of emotional crises: loss of health, loss of a loved one, of a profession or status, of possessions, etc. Imagination is of the mind, but the mind which does not, or refuses to see "What-Is".

In this century, we learned from Freudian and Jungian psychologies that imagination is not strictly personal and private, but heavily influenced by the collective unconscious of past life on the planet. Contrary to other more conventional views, the Buddhist teachings indicate that we have all been together and done things together in the universe, many times. As the human species, we know each others well, much more than we think or feel. Out of the wanderings of the mind, many myths have been engendered: one of the least understood being the personalization of evil as a living image, a figure such as Satan, different from, and external to human beings, yet present in the world. This way of thinking has been heavily accentuated

even in recent history, mostly through organized religions, and with good intentions. Nevertheless, the role of organized religions should be to alleviate the fears that might have external causes, as well as the ones founded on antagonisms and paradoxes created by thought. Seeing evil as imposed to the world from afar, or as occasioned by the acts of sinful human beings has caused, over the centuries, a schizophrenic approach to the function of opposites: due to the principle that every thing has a cause, effects follow that are different from the cause. The habitual pattern of contending with oneself when emotions are most apparent and compelling is an attempt to resolve conflicts with illusive cures outside the mind; the cures can be of a mythical, religious, or clinical nature but they only aim at reinterpreting the conflicts; in this respect, cures are tantamount to pursuing the role of mental conditioning. But in the presence of the only remedy, which is direct encounter with "What-Is", interpretations and myths shatter, and so do the roots of conflicts and emotional confusion. From this it follows that antagonisms can vanish, not because they have been conquered like sins, but because they have been included in the totality of the mind. Seeing and living with the facts and the reality of discord brings an understanding of the kind of virtue which consists in leaving the emotional past behind. Meditation is the plane on which conflicts disappear. To structure the self would require continuous and presumptuous efforts. And it is important for correct understanding of Krishnamurti's teachings to realize

that struggles are the strongest cause of resistance from the mind on behalf of the acting personality. Living in time and belonging to historical time, the personality creates different kinds of identification and anticipation for what is thought to be its progress under various forms of behavior. In this manner, the self appropriates experiences which are merely projections onto a linear future, a sense of time going in one direction, using the three dimensions familiar to the mind. As a result of such identifications, the personality becomes highly vulnerable, conditioned, at times egoistic, but never really aware of itself:

There is fear. Fear is never an actuality; it is either before or after the active present. When there is fear in the active present, is it fear? It is there and there is no escape from it, no evasion possible. There, at that actual moment, there is total attention at the moment of danger, physical or psychological. When there is complete attention there is no fear. But the actual fact of inattention breeds fear; fear arises when there is an avoidance of the fact, a flight; then the very escape itself is fear.<sup>4</sup>

What Krishnamurti calls choiceless-awareness can definitely be connected to the absence of inner fragmentation. Strengthening the self prompts more rebellion, but it does not activate a desire for the truth about what is to be known in the self. What is perceived as unpleasant and discordant needs to blend into the wholeness of a mind that observes what is real. Conflicts arising from fear or anger must be accepted without judgment and without effort. Consequently, the incapacity to observe one's mental divisions without being attached to them is

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<sup>4</sup> Krishnamurti. On Fear. HarperSanFrancisco, 1995, p. 92.

total lack of freedom. Psychological freedom has no space for choice-making about emotions, negative or positive. But when the mind is free, there is nowhere to be but where one is. When confronted to a death threat, there is no choice whether to help or not, whether to escape or not; there is immediate, choiceless action. However, in the mind of a murderer, the choice to kill or not to kill is caused by a case of extreme fragmentation of a mind in conflict between "What-Is" and what it desires, or does not see. That is the case because thought creates many choices: half-choices, substitute choices, blaming choices, empowered choices, victim choices... But what the meditative mind shows, coming from a different source, is that insight is guiding, trying to pierce through hidden conflicts dwelling in brain memory. And the personality resists those wants, thereby creating more disorders, more discord, more hostility toward itself. The totally free mind knows what is out of reach, detrimental, and unethical. The mind which is whole, knowledgeable of the emotions, has the possibility to be non-judgmental and to perceive what an authentic act of being consists of.

Consequently, one's sense of self-perception and integration is the result of one's passion in life itself. By investigating from the inside out instead of absorbing personal experiences from the outside comes the relinquishing of having to measure, compare, conform, or judge. Right observation of mental activity ("The Flame of Attention") has no motive; but if it had to have

one, it would be to discover and to learn. Krishnamurti says that "attention without motive is direct experience". Ironically, he also says that "measure" can be translated as "measure" thereby communicating the idea that one acquires a sense of self-security by comparing oneself or some object with the nature of something else. Every action is limited when it is exclusively a product of the discursive mind. These limited actions cause conflicts with and without others being involved. Valid experience happens when intelligence comes from the quiet mind. Is this sort of intelligence only intermittent, and why? Maybe because of lack of curiosity and inquiry: the mind secured by authority has a tendency to shrink. The meditation proposed by Krishnamurti is not a tranquilizer to soften the mind. This meditation means that one pays attention when there is mental fragmentation, because only in total attention is reality what it is. The principle of this rule is that out of constant attention comes right thinking, whereas thought, which is conformity to a previously known pattern or belief system, can only approximate and mainly distort reality:

The fire is not there at the beginning. It needs to be cultivated. Everything around the fire center needs to be reorganized, so as not to kill the fire, and let it burn without smoke. Then fire brings clarity and direction.<sup>5</sup>

So therefore, it is becoming more apparent that conflict needs to be seen inwardly prior to being accepted, and not re-acted upon,

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<sup>5</sup> Commentaries on Living III. Ed. D. Rajagopal. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1967.

but included at the level of ordinary mind chatter. We also might agree that fear is an ancient, highly collective and cumulative emotion which is being endorsed by individuals to cover their struggle with emptiness. Interestingly enough, in the West, it is said that fear is based on lack of self-esteem. Such concept is rather antagonistic to Krishnamurti's psychology of freedom, for building a self would constitute the best instrument for bringing fire to those conflictual states of mind. What would be the purpose of an appreciation of the self? Precisely to honor the opportunity to be free from thought that it can provide and for the unique role it plays in existence, which is to be in relationship. Not building self-esteem does not mean no-self, but simply no insistence on the self, no cultivation of the personality, the "me":

Now, to find out, not the ending of thought, but to find out how to observe the content, when you observe without the division, then a totally different action takes place. Where there is love, there is no observer. There is no you and the one that you love. There is only that quality of love.<sup>9</sup>

Up to this point, we have tried to explain the origin of internal divisions by looking at fear and the way fear relates to time which implies change, conditioning which means thought, conformity which relates to clinging. One factor in the mechanism of fear which remains to be acknowledged is that of pleasure, connected to attachment and sorrow. Pleasure is not

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<sup>9</sup> Krishnamurti. Mind Without Measure. London: Krishnamurti Foundation Trust, Ltd. Reprinted 1993, p. 125.

the sort of emotion which one wants to discard spontaneously or consciously; pleasure is linked to a very private concept of self-esteem. As a matter of fact, pleasure in modern living is considered a form of therapy. The "therapy of desire" consists in aiming at harmonious, balanced and enriched living through forms of gratification. We know too well about this vicious circle in western countries, and how rapidly it spreads in the rest of the world. The problem is certainly not to identify the functions of desire, but to include them within a meaningful development of society. Nevertheless, attachment to desire and addictive consumerism are the greatest guarantees for not seeing things as they are. Most of the attachments to pleasure are unconscious buffers for not seeing reality, creating a distance from the presence of emptiness, or in western terminology, the existential fallacy. So, a sense of division comes out of the attitude toward pleasure. When conditions are optimal, life is comfortable and provides a feeling of security, but there might still be conflict. The conflict is then to choose between two equally appealing circumstances or possibilities. One implies renouncing the other which, in the face of an illusive future, could bring as much or more satisfaction, security, or prestige. Fear is far from belonging only to the negative emotions, to the thoughts which become highly toxic and endanger physically healthy conditions. Fear of losing pleasure, or indiscriminated attachment to pleasurable situations is the cause behind most fragmented states of being. Fear over ethical choices is another

division, for there is no escape from the mind that thinks without seeing what is as it is. There are many forms of escape, and very sophisticated ones such as intellectual and/or spiritual. But the liberated mind has no choice because it is totally aware of what action is needed. Having no choice is being aware of "What-Is":

We are trying to find out what is the truth of this question of fear so completely that the mind is never afraid, therefore free of all dependence on another, inwardly psychologically. Thought, thinking about an incident, an experience, a state, in which there has been a disturbance, danger, grief, or pain, brings about fear. And thought, having established a certain security, psychologically, does not want that security to be disturbed; any disturbance is a danger and therefore there is fear.<sup>7</sup>

However, when it comes to having a personality, no one is ever born as an individual but as a member of a collective group constrained by millions of years of socio-cultural repetitive mental patterns. At the level of the ego, the roots of fear and anger interfering with genuine creativity or psychic progress are intricately shared by all humankind. The cage where one individual has kept itself is a cage within the greater cage where humankind keeps itself collectively. Personal obedience, which compels to follow authority without questioning, is born out of rebellion against oneself, which is to say the whole of humanity. Obedience to what provides the illusion of change is based on some weakness in knowing oneself. Bringing conflict into the larger picture of the society, such blind obedience has

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<sup>7</sup> Krishnamurti. The Flight of the Eagle. London: Harper & Row London, pp. 11-12.

extremely tragic results. Krishnamurti describes them in the

Collected Works:

The complete revolution outside of society is what I call religious [spiritual] revolution. Any revolution that is not religious is within society and is therefore no revolution at all, but only a modified continuation of the old pattern. What is happening throughout the world, I believe, is revolt within society, and this revolt often takes the form of what is called crime. There is bound to be this kind of revolt so long as our education is concerned only with training youth to fit into society--that is, to get a job, to earn money, to be acquisitive, to have more, to conform.<sup>8</sup>

For example, a society as a whole may want to be free from religious conflicts, but not from religion. The conflicts are clearly not in the religions themselves, but in beliefs which are not understood through knowing, and consequently are conducive to division. In the domain of modern psychology, which studies only the disorder of thought, knowledge is limited and unreliable. In order to observe conflicts, there must be strong interest in learning about consciousness itself: what is the role of effort and will? Is the mind orienting effort toward action from within? If the mind is under personal or clinical control, is this not still a form of violence leading to conflict? The violence remains a fact in consciousness. The Dalai Lama suggests that we not cultivate emotions, but that we investigate into what brings positive emotions--such as what makes one kind, responsible, mature, or joyful--as a start toward testing the possible value of emotions. The mind must be passionate enough to see facts before ideas, and go into the learning of fear with this level of

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<sup>8</sup> Collected Works X, p. 83.

passionate intensity. Such are the mechanical aspects of the mind: the active brain, the inquiring brain, the keeper of consciousness, which is being mugged incessantly by the external world of objects and concepts. Krishnamurti uses practical examples to show thought's functions and mechanisms: thought should not be used as a process, but as an observation tool. But, like Krishnamurti says: "thought has become a means of gratification." Forgetting about thoughts, it remains possible to use conflicts for what they represent: 1) means of overcoming fear and attachment, at times co-dependence on persons and situations; 2) means of establishing genuine communication, including letting go, parting from the old. Fear of the unknown (how to find one's way in the world, how to raise children, survive financially, recover health) has a counterpart in well-being: to find out that one is infinitely more than the circumstances of one's life. Freedom is this transformation of the responses in view of the challenges offered by conflicts:

I can only find out if the mind sees that to live in fear is not only neurotic, but very, very destructive. The mind must see first that it is neurotic and that therefore neurotic activity will go on and be destructive. And see that a mind that is frightened is never honest, that a mind that is frightened will invent any experience, anything to hold on to. So I must first see clearly and wholly that as long as there is fear there must be misery.<sup>9</sup>

So can we, each of us, who are [hu]mankind, look at a very simple fact? Observe, see, that the causation of fear is thought/time? Then the very perception is action. And from that you don't rely on anybody. See it very clearly. Then you are a free person.

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<sup>9</sup> Krishnamurti. On Fear. HarperSanFrancisco, 1995, p. 109.

## II - The Breaking of Anger

Anger, like hate and every emotion involving violence is even a more acute failure to understand the mechanisms of the mind. This failure has been identified as ignorance by the Buddhists, and to some extent, but not with rigorous similarity, can be juxtaposed to the Christian concept of human flaw. But in no instance is ignorance perceived in the Buddhist tradition as being impossible to be corrected by human beings themselves. On the contrary, the very purpose of incarnation is to seek a way out of ignorance and suffering by learning about the role of the emotions within the mechanisms of the mind, in meditation and through the practice of attention. The mind seems to navigate between the observer and the observed which are, as Krishnamurti explains in a way similar, but less technical than the Buddhists texts, indivisible, because consciousness itself is one. The observer and the observed are one and the same conscious self. We think that we own a mind and a body, but in reality we are a speck of consciousness which has a mind and a body. This particle of mind is present in every cell, and if it is the case that it interprets and organizes memories, represses or suppresses them for very definite and useful purposes, it unites itself harmoniously with the physical. In thinking, the mind is constantly oscillating, sometimes pulled between two poles of energy, positive and negative, just like it happens in the world of physics and electricity: there are no connotations at this stage with good and bad in the world, ethical or unethical

behavior. An emotion per se would remain neutral if a person would not act on it; however, most people think that they have to act on emotions as if they belonged to them personally.

Krishnamurti notes that the drive to follow the emotional state is a very powerful one, and that in every case it leads to fragmentation or discord. The resolution of conflict requires to bring about a condition of integration, since fragmentation is what produces disharmonious behavior. Nevertheless, the bringing about of integration is still done by the mind which, in its attempt to carefully organize and classify thoughts, creates cumbersome patterns: this "mindwork" would obtain a result, but would not be the result which Krishnamurti suggests for a total transformation: an awakening to what is not of the mind:

Thought may rebel against the established pattern, but this very revolt is generally the outcome of another pattern; the mind is still caught in the process of knowledge, tradition. It is rebelling within the walls of a prison for more convenience, better food, and so on.<sup>10</sup>

The reason for the insistence on studying a specific emotion like anger is to try to understand that its functions are very intricate and of considerable importance in the resolution of violence, and consequently in starting to live with compassion. When perceived in terms of the quality of energy present in consciousness and in the physical forms consciousness takes, anger, hate and violence are not only easier to understand, but can be all seen as a disguised form of vitality, passion, or

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<sup>10</sup> Commentaries on Living III. Ed. S. Rajagopal. Wheaton, IL: Quest Book, 1967, p. 211.

faith which needs to be redirected toward its normal flow. Consciousness as the current of energy is not a metaphor. It was not for Krishnamurti, neither was it for many other philosophers east and west in ancient and recent times. It is actually very informative to juxtapose the statements which all adhere to the same vision of energy and its uses. In each case, the principle that action can become destructive if the power of energy is not rightly understood prior to action is supported. In the extreme case, evil is a misuse of energy, never a quality of the energy itself. And like we have stated above, it is characteristic of the human condition to be fairly ignorant about the correct ways to use energy. However, as many religious thinkers have told humanity, it is the sole reason about human existence that it should learn this skill. Like John Stuart Mill said:

"Strong impulses are but another name for energy. Energy may be turned to bad uses; but more good may always be made of an energetic nature, than of an indolent and impassive one."<sup>11</sup>

and C.G. Jung:

"There are indications that physical energy and psychic energy may be two aspects of one and the same underlying reality. If this turns out to be the case, then the world of matter will appear as, so to speak, a mirror-image of the world of spirit or of the psyche, and vice-versa."<sup>12</sup>

and Henri Bergson:

"All life, animal and vegetable, seems in its essence like an effort to accumulate energy and then to let it flow into

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<sup>11</sup> John Stuart Mill. On Liberty, III. New York: Viking Penguin, 1982.

<sup>12</sup> Marie Louis von Franz. C.G. Jung: His Myth in our Time. Tr. William H. Kennedy. C.G. Jung Foundation, 1975.

flexible channels, changeable in shape, at the end of which it will accomplish infinitely varied kinds of work. That is what the vital impetus, passing through matter, would fain do all at once. It would succeed, no doubt, if its power were unlimited, or if some reinforcement could come to it from without. But the impetus is finite, and it has been given once for all. It cannot overcome all obstacles. The movement it starts is sometimes turned aside, sometimes divided, always opposed; and the evolution of the organized world is the unrolling of this conflict. [emphasis mine].<sup>13</sup>

One could also mention William Blake, or the Greeks who told us that those who overplay with the forces will be destroyed by them like thunder (the myth of Prometheus). But it is not necessary to investigate into the world mythologies. There is no other attempt in giving these citations than to demonstrate that energy is real and here to examine, to appreciate and, not the least, to cooperate with.

Nevertheless, the extreme cases of violence brought by anger do call for a necessity to question the issue of personal ethic. We are thinking about what triggers crime, public massacres, genocides, and all forms of wars. To the one who is stabbed in the city's subway and bleeds to death, or who loses their family in war or gang riots, it is hard to accept the sole explanation that criminals do not know how to channel energy. And for people in such harassing situations, the concept of sin would be a more explicit and vivid way to cope with the horror of depravity and the pain brought by injustice. Similar to the view of Buddhism, Krishnamurti's outlook does not place any emphasis on good and

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<sup>13</sup> Henri Bergson. Creative Evolution, III. Tr. Arthur Mitchell. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984.

evil, only on the inevitable state of ignorance of the conditioned mind about what is behind cause and effect, and on lack of discrimination:

Friction exists when there is separation...between what is right and what is wrong. Between what is called evil and what is called good. If I am trying to be good then I create friction. So really the problem is how to have this abundance of energy that will come when there is no conflict. And one needs that tremendous energy to discover what truth is.<sup>14</sup>

What seems like a failure to acknowledge the presence of evil in the world nevertheless has profound explanations, for this is how the connection with anger--seen as internal or external violence can be made. The neutralizer of violence is compassion, not an opposite like non-violence nor a force of any kind, be it the force of God, of Nature, or of nuclear weapons. A recent and tangible example of compassion in our recent time is embodied in the attitude of the Tibetan population monitored by the Dalai Lama, toward the oppressor who exterminated one over six million people, including monks in their monasteries. The only soother of grief, the only pacifier of peoples at war and nations against each other is compassion, non-judgmental observation of the reality which is there: the crime, the violence, the discord. And one can see that in the most terrible cases of suffering inflicted by human beings on each others, after the event there is a tremendous release of energy and sedation which penetrate into the consciousness of the sufferer. It is this energy which

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<sup>14</sup> Krishnamurti. Questioning Krishnamurti. San Francisco: Thorsons, 1996, p. 44.

then allows for perfect "retaliation", the one that consists in using compassion in coalition with the rest of the world. For it is the struggle between what should be or not be, and "What-Is" which produces discomfort in the mind. Unfortunately, for long periods of time, the discomfort takes up most of the energy which is required for letting go. Therefore, freedom from violence and fear is anchored in a readiness to see the world in non-idealistic, non-imaginary ways. To deconstruct one's own private imaginary world conduces first to objectivity, and usually to transformation. Secondly, the role and perception of matter and substance in the universe become known through transformation, but more importantly, insight into the nature of causality is seen as the builder of a moral self founded on non-judgmental concepts about goodness and iniquity.

Furthermore, the forms that this ethic can take are full with the moral ideal which the very nature of being holds: in the unity of all life there is no right and wrong, but only the "awakened one" can possess this certainty concretely. To be righteous is not a state of submission, but a right knowing resting on the vision of the unity of all things. Righteousness is a state to be in, not a list of activities to perform duly. This explains why and how freedom has little to do with experience, but is dependent upon the holistic understanding of being at-one with the unconditioned. Most particularly anger, because it is attached to other negative emotions such as fear, greed, and guilt--yet another form of anger which consists in

choosing to look at one's failure rather than seeing the suffering of others--is a wake-up call for change, for the opportunity to stop and see "What-Is". All emotions, positive and negative, are the glue which holds together blocks of conscious energy in the mind, and become visible in the physical self:

...If we truly loved ourselves we would never harm another, because if we harm another it is in some way diminishing who we are...<sup>15</sup>

However, this quote should not constitute a plea for protecting oneself nor for endorsing a one-way trip to paradise. It seems to me that Krishnamurti would see in it a statement about the equality of all beings in view of a neutral force like compassion. In any event, we will unavoidably harm and be harmed during our existence, while seeing and forgiving oneself and others is a way to find freedom.

Besides, the willingness to learn how emotions participate to the mind activity has a strong relation to creativity. Emotions operate through waves of feelings which locate themselves in patterns at the physical level, from the subtler ideas to the gross levels of addiction. There are possibilities to venture into a discovery of the patterns leading to destructive behavior which stands in the space between observation and reaction. The turnover of negative emotions is

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<sup>15</sup> Sharon Salzberg. Co-founder of Insight Meditation Society and the Barre Center for Buddhist Studies, in Barre, MA. She has studied and practiced Buddhist meditation since 1970 and has been teaching worldwide since 1974.

analogous to the alchemical process which transforms anger into vitality, or guilt into compassion, but not as a mysterious or excruciating path. The contradiction between desires, legitimate needs, and addictive patterns is an ascending road to reactions. As part of the energy latent in human nature, emotions are not unmovable external objects. We are emotions with body, mind, and spirit, and we can turn attitudes at any moment. Krishnamurti says that the fear of not having pleasure is thereby a most important feature in the breaking of anger: for is it possible to observe energy without suppressing it, or overusing it?

Kill not desire Friend,  
For desire is the everlasting flame of life.  
Friend, desire is not to be cast aside  
But thy vision will change the course of desire.  
The fault is not with desire but with thy perception.  
Love life then desire shall not cause sorrow.<sup>16</sup>

Surely mindfulness triggers the process of elevating consciousness. However, there is not a "higher mind" standing in a position of control over a "lower mind" directed by ignorance. Without conditioning, the mind is free and because it is made of pure energy, it can act rightfully. Krishnamurti asks why human beings can use considerable energy to hate and to fear, and have extreme difficulties using the same energy to be compassionate and joyful? A crucial, straightforward question indeed. The answer is in the quality of the experience of the individual, for if experience comes from manuals and textbooks, it is virtually a set of information put together by mental activity. The mind

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<sup>16</sup> Poem written in Ojai, CA on april 28, 1930.

bathes in intelligence when it is quiet and alert. Resistance, if held or suppressed, blocks the energy, creating lack of clarity and discomfort in the personality. When causation has vanished, the energy is free-flowing:

...If one becomes so attentively aware, then one has an extraordinary energy--energy that is not brought about through resistance, as most energies are. This energy of attention is freedom.<sup>17</sup>

Consequently, anger is not about getting and having. Secondly it is, as we have seen, about letting go regardless of the intensity of the suffering or the joy. But primarily, breaking anger is becoming compassionate to oneself. Negative emotions, including self-pity, are forms of assessment about one's responsibilities, and regrets over failing to assume them; they are the most self-centered of feelings. And as long as there is self-image, there is no space for seeing just the nature of suffering, detached from oneself or the others. Anger is the reluctance to accept change as part of the world's self-healing mechanism instead of rejecting it as an inevitable doom. Facing change without resistance is altogether a way to avoid self-pity found in the isolation of not seeing things as they get inserted into the global picture. Therefore, it is in the functioning of the total being where less reasoning and less thought between one act and the next occur that resistance fully disappears. Meeting anger totally makes for the possibility of a transforming personal

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<sup>17</sup> Krishnamurti. The Flight of the Eagle. New York: Harper & Row, 1971, p. 89.

ethic as a life-changing occurrence, in this respect more complete than the behavior based on ethical rules which are less authentic to the individual. Accordingly, one learns the tales of anger in the body and accepts them with unsophisticated realism. Guarding oneself with care is the first step toward genuine and lasting generosity. From that point on, a connection can be made with what is deeply loved, or what carries resonance in body and mind.

This openness results in three subtle modes of giving which are by themselves interpretations of compassion. The first stages of giving are often tentative because they are based on the unconscious desire to receive in reciprocity, a sign that insecurity has not vanished from the self. The second stage of giving is in the sharing of what is known to one and to others in some definite circle of friendship, or a community of familiar surroundings and circumstances. The third stage is the real giving which is grounded in spontaneous acts of generosity of the ones who possess all in abundance inwardly, therefore have no need to calculate any gain through reasoning. Giving beyond needs as a way to escape from self is bound to create chaotic reversals of a personality which is hiding instead of opening up in total confidence to all that exists. Compassion does not solve problems, nor does it try to save people from an unknown destiny. Compassion is grounded in the holistically healthy personality which acts, or does not act, according to intuitive intelligence. Because compassion is fearless, it always sees

suffering and pain as learning experiences for all:

Where there is compassion, there is love. With that compassion goes intelligence, not the intelligence of thought with its cunning, with its adjustments, with its capacity to put up with anything. Compassion means the ending of sorrow and only then is there intelligence.<sup>18</sup>

A few more comments in closing this section are necessary for comprehending the violence of anger in a positive manner. Firstly, let's stipulate that the energy of consciousness is unfailing and timeless. It is beyond cause and effect because it encompasses both as the principles of what the Buddhists name nothingness. Secondly, it is useful to consider that we experience suffering only to the extent that we know joy and most positive emotions more consciously than pain. This is another reason why--if there were no others--it is important to "come back to neutral" into compassion. Equanimity is a state which can be reached through practice, and compassion is the leveler of the mind which either speeds up or becomes too passive. To use a metaphor, all peoples are the captains of their minds being bumped constantly, like rowboats on a busy lake. Letting the shock come and looking at it lets it smooth and die of itself. But rocking the boat vigorously against another creates more waves that can be fatal to all. Pain and violence can only escalate through force, and do backfire in time.

Finally, anger is only an emotion, it is not a "thing-in-itself" to look at. One does not experience violence, one is

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<sup>18</sup> Krishnamurti. The Network of Thought. HarperSan Francisco, 1982, p. 98.

violence. To see it in oneself is to free oneself from it, except perhaps in extreme cases of psychosis and other acute mental disorders. Even if Krishnamurti would probably comment that standards of insanity fall into the question of the poverty of humanity's conscious awareness, we would still agree that there are levels of insanity. Most of them could be resolved precisely through compassion. To isolate the mentally ill as well as the elderly are disguised ways to ignore or postpone correct understanding of chaos and death. Anger is beneficial when it is re-directed toward vitality and passion as opposed to being directed at or against some object or person. Expressed anger will not stop, it will create more sensations of suffering which take considerable space in the mind. And this mind needs a lot of energy to see itself. Stopping the war inside the mind, or slowing the thinking process is building a reservoir of peace and serenity. There is no skipping over wounds, sorrows, and grief from the past, be they emotional or spiritual. Meditation is the best healer. When dealing with anger and purification from anger, one should remember the six basic precepts of Buddhism, which I consider Krishnamurti does introduce in his teachings, even if indirectly:

- 1) A non-idealistic outlook at the meaning of life;
- 2) Kindness toward oneself as the first step;
- 3) Patience;
- 4) Believing in the immediacy of transformation, here and now;
- 5) Trying to integrate body, mind, and psyche;

## 6) Questioning and testing experience for oneself.

From that perspective, it becomes possible to see that the bumps on the road are not facetiously aimed at destruction, but are just part of a reality which is limited because of its materialistic appearance. If there is something both playful and challenging in this situation, Krishnamurti says that it is to be found in relationships.

### III - The Mirror of Relationships

So thought is responsible for fear. And we live in thought. Our daily activity is based on thought. So what place has thought in human relationship? If it has a place, then relationship is a routine, a mechanical, daily, meaningless pleasure and fear.<sup>19</sup>

Here is a concise statement about what interests us, whether the possibility of compassion in a violent world is unrealistic, or whether it is dependent upon an attitude related to psychological change. In the preceding sections, there has been a concentration on studying what individuals can learn from emotions, negative and positive, and the pulls in different directions toward conflict and discord. Krishnamurti will say that love is not an emotion, love is not of the mind, it is freedom from the conflicts which stand in the way of love. And Krishnamurti talks about the mirror of relationships for the qualities it permits us to see in the unique ways in which we can relate to each others. Underneath the attractive metaphor lies a

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<sup>19</sup> Krishnamurti. On Fear. HarperSanFrancisco, 1994, p. 108.

very powerful point, namely that relationships are the sole reason for human life on earth:

...All existence is in relationship...It is the 'me' that acts collectively or individually, the 'me' that creates heaven and hell. To be aware of this is to understand it. And the understanding of it is the ending of it. The ending of it is goodness, love and intelligence.<sup>20</sup>

To convey the full value and the significance of this issue requires looking into the existentialism and psychology of the Buddhist tradition. If there was to be deep knowing of oneself, combined with a passionate desire for freedom and the practice of non-attachment, it is feasible to think that one could live a rather blissful isolated life with minimum suffering. But there is karma and karmic background for all, and a real purpose for incarnation and reincarnation which entail something to accomplish in the world, in the religious sense of purification. It is precisely because there is the possibility to interact with other human beings, and in the tension and frictions to be absorbed, that the discovery of one's own unity with the whole creates a breakthrough toward awakening. The Tibetan Master Sogyal Rinpoche comments on karma very succinctly when he deals with the issue of creativity:

Karma is not fatalistic or predetermined. Karma means our ability to create and to change. It is creative because we can determine how and why we act. We can change. The future is in our hands, and in the hands of our heart...<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> The Second Penguin Krishnamurti Reader. Penguin Books, 1970, p. 303.

<sup>21</sup> Sogyal Rinpoche. The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying. HarperSan Francisco, 1994, p. 95.

**How can we live without conflicts?** Perhaps it is not a promise possible to consider at all, because some conflicts are necessary for change and growth. The cultivation of a peaceful mind is essential for noticing the nature of conflicts arising between people in their immediate surroundings, and then proceed further on the trail of discord that goes into the tissue of society. Change being a part of the very fabric of nature where the law of opposites is regulating life itself, it is not possible to avoid or relinquish change. Therefore, external factors, some accidental, some not, provide the mutations which are necessary. However, to create one's destiny through the understanding of one's own attachments and emotions, if based on this principle of change, cannot be a solitary affair. In the West, intentionality may be seen as a major impacting factor on the resolution of internal divisions and external conflicts. Positive intention provides an elation to the mind, which then performs rightly. Negative intention also triggers intense activity, but it is based on the necessity of a release of energy. But what is this intentionality if not a clear sign of struggle with the mind? If there is careful attention given to the nature of emotions, conflict becomes apparent. And what is the purpose of action when one sees a conflict in the mind? Maybe during that attention, desire itself vanishes because the vanity of the intention, or its inadequacy, are uncovered. But an inner conflict which is not uncovered does not dissipate; it becomes persistent in the mind. It takes roots and blocks clarity; it

catches momentum and expresses itself in various forms: anger, fear, connivance, gossip, greed, violence. Therefore, at the very root of violence is non-acceptance of the presence of unity in oneself. This lack is compensated by creating uninterrupted thinking. Being at-one with oneself and the world around is an enhancing experience, and it is the sense of psychological freedom which Krishnamurti wishes would be felt more largely. One is trying to pay attention to the unity of opposites, observing the opposites outside of one's own sphere of action. Then, as the experience of unity takes place, opposition uncovers its own essential value: life and death; joy and pain; good and evil. All become opposite poles oscillating on the same scale. But as long as opposites are assessed and compared to external theories, they acquire a power of their own which becomes very engaging for the process of thought. This is why at the root of compassion, there must be simplicity and modesty. Struggle, resistance, and rejection are sheer illusions when it comes to thinking mechanisms. What Meister Eckhart had to teach from mysticism: "What we have gathered in contemplation, we give out in love" is very much in line with Krishnamurti. Conflicts have to be accepted as a genuine part not only of existence, but of the content of the mind. What is wrong and detrimental to both society and the individual is the reacting upon a state of discord, through war, through death and torture, or through guilt and procrastination.

Krishnamurti says that in order to enlarge one's individual nature to a higher function of awareness, one brings the "flame of attention" to operate. One builds the higher foundation first, prior to studying the function of the mind. The foundation is based on acceptance of a concealed unity underneath the domain of thought. What Meister Eckhart is stipulating is that nothing is worth experiencing in a state of quietness and bliss if it is not brought back into right action on this plane of reality. The flame that burns continuously in the mind is not to be contemplated so that inspiration and desire become holy, and the student protected from any harm and conflict. The "Flame" is itself the center of the unity which we are describing as being the leveler of opposites. One does not understand ignorance, anger, suffering and fear by rejecting interaction, but by embracing the waves of emotions, integrating them into the pool of consciousness where they are absorbed. Krishnamurti also says that there is an accessible condition which radically changes human existence. It took great dedication to communicate this idea: that change can happen fundamentally and spontaneously. It takes many centuries for evolution to perform somewhat higher modes of intellectual and physical development. But the transformation mentioned by Krishnamurti has no relation to evolution, nor to time. Krishnamurti, like other religious teachers, is concerned with the poverty of psychological and moral development which characterizes civilization after civilization. Thought has constructed its own standard of

perfection, spiritual elevation, and states of bliss by imagining that mind itself relates to something higher than the state of human life. Therefore, there are constructions of plenitude and heavenly states where no limitation can dwell, and of course realms of suffering which are dreadful and to avoid at all cost. But how could any of these concepts actually be outside the mind?

Freedom is not a state of non-dependence; it is a positive state in which there isn't any dependence. But it is not a result, it has no cause. This must be understood very clearly before we can go into the question of why man depends or falls into the trap of attachment with all its miseries. Being attached we try to cultivate a state of independence--which is another form of resistance.<sup>22</sup>

The question we try to corner is this: when does the individual interacting with others ever project thoughts of healthy, harmonious, and blissful states toward humankind, or simply the neighbors? Pre-historical inhabitants, who had no visualization of a perfected human soul, still did achieve their participation to the collective evolution of the human species. Could it be possible, at the present stage of evolution, to achieve a psychological transformation through compassion, without setting any standard for the level it should reach? The error would consist in accepting too much of the apparent conflict without believing that there is a simple way to bring potential to the surface. The way is simple at least at the individual level because it is imbedded in the use of attention. Where there is potential, there is realization. The potential is unlimited,

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<sup>22</sup> The Second Penguin Krishnamurti Reader. Penguin Books, 1970, p. 258.

says Krishnamurti; attention is a flame that burns incessantly because energy pervades the entire universe: "Attention is the very essence of all energy".<sup>23</sup> The other error would be to observe and accept conflict without truly believing in change. Societies in general cannot resolve conflict with secondary perceptions of what it would be like not to have conflict, but in knowing the roots and the processes by which those divisions grow. The motions of life impose a play between sensations and emotions, the current of all activity which monitors itself through the medium of consciousness. But the motions take many forms which are the results of thought manipulation. Life suddenly loses its natural playfulness and non-judging quality including its shaping, changing potential. Conflictual states are not part of life, they are the factors which alter the motions of life. They need to become integrated.

As it is expressed in the Vedic hymns, if existence is matter and consciousness is life, they do relate and have their being together harmoniously in unity; therefore self-knowledge and world-knowledge are inseparable. When Krishnamurti talks about innocence, it has nothing to do with being the sole property of early childhood, and it has nothing to do with naïveté. Innocence, he sees as the state of the mind at rest, the mind not living in the memory of past experience, usually negative. Innocence, attention, truth, and freedom are one,

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<sup>23</sup> Krishnamurti. The Flight of the Eagle. London: Harper & Row, 1971, p. 89.

since none of them originate in thought. Thought cannot build a bridge to freedom, because thought inevitably belongs to the past. Thoughts are never fresh, never of the moment, and certainly never innocent. Thoughts are builders of necessities, desires, and goals, which are too often the cause of conflict between human beings. Thought belongs to the observer with his/her mental activity. The observer tries to see the distance created by thought between him/her and the other(s). The observer also wishes to establish and maintain that distance as a protection against manipulation of his/her own mental activity. It is in that distance that conflict arises between the observer and what is observed. None of this happens consciously. And in this activity of thought the mirror of relationships finds its powerful and transforming role. Everyone feels a demand to build a self-identity, an idea of a self being established with its own knowledge, activities, family, tradition, hopes and goals. Therefore, actions are based on likes and dislikes, or cultivated opinions abruptly communicated or imposed on others. There is inevitably a certain degree of violence in those acts which are born of thought. Whereas immediate, spontaneous action is likely to surge from the attentive, intelligent mind. Reaction comes out of a form of premeditation which has been called thinking since the dawn of humanity. It has lost its character of innocence and pure doing. And in the real world, reaction is regularly mistaken for right action, hence the presence of violent conflicts:

Objects of desire change constantly, but desire itself remains the same. To liberate itself from conformity, the mind must be free of violence and envy. It must follow its own light which is the flame of attention: "Attention is the complete good."<sup>24</sup>

In addition to all of the above, it is clear to see that thought has no level of honesty to itself. Thought is not pure because it is the result of evaluation and comparison with something other than itself, but unfortunately still based on previous thinking. Honesty would consist in seeing "What-Is" in its immediate, total authenticity unrelated to past or future. A major factor in interpersonal conflict is the need to fill a void with thought by building on opinion, entertainment, attachment, and as many contradictions and paradoxes as the mind will fathom. This constant repetition of the known by thinking is non-life, a real description of death in both western and eastern traditions: development and cultivation of the personality means dying to the promise of life beyond the mind, in this very life and moment. If this is not necessarily expressed in straightforward ways in the vocabularies of World Scriptures, the essence of the message has been translated by many religious teachers. We are suggesting that Krishnamurti did the same: the fullness of the void which is Being is showed in the "flame of attention" which never consumes itself. And that revolution through attention is instantaneous:

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<sup>24</sup> Commentaries on Living III. Ed. S. Rajagopal. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1967, p. 261.

A truly religious person is not one who is encrusted with beliefs, dogmas, rituals. He[she] has no beliefs; he[she] is living from moment to moment, never accumulating any experience, and therefore he[she] is the only revolutionary being.<sup>25</sup>

Sadly enough, if there is only thought at the stretch of humanity in order to approach life in its beauty, then the life of computerized brains might be of equal quality with that of human beings. For there is no intensity, discovery, or knowledge in the repetition of acts built on thought. The computerized human brain which could be invented would be in one way similar to us now: it would not go further than thought. Thought, in its limitation, always wants to possess and keep what it has invented: the paradox of wanting power and morality is therefore immoral if it is not based on compassion. Only seeing with the totality of consciousness is the one act that liberates, and does not seek security unconsciously. In order to evoke this consciousness in the present world, every individual would need to discover the value of non-clinging to thought:

Truth is something that demands extraordinary clarity of mind, a mind that has no problem whatsoever, physical or psychological, a mind that does not know conflict. Even the memory of conflict must end. With the burden of memory we cannot find truth. Truth can only come to a mind that is astonishingly free from all that is man-made.

Those are not words to me, you understand? If it was not something actual, I would not speak, I would be dishonest to myself. If it were not a fact I would be such a terrible hypocrite. This requires tremendous integrity.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Krishnamurti. On God. HarperSan Francisco, 1992, p. 114.

<sup>26</sup> Krishnamurti. The Mirror of Relationships. Ojai, CA: Krishnamurti Foundation of America, 1992, p. 21.

We may ask: Is it not rather puzzling that in order to find security in thought, people are compelled to belong to groups, organizations, and religion? People intensify identification to the point of having to belong to the ideas and ideologies which bring comfort to their personalities. And for the sake of this security, people will eventually go through destruction and suffering rather than lose this sense of identity.

Identification is the prison where thought dwells. Identification is the illusion of thought which dictates the demands to act upon an idea. The key to understanding this mechanism is to see that thought wants the personality to conform to what is brought to the senses by the external world. One needs to question whether ideas help action or whether they impede action. Especially in matters involving compassion and morals, actions based on the belief in ideas external to oneself can be erroneous, erratic, and extremely destructive. Belief systems--even if logically grounded in moral principles--have no reality of themselves. The nature and value of the relationships which belief systems try to grasp are not essentially covered by principles. Any idea, as pure and altruistic as it can be, is still shaping itself within previously established knowledge. The mental work performed on a beautiful idea is secondary to the intention placed in the idea primarily. Thoughts about compassion, for example, can be put into a lot of words, but thought can never be compassion. Thought is not the action and thought cannot predict action. Only an authentic act of compassionate attention can be

spontaneous and generous in its absolute freedom from choice.

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Such is the way in which a description of conflict based on Krishnamurti's approach is attempted. Only through observing one's reactions in the reactions of others can progress be made in the exercise of attention. This is to say that we help one another understanding the way of compassion. But to seek relationships to the effect of doing that learning is not going to lead to transformation. Serious students attract what they need for their own growth and the progress of their peers. Relationships happen, and it is enough of a responsibility to shape them and make them grow without the preoccupation to reach out desperately to create more interaction with people. Doing so is like taking a flight from loneliness, meaning an escape from the felt discomfort of not relating to oneself, not being attentive to the internal aspects of fragmentation. Aloneness, on the other hand, has the characteristic of being appeasing and rejuvenating, because it means essentially to be "all one" with all that there is. And there is potential to find mirrors in people in all places and circumstances, peaceful and violent.

Obviously, the heart of the problem is connection, how to connect without being invasive, demanding, or inconsiderate. Thought itself is responsible for creating images about what should be, what is, and what one is. The characteristic of

thought is its propensity to provide despondency in relation to what the world can easily supply in abundance, or about the state of poverty--sometimes real, sometimes fictitious--which one refuses to face. In the duality between what one is and what one could or should be, is the ultimate source of discomfort. It is extremely apparent in relationships because it is easier to identify with real human beings than with objects. In a moment of inattention, thought starts creating the image; right relationship means being able to let go of that image.

Furthermore, it is easy to fall into subtle psychological bargain with individuals rather than groups. The quest for happiness and success which has been rendered excruciatingly imperative by the media and by the preoccupation with tradition is a cult which is promoted as the ultimate good which human beings should seek. Hasn't the quest created enough violence in so-called developed nations? And if the quest becomes the goal of the nation itself as an entity, what intensity of conflict will be felt in the thriving of all its members? Pleasure can unfortunately become the substitute for happiness when relationships become goal-oriented. Pleasure is a sensation which is entirely linked to repetition and memory. Therefore, how can happiness be re-established based on what is seen in the mirror of relationships? There is no end to conflict without making use of this mirror, says Krishnamurti. There is no possibility and no reason for isolation from the group, the family, or the co-workers. The notion of loneliness is a thought

from the mind, for it is impossible to be alive and not see other human beings. The way in which connections are made has much less to do with knowing people, their actions and their thoughts, than seeing a reflection of oneself in them:

This total process of the mind is to be understood only through relationship--relationship with nature, with people, with our own projection, with everything. In fact, life is nothing but relationship. Though we may attempt to isolate ourselves from relationship, we cannot exist without relationship; though relationship is pain from which we try to run away through isolation by becoming a hermit and so on, we cannot do that. All these methods are an indication of the activity of the self.<sup>27</sup>

Similarly, selfishness consists in giving out to the world only the results of mental activity, of thought and inattention. Reflecting oneself in the other, on the other hand, means increasing the capacity to listen, to see and understand the other as oneself. Only then can a silent mind bring quality to the relationship. Identification with someone else--in romantic love for example--is the giving away of the personality in the act of attention which the mirror provides. What one tries to see is that the letting go of desire, and of the belief that conflicts are inherent to life as opposed to thought, is the challenge. As mentioned earlier, desire and conflict provide an acute sense of aliveness which is a total illusion. To be free from the known, from the activity of thought, and consequently from the fluctuation from one conflict to another brings happiness which does not require of itself to be pursued or

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<sup>27</sup> Collected Works VI. Madras, India, pp. 322-3.

possessed. Such happiness is pure, innocent, compassionate, and totally unaware of itself.

Relationships are mirrors of compassion. I would assume that Krishnamurti should accept this statement. Those mirrors are holistic, supportive instruments which go further than the methods of teachers or even the models of scriptures for modern time, because people who are mirroring are alive and capable of relative accuracy. No one should be required to live exclusively to a truth which already exists in definition, established through the lineage of ancient teachers. Truth must be accessible to responsible investigation, and constant discrimination from live persons who need to see it work. The characteristic of compassion in relationships is the potential for equanimity without judgment, but with discrimination as to "What-Is".

I think that if relationships are more than ever dependent upon emotions, or if they are becoming a form of psychological bargain for security and power, it is because there is powerlessness about being compassionate. For three reasons:

- 1) The possibility of compassion resides in the potential to observe oneself in total psychological freedom and psychological health;

- 2) It resides in due recognition by society of the value of compassion. The reality of the present conditioning of society is that power, force, and success are subjects of admiration and praise.

3) Even if things are changing, and conflict resolution is not alien to many nations and their leaders, the role of the media in consumerism and cynicism is vast and persistent.

Compassion is hidden, but has the properties that light itself possesses: it permeates through time and goes through a medium. It is also very modest; it starts with the smallest deed and has no goal toward the greatest. In its simplicity, it moves the center of gravity to shift so that the ego is no longer the controlling force. So it is the case that every individual can discover that the heart brings what the mind wants, which is not sentimentalism nor based on ideologies, but rather an unaltered view of the flow of energy.

## CHAPTER 5

### The Meaning of Dialogue

Dialogue starts from a willingness to be tentative about what you know.

The focus of dialogue is on "What-Is" rather than on ideas and opinions.

Dialogue is being together and seeing together in an unfolding relationship.<sup>1</sup>

One of the most important aspects of Krishnamurti's teachings is the insistence on the cultivation of healthy relationships. Krishnamurti first met physicist David Bohm in the 1960s, when what was to become a twenty-year friendship started in California. David Bohm was at the height of a scientific career in theoretical physics, studying questions which bordered the field of metaphysics, and were emphasized by his particular interest in Zen Buddhism. Due to the nature of the theory he was trying to develop (the "Theory of the Implicate Order") and because of Krishnamurti's views about the observer and the observed, the two men found that they had much to investigate in common.

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<sup>1</sup> Printed material. Ojai, CA: Krishnamurti Foundation of America.

In this chapter, I try to juxtapose the similarities of their preoccupations about the manner in which social interaction can improve when the discursive mode dissipates. I find that the idea of dialogue is meaningful and feasibly achievable within the present structure of society. It is interesting to note that the conversations on dialogue between Krishnamurti and David Bohm expanded into other areas of research targeted toward the study of consciousness, with other scientists like psychiatrist David Shainberg and biochemist Rupert Sheldrake. For the purpose of comprehension, I have categorized social dialogue here under the three headings of communication, the role of thinking, and holistic interaction.

#### I - Dialogue is Communication beyond Words

If considered from the point of view of a relationship between the human and the natural world, one can observe four giant mutations in the evolution of humankind so far:

1) Since prehistorical time until the rise of spoken language, the first way to communicate with nature was to be in it. Because of physical limitations and dependence upon the natural elements, the sole purpose for living had to be survival. The first human beings were very much part of nature, immersed in an environment which did not require intense mental activity.

2) From the time when great civilizations emphasized the self-reflective potential until approximately the dawn of the industrial era, humankind's relationship had been with Nature.

The age of the great discoveries, explorations, conquests, the role of clergy, predominance of agricultural societies, testify of this state of affairs. Medicine was homeopathic and holistic; education emphasized botany, geography, geology, zoology, in addition to the humanities. Large areas of land became available and were passed on from generation to generation, even to the poorest. The spiritual life, from paganism to church dogma, was important to peoples who had a close understanding and relation with Mother Earth.

3) With the rise of the industrial era and the great inventions of science, humankind started to rule over Nature. From Descartes to Galileo and Newton to Einstein, the enticement of materialistic opportunities emphasized the sense of becoming, if not "masters of the universe", certainly instruments of dominion over a perfectly functioning world which would serve humanity in its evolution. It is clear that spiritual development during these centuries rested on the premises of Cartesian rational claims and the dualism that ensues. To this day, the Christian church has, for the large part, reached the highest level of corporate organization in the history of religions and, in line with the Age of Reason and rational determinism, is committed to preserve the supremacy of the exoteric tradition over that of mysticism.

4) At the turn of a new millennium, the time has clearly come to address the vital issue of the eco-human perspective. We could see humanity making a move to live through Nature. Nature

is alive and well, only we humans are discovering the mistake of spoiling and wasting the endowment. Greater physical longevity for the human species, cures for major diseases through gene therapy, potential for consciousness development, are closely linked to scientific progress. This is most clearly seen in modern physics and neurobiology, and in the growing potential for extraplanetary travel and other astronomical discoveries.

If one wants to see meaning as well as a unifying link behind these four transitions and their possible implications, it seems imperative to find ways to initiate global understanding, should the quest indeed be to seek change. As discussed before, Krishnamurti says that change is fundamentally real. Change is the very movement of life. But the nature of change is made possible in great part by the consensus of human minds. This is to say that mind is here understood in Krishnamurti's sense, as the highest function beyond the domain of thought. Nevertheless, even after the spiritual breakthrough of the sixties, the emphasis on the conceptual, empirical, and objectivist observation of nature and of the universe are still predominantly part of the cultural norm worldwide. This has a tremendous, covert impact on the global world view and on individual ethics. To provide some coherence, one of the ways to understand the nature of change as a constructive component of growth is through a careful reflection on the activity of dialogue. Since the Greek era, the context of dialogue has been changed to a science, a discipline, an imprecise tool for education. It has not been

practiced seriously in recent times. One of the reasons why dialogue is not made possible has to do with a lack of concordance as to what the nature of consciousness could be. Thought is rarely investigated other than through the dichotomy between objectivism and subjectivism. We do experience, however, that thought is responsible for divisions in our sense of self, and that this produces separation between the peoples and the nations of the world. Different countries think on their own, within their own governmental structure, what the best scenario could be for their advancement as independent states. The level of economical interest is tied to financial struggles and debts which are in many cases devastating, in all cases inextricable situations of considerable bureaucratic complexities. The problems for individuals and their countries have originated in thought and in the accumulation of concepts embedded in brain memory:

There are the threats of war, of nuclear or conventional war; there is decline of all religions; there is no moral activity; but most of us are living superficially, intellectually, never examining, never questioning, never doubting, all that is going on in the world. And to examine, probe, observe, requires a very clear mind and heart, a brain that is not held by any tradition. The brain is already conditioned. The human brain has evolved through millennia. If we are not aware of the activities of our own sensory responses, to examine and to observe what is going on in the world becomes almost impossible.<sup>2</sup>

Over the centuries, the function and benefit of dialogue have vanished inside the conformity of routine modes of behavior

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<sup>2</sup> Krishnamurti. Mind Without Measure. Madras, India: KFA, 1983, p. 69.

and communication, because there are definite limits to conventional modes of thinking as was suggested in the previous chapter. Locating the origin of dialogue in Greek civilization is intended in order to emphasize that the meaning of a Greek word such as "Therapei" is attention, and that this translation is therefore overlooked by linguistics. If attention implies the cessation of thought, as suggested by Krishnamurti, there must be a possibility other than thought which allows for attention to happen spontaneously. One way to approach this question might be to ask, as the ancient Greeks did with Parmenides and Heraclitus, what the meaning of being and becoming is. But what sense is there in redoing Greek philosophy in the 21st century? Within the history of humanity, physiological changes have had tremendous impact on whether civilizations would remain strong or would become dysfunctional. This is still to say that conflicts and disparities originate in the thoughts of human beings, not in the unity of their consciousness. Like contemporary psychologist Ken Wilber has it:

...Unfreedom, aggression, and anxiety are not characteristic of the nature of humanity, but character of the separate self of humanity. It is not man's instincts that undo him, but his psychological appetites, and those appetites are a product of boundary, not of biology.<sup>3</sup>

Evidently, the perception of universal truth has hardly ever been uniformly accepted as the movement of life itself, or else it was disputed, deemed irrelevant to conceptual reality. But

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<sup>3</sup> Ken Wilber. Up from Eden. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1996.

fortunately, truth is much beyond the limitations of human mental activity. Therefore, starting anew the process of dialogue has at least two components: a) raising consciousness above the conceptual level; b) understanding the role of compassion:

He who would understand the truth must give it his[her] undivided attention, and that undivided attention comes only when there is no choice, and therefore no idea of distraction. There is no such thing as distraction, because life is a movement, and one has to understand this whole movement and not divide it into interests and distractions...When you see the truth of this, it liberates consciousness from yesterday.<sup>4</sup>

We shall see why the function of dialogue grounded in the experimental groups led by David Bohm in the 1970s has implications of the highest significance for the global community. If indeed transformation starts at the individual level, it cannot be limited in that way. But if change happens collectively in dialogue, communication and participation can emerge directly. Dialogue is interaction with whatever one wants to understand. Meaningful interaction with nature, with art, and with people requires engaging in mute resonance with the complexity of the world. As will be seen, speechless acts are the greatest forms of successful dialogue because, inherent in their nature, is the use of the intuitive function of the mind which implies that thought is relinquished. Inspiration driven by intuition is the result of the quality of attention which is present in quasi non-verbal dialogue. Physicist David Bohm calls the dialogue an unfolding relationship. When every participant

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<sup>4</sup> Krishnamurti. On Truth. HarperSan Francisco, 1995, p. 8-9.

and the group are attentive to "What-Is", communication takes place in the being and seeing together simultaneously. Increasing the silence between thoughts is what keeps the dialogue alive and helps maintain the focus on "What-Is" for lucid sharing and concordance. The only valid way to approach dialogue is to obliterate prior information acquired in other discussions and accept self-exposure to the group in total confidence. If the flow of questioning is sometimes slow or dense, and engages in only minimal verbal expression, one must adapt with sensitivity and not be disruptive. For the knowledge based on memory which is brought in at the beginning of the session should dissolve into a consistent and quiet movement of sustained inquiry, of listening, and of genuine presence to the group. One probes that the exercise of dialogue is to see the large picture as opposed to the particular, the nationalistic, or strictly personal opinion. Such dialogue is at the same time a process of exploration away from personal issues for the understanding of a global, larger attitude. The fullness of Krishnamurti's teachings is based on this concept of dialogue between the inquirer, the reader or listener, and himself acting as a mirror, not as an interlocutor:

"I feel it will be worth while if we can, in exchanging words, see clearly the pattern of our own thinking; that is, if we can expose ourselves, not only to another, but to ourselves, and see what we actually are and what is inwardly taking place. To be worthwhile, a discussion should serve as a mirror in which we see ourselves clearly, in detail, without distortion, taking in the whole picture and not

merely looking at one particular fragment."<sup>5</sup>

However, the success and the quality of meaningful dialogues depend largely on the level of energy, attention, and openness at play between the participants. The role of facilitators in groups is to keep dialogues protected from personal anecdotes, narratives, and private interpretations, thereby avoiding the tendency to become therapy groups. The facilitator remains vigilant and is not a leader but an equal in the group. Respect and commitment to truth is what makes communication possible between participants. By moving at a slow pace between questions, reflection, and responses, the facts come to full vision to all involved. And the concordance is more powerful than agreement: it has at its root the sharing of truth in a coordinated action grounded in a common vision. Based on my few experiences in the United States, dialogues are frequently extended and as silent as possible to provide a chance for cultivating a grasp on attention and a rigorous understanding of the questions. Krishnamurti's words, when engaging in dialogue with listeners, were eloquent enough to bring to the surface feelings of puzzlement or strong emotions. He always spoke simply, slowly, and in my opinion somewhat redundantly, because by doing so he was allowing the audience to absorb feelings inwardly, to own emotions and make them part of their actual life. A dialogue group is based on the same idea and practice.

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<sup>5</sup> Krishnamurti. London, Brockwood Park, June 10, 1962.

It is also a function of dialogue to make possible the observation of the universality of emotions which are perceived as personal. Because a genuine act of observation implies a dispassionate look at one's thoughts and emotions, the dialogue group is a perfect exercise for personal observation. Such learning brings about the possibility of change, but also the understanding that experiences strictly based on thought are actual distractions from living in the immediacy of the present moment:

The challenge is always new, and our response is always old, because it is the outcome of the past...That is, there is a challenge, which is always new. I meet it with the response, with the condition of the old. So what happens? I absorb the new, I do not understand it; and the experiencing of the new is conditioned by the past.<sup>6</sup>

To explore and dialogue with depth, silently, with no time constraint and with care for one another, is a very liberating event, and could be a real means of progress if applied to the resolution of international crises. In the absence of emotional charge within the group, acceptance of each communication in total freedom, respect for the energy of the group as a whole, there are no frustrations nor demands. The empty space made possible by the "no-goal-and-no-agenda" principle of dialogue is not unrealistic or purposeless. It happens to be part of a quality process which operates at a level higher than the mental. The result of dialogue should be to bring people together to a degree of comprehensive intelligence detached from thought,

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<sup>6</sup> Krishnamurti. On Truth. HarperSan Francisco, 1995, p. 2.

therefore intuitive. Different opinions might confuse us, but they certainly divide us by definition. Seeing the truth together silently provides calmness and energy to the group willing to bring solutions to destructive problems, out of the same positive intentionality. Assumptions and opinions make people tensed and hypersensitive, prone to be influenced. But conditioning comes dramatically to the surface during a dialogue session and dissipates because it is not nourished by thought. However, a dialogue group is not a psychological inquiry session. Emotions are observed for what they are: distracting but unworthy of concentration. To observe the appearance of assumptions and strong opinions in a group is the greatest step toward resolving conflicts.

Undoubtedly, to a corporate or political hierarchy, the idea of dialogue would seem extremely eccentric and totally unproductive. A major purpose of political encounter, including that of most conflict resolution groups, is to generate strong opinions and postulates, formulate them vehemently in verbal and written statements unclear to the public at large, thereby wasting the energy of leadership. How should the function of public groups be redesigned for the sake of the community at a time when the intensity of the crises, the confusion worldwide, the concerns with the environment, with religious and political rights is occupying the largest part of our minds? Somehow, the ostentatious necessity to act globally must be separated from the obsession with conceptual approaches if it is to insure the

safety and well-being of the planet. Yet, it looks as though most nations consistently opt to settle their own struggles locally and independently. Groups may work together on the international scene, but they remain firmly grounded in their particular historical culture and tradition. The art of getting together as a human group conscious of having the same psychological patterns does not exist. In contrast to this idea, participants at most levels of national interest continue to delude themselves into the belief of remaining ideologically independent, while trying to minimize the vital problems which touch the entire globe. Occasionally one can witness a splendid, beneficial action of international dimension occurring on the world scene, but sooner or later it becomes evident that there was economical or political interest underneath the cover of justice and compassion. This may happen because human beings generally favor fragmentations which provide a sense of affirmation, of superiority and competitiveness: between nations, between religions, between lifestyles. So, the world is broken up into pieces which constitute the thoughts of the nations put into action by the citizens and the leaders they choose after serious thinking. Individualism is rampant under the guise of global consensus. There is self-interest in almost anything, usually the result of the influence of a cultural environment creating other illusions of self-identity. Additionally, it is a generally adopted opinion that non-attachment is not viable and should not be cultivated. However, it is through a form of

positive non-attachment that one can cultivate the possibility to be in a state of attention where freedom prevails, and where choice never becomes an issue. There is no compulsive choice-making in total awareness, for to observe a situation attentively brings its solution to mind:

And perhaps you have noticed another interesting and very simple fact: that the moment you really want to do something, you have the energy to do it...That very energy becomes the means of controlling itself, so you don't need outside discipline. In the search for reality, energy creates its own discipline. The man[woman] who is seeking reality spontaneously becomes the right kind of citizen, which is not according to the pattern of any particular society or government.<sup>7</sup>

It is precisely because there is an urgency to act globally that dialogue groups can be used to raise the level of awareness. Acting upon the fact that they are undivided, groups working together consciously can gradually have insight into the decisions and applications of group work. The consciousness of a group is always new and growing, because it is equal to the consciousness of each individual which has merged itself into that of the group. As the dialogue unfolds, the group can transform challenging economical and political situations without force, without intellectual boundaries, with the quality of an awareness which is not built on the persistence of ambitious personalities trying to expose their ideologies. Groups in dialogue are more able to come to the realization that they are included in the same unfolding movement toward the well-being of

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<sup>7</sup> Krishnamurti. Think On These Things. New York: HarperPerennial, 1964, p. 211-12.

humanity, or that they can approximate a state of harmony. What is it that makes a group different when mind is used at a fuller capacity? Remaining in a state of quietness or non-thought demands strong commitment from every member of the group, and a lot of consistency within the group. This is made particularly difficult when social individualism is so important that there seems to be no purpose in participating to group endeavors other than reinforcing one's personal identity. The vicious circle of counter-productive individualism has caused enormous limitations in the search for global solutions to global challenges. The assumption of dialogue is that one accepts to participate with the notion of being holistically related to the world, without any attempt to control or direct the group for the promotion of one's opinion, or unconscious self-gratification. Besides the establishment of genuine communication between corporations, employees, nations, government officials, and political leaders, the idea of dialogue has a strong scientific background which David Bohm, as a renowned, creative physicist, proceeded to implement until his death in 1992. Dialogue groups continue to take place in the United States under the auspices of Mrs. Saral Bohm, together with the scientists who pursue David Bohm's Theory of the Implicate Order.

## II - Thinking About Thinking

All the instances of divisions between people and organizations, for Krishnamurti as for David Bohm, are based on

the exaggerated importance given to thinking without correct attention. Thinking cannot resolve itself through thought. Memory works automatically, and a considerable amount of subliminal thinking occurs continually. Needless to say, it has become the privilege of the media to manipulate this situation. Unfortunately, subliminal impressions are also invading more refined cultural interaction such as religious rituals, or traditional forms of education and entertainment. The crisis is in the activity of thought, as well as in the cultural environment which is already highly abused by thought. Here is the literal explanation of David Bohm:

The cause of the crisis is that for thousands of years thought has been doing things but denying that it did them. Instead of just stopping the doing of the thing that was making the crisis, it made a problem. The whole process of thought is thus conditioned to think that it has no effect--to think that it does something and then doesn't have to take that into account.<sup>8</sup>

This statement is even more powerful when juxtaposed to what Krishnamurti says about mind conditioning. One rarely sees that a problem, and especially social issues, are not only out there in the inner city or the ghetto, but in the way people think or continue to think, or are influenced to think. People react based on the way they think about each other or about some ideology. It is the reactions to thought which generally create negative situations, because mental activity on its own cannot create correct action. As Krishnamurti puts it:

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<sup>8</sup> David Bohm. Ojai, CA: Meeting with Oak Grove Students, November 14, 1989, p. 12. Copyright 1990 by David Bohm.

We are thinking that thought is not doing anything. But the process of thought actually propels the crisis, though it says that the crisis is just going on by itself.<sup>9</sup>

A way to adjust the thought process, to learn to think differently--since thought cannot be eliminated--is to cultivate attention. Differentiating the thought which is open (e.g. remembering a person) from the thought which has a charge of intentionality (e.g. choosing a career) impacts tremendously on one's ordinary activities. The most important feature of thought is that it contradicts itself: results are different from the thoughts which created them. Such is the criteria for incoherence. Thought is not an outside object to be fixed with another thought. Thought is a physiological process which should be beneficial to psychological well-being, but which can spread like a disease between people when it is abused. Consequently, everyone could be blamed for spreading the disease, and everybody can decide to be healed:

That's what the human race has been doing for ages. It notices that something is wrong, but it doesn't find the right cause. Thus, the very thought that it uses to deal with that wrong thing is the same mistake that made it in the first place.<sup>10</sup>

The solution proposed by David Bohm and Krishnamurti indicates that the process of thinking can be modified. At a slower pace, one can feel gaps between thoughts by not entering into the train of thoughts. The nature of thought which produces

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<sup>9</sup> In Bohm, p. 13.

<sup>10</sup> In Bohm, p. 21.

an action (not a reaction) is different from the thought which interprets and perpetrates emotions. By observing the mechanism and the root of thought, one does not suppress thought--which is an impossibility--but breaks fragmentation and comes to an open gap between thoughts. Slowing the mind makes it possible to see the cause before the effect, the generic as opposed to the particular:

When you observe what is going on in the world outside of you, you see that each country is isolating itself, each group is isolating itself--the Muslim, the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Tibetan, the Russian, the American, and so on. This factor of isolation is destroying the world, is separating humanity. This is an actual fact that is taking place in the world. Then, inwardly, each of us think we are separate.<sup>11</sup>

What occurs during this experience is the cessation of impulsive operations in the brain. This provides space for a position of detachment from one's particular circumstances. One can see a picture large enough to include personal problems into it. Granted that emotions and conflicts are commonly experienced by the whole of humanity, what happens during a well-conducted dialogue session is that non-verbalization of private thinking allows for insight about a solution which is seen in that larger picture by all participants. David Bohm provides an analogy, transferring this observation to the larger social groups:

...The psychological map which thought makes is not distinguished from the territory because you feel it to be a part of the territory...It is as if your assumptions were being projected into the whole world. So what you see of the

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<sup>11</sup> Krishnamurti. Mind Without Measure. Madras, India: KFA, 1983, p. 9.

world contains your map...A great deal of the trouble the human race is creating is due to that wrong use of the maps, because the whole human race acts according to the map that it projects into the world and into itself.<sup>12</sup>

Therefore, to understand the nature of thought one needs to practice non-restrained attention. Only attention of the highest quality can reveal what thought is made of. Thought can become excess, harmful baggage which creates destructive procedures from which the mind needs clarifying. Krishnamurti said that the observer and the observed are one because consciousness is undeviating and does not belong to time. The subject/object is an abstraction, a creation of thought for the main purpose of security and reassurance that reality exists as phenomenon:

Then what is truth? The astrophysicists, the scientists are using thought to investigate the material world around them, they are going beyond physics, but always moving outward. But if one starts inward one sees that the 'me' is also matter. And thought is matter. If one can go inward, moving from fact to fact, then one begins to discover that which is beyond matter. Then, if one goes through with it, there is such a thing as absolute truth.<sup>13</sup>

And like Bohm says it, the object is the map, not the territory itself. And yet the tendency, especially in modern science, is to ignore the harm of this dichotomy and to say that mind is not to be found outside the physical. David Bohm says that the mind is unlimited, that it cannot be restricted to the object. Truly, modern physics sees that the observer is inseparable from the instrument it uses to measure reality. In the views of

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<sup>12</sup> Bohm, p. 25.

<sup>13</sup> Krishnamurti. On Truth. HarperSan Francisco, 1995, p. 113.

Krishnamurti and David Bohm, it finally all comes down to the question of the nature of the relationship between thought and action, between intention and result. There is much talking about a new thinking for the New Age. But there cannot be a different way to think unless thought itself is understood and transcended. To acknowledge the impact of thought upon the planet, one can learn from the sort of technology which has evolved so extremely rapidly:

We have to focus on the fact that we have irreversibly entered into this technology. We can't go back. So we have a major problem with the incoherence of our thought. And for the planet and the human race, we've got to make sense of this.<sup>14</sup>

So if the brain is not active, working, thinking--which the machine can do far better than the brain--then what is going to happen to the human brain? Either entertainment, or inquiry into oneself, which is infinite.<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, in order to capture the system and not be caught in it at the same time, it is necessary to see the system as a whole, as a totality. Saying that there is a different form of thinking means being already caught in the system. This is a way to say that to see "What-Is", as Krishnamurti puts it, is to be outside the limits of thinking. But the issue is not to invent a new way of thinking. The question is to understand the process of thought by looking at it. One needs to develop the willingness to try: perhaps it is possible to reach another level

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<sup>14</sup> In Bohm, p. 37.

<sup>15</sup> Krishnamurti. On Mind and Thought. San Francisco, CA: HarperSan Francisco, 1993, p. 106.

of consciousness when one sees "What-Is". This is precisely what the association between Krishnamurti and David Bohm was all about: to see if there is a possibility to go past traditional ways of thinking, and past the dualistic mechanism of thought. We mentioned briefly earlier that David Bohm's dialogue groups originated together with his scientific theory. Evidently, the "Theory of the Implicate Order" is beyond the scope of this thesis. It is described fairly accessibly to the general public in several of David Bohm's publications. Suffice it to say that David Bohm states that thought is a set of reflexes added on to each other ad infinitum. Whether used logically or defensively, the average thinking can be seen as a system made of various reflexes. The reflexes are felt emotionally and physically. It is a well-known fact that it takes several seconds for adrenaline to flow into the blood stream following a reaction of anger. It is the same for every thought being generated: it produces a chemical reaction in the body. The reflexes which are too rigid become structures which require more thought to survive, and consequently more reflexes acting as defenses for the structures:

Many of our intentions are reflexive; they just come out automatically. They are coming from reflexes, whose basis is thought. The intention is implicit in the thought[ ]. We have the picture that there is "somebody" inside us who is given all this information and then decides to have the intention to do something based on that. I'm suggesting, however, that that is not so.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> David Bohm. Thought As A System. London: Routledge, 1994, p. 91.

David Bohm also states that the reflexes are often incoherent, inconsistent, and conflicting. In addition to this, there is the fact that thought persists for long periods of time. We know, for example, that many diseases like cancer, as well as emotional and mental stress, are the results of the persistence of chaotic thoughts and the reflexes they produce. Another featured role of dialogue is to ask whether the chaos in human thinking is in synchronicity to the apparent chaos in the universe, which is in fact preserving evolution by insuring continuous change:

If we had an insight right away into all this--that the observer is the observed, as Krishnamurti so often said--then it would all evaporate. The point is that we have a resistance to that insight. We have the fact that there is confusion and incoherence. And we have the fact that we do not have perception which sees what is going on. There is this chemistry, this reflex which keeps people going in the same way...<sup>17</sup>

The only other alternative is to remain passive without questioning, therefore extremely limited in comparison to the potential to increase awareness:

The question is then: which is going to prevail--this questioning or the old conditioning habits? The possibility of our thinking is somehow in the DNA; as is the possibility that the thinking could go wrong, given a set of circumstances which will condition it to go wrong. And somehow in the history of the human race that has happened. We don't know whether it was inevitable. But considering the nature of our brain, we can see that it looks likely that this sort of thing could happen.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Id., p. 213.

<sup>18</sup> Bohm, pp. 58-60.

The "thinking about thinking" challenge is what the dialogue groups are trying to study in depth: why does the mechanism continue to operate intellectually, to function through an image, or through words? From abstraction to understanding, to practice, and to action, there lies a gap which is too easily filled with the delusion of acquired knowledge. However, when results are totally out of touch with the intention, the delusion appears very clearly. Therefore there must be something more reliable, some form of intelligence which affects the reflexes by taking hold of the whole system. Thought is limited but we continue to think we know a lot about mental activity. If the future of humankind is being put to risk because of nuclear weapons invented by thought, should it be the thought-reflexes and the egos of participants which enter into dialogue? The ego is so dominant as to constantly expand its boundaries in such ways which make it feel secure and untouchable. The distinction to be made is between self-awareness and the need for communication. The former refers to the quality of mind of each individual present in the dialogue, and the latter is the inclusion of the total individual into the dialogue. It is also articulated by Krishnamurti and Bohm that time and space have been made comprehensible by human thought, and are consequently no more than guiding maps for what they mean to represent. Likewise, the nature of consciousness is equally incomprehensible in its totality. A mind which could remain immovable and intact inside what we call "the observer" would be pure intelligence:

What is important is the awakening of intelligence. Intelligence has no expansion or contraction. [Unlike the physical brain, seat of reflexes]. If it has expansion and contraction and is measurable, then it is not intelligence. Intelligence is not cultivated by thought. Intelligence is born through insight. This intelligence is not craftiness, cleverness, nor accumulation of knowledge. It has no relation to thought. The ability to build bridges, projects, machines, and computers is different. The accumulation of knowledge and the capacity born out of it is not the awakening of intelligence. This is an intelligence born of insight. When this intelligence is awakened, compassion is born. All the other capacities will have to act in accordance with this compassion. Compassion has its own intelligence.[emphasis mine].<sup>19</sup>

From this it follows that holding to a position is to ignore the fact that thought has created the reflexes on which such position or opinion is founded. Therefore, any given opinion can lose its foundation since by definition it is based on something as movable and unreliable as thought. In order to maintain a dialogue bringing harmony and compassion within a group, it is necessary to find out if there is a foundation more deeply rooted than thought, something like meaning. The meaning which emerges as the dialogue moves on produces a new mind which is coming from the source of an intelligent, unspoiled, neutral terrain. Interaction becomes participation or communion (the word chosen by Bohm) into the common meaning, the thread of development within the dialogue.

In addition, it seems equally critical to study the process of thought for the changes it could bring to psycho-spiritual studies. It is only a suggestion on my part that dialogue could

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<sup>19</sup> N. Lakshmi Prasad. Conversations with J. Krishnamurti. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1990, p. 62-63.

be one of those means of investigation. It is important to just share in communion what thinking really is all about.

Nevertheless, it is evident that what continues to be considered the highest achievement of humankind--namely the use of reason--is coincidentally the greatest danger impending upon its evolution, and now upon its very survival. This fact in itself should be a sufficient motivation for dialogue. If consensus is to be reached in dialogue on urgent issues such as civil rights, non-violence, and ethics, there must be questions to raise concerning the nature of consciousness, and the urgency of psychological change:

I do not know if you have noticed that the more you cling to some kind of conclusion, reasonable conclusion, logical conclusion or the conclusions of certain authorities, there is less energy. Where there is conclusion, there must be lack of energy because, when you come to a conclusion--which means, after discussing, arguing, come to a point which you think is right--then you shut the door to further enquiry, and that is what is happening in the world...Enquiry means to penetrate, to investigate, to explore, to open the door, to find out further. But most of us have not that energy, and so we fall back upon something which we call tradition or some book or other.<sup>20</sup>

Until now, one sees that the tool utilized for communication in group discussions is the intellect, the mind in its most common mode of operation. This is not a negative, derogatory statement. Most resolution groups have the best intention in mind. It is just an observation leading to say that what might be appropriate is an attempt to shift to a mind potential which goes beyond the

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<sup>20</sup> Krishnamurti. Mind Without Measure. Madras, India: KFA, 1983, p. 42-3.

intellect. Self-deceptive thinking exists since there is rarely any awareness of it, and even more so for a group than for an individual; therefore, there is evidently no freedom when thought has a definite purpose. And since it is an illusion to consider that consequences are the results of thinking, when in fact consequences are already contained in thought, reality is present in the freedom which exists prior to thought, namely intuition and intentionality. The preoccupation of David Bohm in communicating the value of dialogue is not as arrogant as to perhaps safeguard the future of humanity, but it studies the possibility to engage in real change through the evolution of consciousness by understanding wholeness in inquiry, as opposed to brain knowledge.

In more scientific terms, David Bohm also asks in dialogue<sup>21</sup> whether there is a possibility to find out if the individual (the particular) is a representation of the universal (be it God, or consciousness) and whether the topic could be studied without the mask of the ego, the so-called observer? The challenge of such inquiry of course would be to reassess the value and the role of argumentation. The role given to argumentation is so much a part of the human psyche that it is no longer possible to eradicate a system of belief which is so highly contaminated with its own incessant tumult. As a matter of fact, the difficulty in initiating dialogue groups is not to

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<sup>21</sup> "David Bohm, Krishnamurti: The Future of Humanity." Audiocassette. New York, NY: Mystic Fire Audio Inc., 1983.

gather people and motivate them to meet, but to relate to them the value of coming with a blank agenda and a free mind. The magnitude of insights obtained from a dialogue group is not easy to transcribe. For one thing, dialogue has become a myth which does not have a connotation of utility or relevance in the modern world of business and financial deadlines. Even when concerned with ethical and moral issues, it remains essential to demonstrate the orthodoxy and efficacy of the method employed. Method in the case of a dialogue is necessarily a contradiction, as both Krishnamurti and Bohm would agree. Krishnamurti says that the characteristic of clarity is to be found out of a spontaneous movement in the brain:

Can the mind give full attention without sense of exclusion? Surely it can, and that is the only state of attention, the others are mere indulgence, or tricks of the mind.<sup>22</sup>

It can be assumed, however, that most participants in a regular discussion, especially at a high level of responsibility, have little consideration to give to this sort of spontaneity. Clarity for them would mean an extremely active mind which processes thought as rapidly and rationally as it is capable. Clarity means "clarity of thought", the exact antithesis of a spacious, silent mind. David Bohm says that dialogue is meaning flowing between people, and he provides a vivid example of this image:

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<sup>22</sup> In Collected Works Vol. IX, p. 280.

I read many years ago of an anthropologist who visited a North American Indian tribe of hunters-gatherers. They would meet in a circle of thirty or forty people, and they would talk directly with each other...They talked with no agenda, no purpose; they made no decisions and they ended the circle for no apparent reason. And after that they apparently understood each other well enough so that they knew what to do[]They met again and again, in sort of a sustained way.<sup>23</sup>

Now, Bohm talks about the shared meaning of a society and its cultural content and background, and then he talks about communication. The larger the number of participants, the more assumptions and opinions inevitably drop into the agenda. But where there is no agenda there is meaning: the meaning is the intention for dialogue. Bohm also mentions the "impersonal fellowship" the dialogue provides for, which is not an aloof kind of pseudo-group, but rather something quite close to a communion coming out of a creative vision not sustained by forceful thinking. Participants to a dialogue are aware that the past is an active force. Like Bohm says: "the past is not really the past, it's the effect of the past in the present."<sup>24</sup> This is a scientific fact rather than an assumption, and what difference does it make when trying to resolve conflicts which have originated perhaps centuries earlier? It means either the acceptance that nothing new can arise from the past and the expectancy of a view unrelated to the past, or the negation of

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<sup>23</sup> David Bohm. Thought As A System. London: Routledge 1994, p. 188.

<sup>24</sup> "David Bohm, Krishnamurti: The Future of Humanity." Audiocassette. New York, NY: Mystic Fire Audio, Inc., 1983.

change by remaining fixated in brain memories brought up by thought. Probably, this is the most difficult of challenges for the leaders who see, in the historical memories of their nations, the sole purpose of their mission of reconciliation. For only if one sees the importance of the meaning of dialogue, does the value of communication come with it; the difficulty is to stay with "What-Is" whether it be the cruelty of the facts of war and terrorism, of torture and injustice, or the impossibility to help, to restore, to care. Sustaining the vision means going deeper into the chemistry of thought which was described earlier, primarily to avoid more reflexes to happen, finally reaching the spaciousness where insight can arise. The tension, if it is owned by the fellowship of the participants, is released and it becomes their vision. To own the experience and not escape from it through thought brings relief from its grasp:

It would be a tremendous thing if we could, all of us together, understand this one thing: the nature of awareness, nature of perception, nature of insight. Because then the mind is free to live. To live, not to live in conflict, in battle, in suspicion, in fear, being hurt, and all the rest of that misery.<sup>25</sup>

It should then become clear that dialogue groups cannot escape issues nor do they confront them. They see, share, and commune with the energy that comes out of the issues as they are surfacing. Even a group of twenty or forty is a small mirror of society; each person unconsciously perpetrates in the group the

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<sup>25</sup> Krishnamurti. On Mind and Thought. HarperSan Francisco, 1993, p. 40.

roles which they identify with in everyday life: whether one is controlling and domineering, or in a situation of being dominated, supervised, perhaps even in a state of servitude or co-dependency mentally and/or physically. But if the group is of a size and type where people do not know each other well, the meaning which comes out of the microculture they represent together becomes evident in the dialogue and something can happen, which is collective insight. David Bohm's analogy for this situation is that of the laser light compared to ordinary light spreading in all directions. The laser light is coherent and more powerful, sending one beam of light in one direction at a time. The power of a group of people thinking coherently has the same power and effect as the laser light. And their communication is tacit which means silent, without verbal imperatives. Real knowledge is tacit, and what is said explicitly should be the result of tacit investigation commonly shared. Unnecessary thinking does not have to be expressed verbally, therefore it evaporates. Only the reflective meaning would be expressed through language. Part of the collective mission of the dialogue groups implies that the stage of negotiation of assumptions and opinions has already taken place. The major difficulty is that most political leaders think they engage in dialogue, or call dialogue what is merely negotiating what the others think or know. For Bohm, that is only merely the beginning of what could become a dialogue with no pursuit in mind. Anybody wanting to think consciously with others must be

patient enough to observe their opinions as they arise without any judgment. This is rendered difficult because it is inevitable that some opinions are disturbing or unpleasant. To suspend that activity of reacting and judging is the essence of dialogue, and it is based on trust. Refraining from analyzing others' thoughts and suspending evaluation makes it possible to share the common content belonging to the group. The background of this mini-culture is reproduced in a few people looking together at the whole, realizing that consciousness is moving between them. What then are the applications and the changes which can be accomplished through such aspiration?

### III - What Is Global Dialogue?

To the extent that we perceive how we generate assumptions and opinions and that we accept leaving them aside, dialogue becomes a possibility accessible to all. Consequently, there are ways for communities to participate and organize dialogue groups. Individuals cannot fight incoherent thoughts through effort. Nor should there be concerted efforts to create silence in a community. But the attempt to reach a deep level of attention together is probably what could produce change, or the incentive for change, because attention creates space. Meaning enters where it can grow, therefore dialogue should be the sharing of a common content contained in the mental space between participants. Moreover, because dialogue goes beyond verbalized thinking, it is not only a great instrument of friendship, it

also symbolizes an inclusive effort to be liberated from conceptual barriers by tuning in communion with other attentive beings. This communion does not have the appearance of a ritual: it is a fusion of meaning between human beings. Participants are gathering into a space which is freely flowing between egos, and where intelligence, not intellect, blends into an unfolding movement:

The content of consciousness of each human being is, evidently, an enfoldment of the totality of existence, physical and mental, internal and external. This enfoldment is active in the sense that it enters in a fundamental way into the activities that are essential to what a human being is...Each human being is therefore related to the totality, including nature and the whole of [hu]mankind. He[she] is also therefore internally related to other human beings. How close that relation is, has to be explored.<sup>26</sup>

This has been one way to describe the significance of dialogue. Let us now look at some of the possible applications in a world made of relationships, to which Krishnamurti dedicated his teachings. Occasional feelings of wholeness, of being immersed in the wholeness of this planet and belonging to its vitality are not uncommon. But there are two aspects of this experience which require further communication. Wholeness is not a concept or an emotion: it is a feeling with no thought attached to it: "So a holistic life is not possible when the cause is thought, time, and the desire for identification and roots.

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<sup>26</sup> David Bohm. Unfolding Meaning. New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Inc. 1987, p. 22.

These prevent a way of living that is whole, complete."<sup>27</sup> As it is plain to see, telecommunications, mass media, and transportation have contributed to eliminate geographical and cultural barriers. Therefore detailed knowledge of what happens anywhere on the planet and how one relates to the events is practically unavoidable due to the immensity of the network. But it does not follow from rapid growth in geographical and physical interaction that the willingness to think together in better ways is a fact. Nor does the notion of being able to reach anyone anywhere produce togetherness. This is the first point.

Secondly, the technological network of thought may or may not provide change to the psyche we all share. A real personal perception of wholeness, of togetherness as brother/sisterhood, provides a sensory receptivity to world events which is infinitely more touching than the mere empathic thinking about them. Telepathic, intuitive faculties might be a closer way to qualify the relations that happen in togetherness. It is clear to me that the dialogue groups were designed to provide a practice for developing the latent intuitive potential we all have. A certain amount of individuality is required in choosing an area of interaction, or a group to belong to. The same applies to different nations. In this respect, it is encouraging to observe the formation of large international, humanitarian organizations, and the important forms of service they dedicate

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<sup>27</sup> Krishnamurti. On Truth. San Francisco, CA, HarperSan Francisco, 1995, p. 117.

themselves to accomplish. By relinquishing the authority of a leader at the center of a discussion, contrary to the traditional format, a freer common idea of service can inspire the group for introspection, and the interplay of the group makes it a living entity which becomes highly creative. To pursue the integrity and progress of a dialogue, a psycho-scientific, or noetic orientation is helpful, however not under some form of imposed discipline. Taking charge of one's own conscious awareness to bring it to use for dialogue is essential but should not become compulsory. One somehow must remember that the group provides results which are higher than he/she could reach on their own. The energy produced by a group is far more powerful than the outcome of logical, rational decisions which are not necessarily, even rarely met in full awareness of one's personal limitations: unanimity is rarely found in the rearranging of intellects, but in the organ of perception of truth which is brought to use in dialogue. Those who understand meditation may have a better sense of this argument and of the unity of all forms. Nevertheless, merging one's mind within the fusion attained by the group is a powerful experience for anyone willing to participate:

When you listen, you catch up quickly, you don't have to have a lot of explanations, analyses and descriptions; you are flowing with each other...When you so listen, the miracle takes place. When you so listen, it is like sowing a seed. If the seed is vital, strong, healthy, and the ground is properly prepared, it inevitably grows. So one has to learn the art of listening. If you listen very, very carefully, you capture it so quickly, the meaning of what

the other is saying.<sup>28</sup>

Needless to say, responsibility is crucial in choosing one's direction for group dialogues. Deepak Chopra says it well: "Responsibility means the ability to respond." The groups which could sustain durable, humanitarian decision-making require the commitment of dedicated individuals already prepared to give up a great part of individualism toward consciousness growth. The attributes of such groups are based on dedication and respect. This means looking for clarity to substitute for the commonality of achieving a goal which could create more confusion:

...cleaning up the rivers and planting trees and saving the whales should go together with dialogue and with seeing the general problem of thought. They all belong together, because any one of those activities by itself is not enough. Yet if we all just talk about thought and think about thought for a long while, the whole planet may be destroyed in the meantime.<sup>29</sup>

In this quote, what David Bohm is saying is that if we had truly and consciously wanted a better environment on the planet, the right kind of technology would have been invented. Is it a shock to realize that if there had been moral and firm intentions about the possible uses of technology, human beings could have changed the climate of the planet for better equilibrium instead of depleting the ozone layer? This is just one example of the

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<sup>28</sup> Krishnamurti. Mind Without Measure. Madras, India, 1983, p. 8-9.

<sup>29</sup> David Bohm. Transcription from a meeting with Oak Grove students in Ojai, CA, November 14, 1989, p. 32. Copyright 1990 by David Bohm.

meaning of thought and right action. More on this topic will be discussed in the following chapter. Meanwhile, one can see why technology, which is the result of elaborate thinking, is far from being a neutral activity. Nor are political or corporate leaders immune to the effects of dualistic thinking when they try to articulate what they mean to be an advantage for their country. Whether one wants to approach an issue from the point of view of conceptualization, or decides to break down the whole into its parts, it means having a definite goal, a set agenda. To dialogue means to work together despite these differences, knowing that there might be no answers to questions such as "going to war or not going to war" or "which is the best way to save the planet." But perhaps there will be the possibility for a positive intention to appear over the dialogue. Surely in all occurrences of dialogue, since the questions are approached in total friendship and unbiased thinking, the results would be toward compassion. While there are no compassionate ways to destroy each others for the sake of justice, dialogues about the facts of destruction might bring intelligent, humane answers to this problem. What happens between groups becomes as real as the issues discussed. This interaction is impersonal and neutral since it is not the product of personal attachment or affinities based on thought. Most populations at war with each others have no intention to dialogue because they are caught in the divisions which their thinking only accentuate, obstructing any possibility for attention. Such is the challenge of dialogue that through

the process which involves the totality of being (body, mind and psyche) sensitivities which are far more encompassing than reflexes alone are bound to surface. These are the tests of dialogues. One participates fully in the state of dialogue, into the unfolding of the inquiry, or else the fragmentation remains visible.

This is why out of such practice, and with the quality of attention described by Krishnamurti, a phenomenology of compassion and a transformation of the psyche can occur. Compassion is more real than thought, it is intelligence rooted in a togetherness which cannot be produced by the busy-ness of thought. Deep contact with the natural elements makes this definition more concrete. Machines and concepts which are the results of thinking are given disproportionate roles and qualities. Nature has not been created by thought, and nature remains in contact with physical, self-conscious beings in an harmonious, non-judgmental way. It continues to sustain humanity's needs despite our various forms of disruption:

The dawn is over and a new day has begun. It is really a new day, a new morning. And when one looks around, one wonders at the beauty of the land and the trees and the richness of it. It is really a new day and the wonder of it is, it is there.<sup>30</sup>

Perhaps it is through relationship with the natural world that one might grasp a better understanding of the interference of thought, of what went wrong with human thought, human mental

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<sup>30</sup> Krishnamurti to Himself. His Last Journal. San Francisco, CA: HarperSan Francisco, 1987, p. 114.

activity, going as far as destroying the aliveness of the environment. We might realize that it is more difficult than assumed to picture consciousness as a universal principle, as not necessarily separated from the universe or what we call creation, which is precisely the manifestation, the emanation of conscious energy into matter and form. But that is extrapolating from the topic of dialogue and the possibility of compassion. Yet when mind is understood as one and universal, it is easier to see that each aspect of it in living things contains the whole and is not separated from it, but of the same original nature. I think that this is an analogy which Bohm necessarily adopted, by bringing metaphysics into the content of his scientific research. As a foremost scientist, he developed and sustained a theory called "The Implicate and Explicate Order", not unlike Process philosophy. With this theory, he made an interesting point about the possibility of dialogue as a global instrument of inquiry, using the analogy of the unfolding and enfolding movement of the universe, of the whole and its parts. What this principle brings to mind is the enormous potential for genuine communication which is made available. We are already participating to some of these massive features through computer networks. If this sounds in total contradiction with the statements about technology made in section II, the argument is that the use of technology grounded in the commitment to the approach of dialogue could become extraordinarily positive for psychological change. Nothing is more frustrating and discouraging than a reluctance to change

despite all the facilities and preparation provided for it. Like Krishnamurti has commented: "It's been approximately 50,000 years that change is supposed to happen." It may be sheer utopia as well as visionary optimism to seize the example of software communication to provide an earthshaking transformation of the human psychological frame. However, it occurs to his current students and former colleagues that David Bohm might have developed both the Theory of the Implicate Order and the idea of Dialogue into their utmost conceivable possibilities for well-being:

The idea of no agenda and no conclusion has probably been circulating among the lower echelon--which shows how these ideas do percolate and may even reach the highest levels. I know that there are people in the State Department who are familiar with this idea of dialogue--it could have reached them that way. This indicates that things can communicate very fast in this modern world--though that may look very insignificant at first...Just as the destructive things communicate, so this idea of dialogue could communicate, too.<sup>31</sup>

...We don't know how fast a movement in the mind, in the thought process and beyond the thought process--this sharing together--will spread.<sup>32</sup>

In many instances, it has happened that what seemed unworkable at first examination is what became the best solution in the end. David Bohm would explain this by saying that it is energy without a definite purpose which produces creativity. In addition, one can see that a majority of people talk very

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<sup>31</sup> David Bohm. On Dialogue. Ojai, CA: David Bohm Seminars, 1992, p. 24.

<sup>32</sup> Id., p. 25.

profusely, but nonetheless with an unconscious goal of not addressing the issues directly, if at all. Meanwhile, the same individuals seriously identify with their opinions and prejudices. This propensity to identify with thought, precisely when it is not brought to consciousness, can be extremely disruptive or violent to all involved in the conversation. Krishnamurti would argue that a mark of intelligence can be observed in not having to defend one's thoughts--whether they be logically perfect or not--since thought is limited and has no relation to truth. Like he also said, truth is not to be found on a specific road, for all roads are similar, and none of them ultimately matters. The sensitivity which is characteristic of intelligence is the result of the cessation of screening through thought, and includes body language as well. Krishnamurti was an expert at dialogue in his own peculiar way: he could captivate his audience by not answering any question directly, or not touching a topic from a specific angle, but by raising more desire for inquiry. Like David Bohm, Krishnamurti knew that the shared meaning is the cement of a group, and consequently of a society. Dialogues are concerned with meanings, not with the attainment of truth. More importantly, in the absence of emotional charge in a dialogue, collective conditioning shows openly. The same conditioning would be a lot more challenging to acknowledge on one's own. For it is in the suspending of assumptions that joining together happens, driving the energy toward creative insight.

In my opinion, grass-root levels of dialogue are evident in the New Age and other spiritual groups which are forming in small urban and suburban communities. It is interesting to see that through the means of modern communication, a large number of books and tapes on spiritual topics are often at the origin of such groups: "The Celestine Prophecy"; "A Course in Miracles"; "Roots of Healing"; "Care of the Soul" to name only a few, are examples of how dialogue groups surge out of the desire to share meaning for further discovery. One may make the point that some of these groups are, or tend to become, forms of therapy groups. However, in view of the benefits brought to the community, it seems irrelevant to question or condemn this sort of situation, at times inevitable or innate to the nature of dialogue, at least in its primary phase. These preliminary phases can alleviate some of the ills of society which David Bohm mentions in the coming quote. What is mostly to the point of compassion is the impact of peaceful minds working together for the sanity, the transformation toward health of our unconscious collective psyche, which was the constant preoccupation of Krishnamurti:

We should keep in mind, nonetheless, that the dialogue--and in fact, all that we've been talking about--is not only directed at solving the ills of society, although we do have to solve those ills;[ ]but ultimately that's not the entire story. That's only the beginning. I'm suggesting that there is the possibility for a transformation of the nature of consciousness, both individually and collectively, and that whether this can be solved culturally and socially depends on dialogue. That's what we're exploring.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> David Bohm. On Dialogue, edited by Phildea Fleming, James Brodsky. Ojai, CA: David Bohm Seminars, P.O. Box 1452, 1992, p. 40.

Society is not some extraordinary mythical entity; it is our relationship with each other, and if two or three of us change, how will it affect the rest of the world? Or is there a way of affecting the total mind of man[woman]? That is, is there a process by which the individual who is changed can touch the unconscious of man[woman]?<sup>34</sup>

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In closing, I would like to quote again from Deepak Chopra (himself a student of Krishnamurti) who, through the use of humorous observation, reminds us that when predators are obsolete at a given time, they become extinct. Of course we, as the human race, could be pictured now as the predators... But it is no longer the survival of the fittest which will prevail, only perhaps the survival of the "wisest". And with no arrogance, but with determination and energy, we will have to change. As a human group, we should not be sentimental, but compassionate; not so much thriving with effort, but attentive with our whole mind. Human beings have an innate passion for life as well as the possibility for choice and intentionality. The choice is between responding chaotically to the desires brought by the memory of past events, and a conscious interpretation of thoughts with compassion in mind. Nature does not rely on thought because it knows what to do, therefore everything is happening effortlessly, as we see it. Such could be an inspiration, if need be, to re-

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<sup>34</sup> J. Krishnamurti. The Book of Life, ed. Mark Lee. HarperSanFrancisco, 1995. (Daily Meditations, November 28).

ignite our self-reflective animal desire to live consciously.<sup>35</sup>  
Teilhard de Chardin said that it is not that human beings need to become more spiritual, but that the spirit in human beings inevitably needs the experience of being human. Why should there be fear to unveil the mask of matter just enough to permit change to take place?

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<sup>35</sup> Reflections based on a series of lectures given by Deepak Chopra, M.D. in Los Angeles, 1995.

## CHAPTER 6

### Practice, Solidarity: "We Are the World"

I am trying to say that this sense of isolating process is so strong in us that we can't train ourselves to be out of it. I say, see the fact that you are the rest of [hu]mankind, for God's sake see it!<sup>1</sup>

From the preceding chapters, the issues which surface pertain to practical aspects of psychological change, by lessening dependence on the forms of knowledge which emphasize conceptual thinking and by developing the potential for attention to "What-Is" without fear. Unfortunately, most of the fragmentation brought about in education results in a quasi-inability for students coming out of school to communicate in freedom and dignity with their environment, much less to serve meaningfully in the communities where they belong.

That is why, in the light of what has been emphasized earlier, the question to ask at this point is: Who has changed after reading or hearing Krishnamurti? Who takes "The First and Last Step"? What difference does Krishnamurti make in the life of those who come across him one way or the other? The difficulty is

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<sup>1</sup> Krishnamurti. In Questioning Krishnamurti. San Francisco, CA: Thorsons, 1996, p. 15.

that each one of us is unique, therefore at a specific stage in encountering and knowing the nature of our mind and our relationship to the visible and non-visible reality of consciousness. So, in what way can we look at each other in order to meet each other? How do we motivate and stimulate each other with our own individual uniqueness? The renowned scholar on comparative religion, Professor Huston Smith, makes pertinent remarks to the effect of demonstrating the inadequacy of our philosophical background, or the difficulties inherent in making use of it to teach the possibilities of compassionate living in the contemporary world:

Few professors today could comfortably open their philosophy courses by saying, "If you hope to acquire not just knowledge but wisdom you must change your lives. You must try to tell the truth. You must cease to live in your skin-encapsulated egos with their petty wishes and try instead to identify yourself with the all-embracing Self.[ ]Yet this is the way wisdom philosophers (jnana yogins) used regularly to speak. Socrates argued that if you want to keep your ability to philosophize intact it is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong."<sup>2</sup>

Once again, together with Krishnamurti, we shall try to see how each individual contribution is unique and essential toward a greater change.

#### I - Sharing the Spirit with Krishnamurti

There is a strong tendency in most individuals to project and pretend more than is understood in terms of real personal knowledge. This delusion is perpetrated by the media and turns

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<sup>2</sup> Huston Smith. Essays on World Religion, ed. M. Darrol Bryant. NY: Paragon House, 1992, p. 217.

itself into prominent forms of repressed violence. As Krishnamurti says, such attitude leads to a state of procrastination and dependency:

And, if we are to observe together, we must be free of our nationalism. We human beings are inter-related, wherever we live. Please realize this, how serious, how urgent it all is. We have to face things as they are, to look at them very closely and see the urgency of doing something immediately, not leaving it to the scientist, the politician and the intellectual.<sup>3</sup>

Basically, it all comes down to the fear of the unknown which seems to constitute a global feeling of existential deficiency. People often mention hope, making it evident that the need to refer to chance or the adopted belief system as opposed to discrimination is based on anxiety and insecurity about events in the future. If, as Krishnamurti explains it, social responsibility and awareness go hand-in-hand, psychological healing must take place prior to seeking deeper, harmonious mind development. For who is this I we name the self? How do "I" explain who is "me"? What is this notion about "I am I" and why does it stop when I stop thinking? Where or what is the reality we refer to constantly, and how do we look at it? The problem with personal experiences is that they become fixations or obsessions of the ego, obviously. But fixation is not part of true human nature. Change is effortless when the ego, the "me" is not predominant. Removing the obstructions caused by fixations simply means observing the mind when both sense

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<sup>3</sup> Krishnamurti. The Flame of Attention. HarperSan Francisco, 1984, p. 11-12.

perception and thought are felt without interpretation.

Following this act of total attention, the way is open for personal and societal healing:

The crisis is not a matter of economics, of war, the bomb, the politicians, the scientists; the crisis is within us, the crisis is in our consciousness. Until we understand very profoundly the nature of that consciousness, and question, delve deeply into it and find out for ourselves whether there can be a total mutation in that consciousness, the world will go on creating more misery, more confusion, more horror. Our responsibility is not in some kind of altruistic action outside ourselves, political, social or economic; it is to comprehend the nature of our being; to find out why we human beings--who live on this beautiful earth--have become like this.<sup>4</sup>

In short, the mind becomes the ultimate trap to avoid because it is obsessed with itself. The mind is constantly eager to study itself, to find meaning for each state it finds itself in. The mind which always craves both concrete and abstract things (concepts, ideologies, beliefs, and the objects related to these) also looks for "safety zones". During those states, only a partial mind is at work, namely the intellect, in such a way that one oscillates between thoughts and the emotions produced. It is no wonder that we feel separated. To connect means to probe the self inwardly until one can distinguish free will and intentionality from selfishness. Whenever the ego remains in the background, there is awareness, even if this might lead to the illusion of an "observer" being there:

Conformity means imitation, which means more conflict...So there must be an understanding of that word not only verbally but inwardly, the meaning of it, the significance

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<sup>4</sup> Id. p. 83.

of it. That is, I understand the full significance of choice, the entirety of choice.<sup>5</sup>

Theoretically, if we want to move on, an education encompassing this approach would bear potential to heal a fragmented society. But in practical terms, the crucial elements for change are still missing. Of course, Krishnamurti came from a tradition where the study of mind has permeated the philosophy, culture and religion of the people since the dawn of humanity. But needless to say, he had both the intention and the potential to go beyond the conceptual. In the teachings, he elaborated on this possibility step by step, with discipline, conviction, passion and almost devotion. Meanwhile, one may ask: What would happen if attention was a normal practice for everyone? What good for humanity would come out of conscious, sane, personal observation? Krishnamurti never helped directly with psychological trauma because it was obvious to him that modern psychology misses a correct understanding of the most important element about the mind: the realm of the non-tangible, what makes spirit become a phenomenon. What the individuals who are interested in the teachings have in common is the willingness to observe themselves in their surroundings. By that is not meant introspection through self-analysis, but simply a regular inventory, a sort of candid, non-judgmental outlook at one's particular behavior patterns and thought processes constructed

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<sup>5</sup> Krishnamurti. In Questioning Krishnamurti. San Francisco: Thorsons, 1996, p. 55.

around cultural symbols and metaphors; repetitions of errors and disorders; ecstasies and miseries; suffering and rapture; conflicts and peace. To see that all of it converges to form the present moment when one is participating to life, is the key to change. One would think that if this could be done all at once, in synchronicity over the world, with no notion of time and distance, we would literally be the world... But it has not happened despite numerous religious and humanistic attempts in the past. During several discussions with psychologists (among them Karen Horney, R.D. Laing, Eric Fromm, Harry Stack Sullivan, and Carl Rogers) Krishnamurti demonstrated that, first of all, attention should be brought to the fact that mind, with the imprint of human thought, has created an atmosphere on this planet. Indeed, herds of wonderers and discoverers in antiquity have relied heavily on myths and metaphors. The myths and symbols re-occurring in our cultural diversities represent different patterns of universal harmony which often become the background motifs used as religious references. And part of the struggle to observe consciousness has to do with processing phenomena, with the difficulty to distinguish between sense-perception, emotion, thought, and "What-Is". Nor does the use of imagination bring stable relief from the damage we do to ourselves with separative thought. The mere creation of new images or words is a form of sophistry, a powerful projection from the ego. Krishnamurti says that attention is a means to distinguish between the facts of life and the wanderings of the

mind. It is a process through which torments are felt to be the result of identifying with thoughts, the tormentor and the torments being one. The process is grounded in time, and that sets tremendous limits to the mind which could change spontaneously, free of any choices to make: seeing does not involve choice; it is a neutral move on the part of the person, it is a moment of ultimate clarity."<sup>6</sup> Because seeing liberates from private thinking patterns, it is a start, a commonly shared ground for healthy self-knowledge, sensitivity, and neutrality. By non-judging the limitations of the ego, of the personality, one observes the vanity and fragility of it all. For while there is nothing wrong in dealing with particular limitations, there is limited meaning in observing one's own feelings without an intuition of the truth. A real sense of self-worth means achieving, in practical terms, a level of responsibility toward the community and the eco-system. The support of a group or a community is at times necessary, but personal inquiry is essential:

So the lack of self-reliance, the lack of a sense of responsibility for oneself--that may be the root cause of all this confusion. We have become irresponsible because we depend.<sup>7</sup>

Like we said before, it is the accessibility to "What-Is" which conquers selfishness and opens to compassion. Attention is crucial in order to see that the general and the particulars are

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<sup>6</sup> In Bulletin No. 70, 1996, KFA, Ojai, CA, p. 27.

<sup>7</sup> Krishnamurti. Mind Without Measure. Madras: KFA, 1983, p. 2.

always given together, and discerning that it is the essence of matter to bring the meaning of wholeness into action. If consciousness itself produces matter, matter is therefore not without value and not unworthy of respect. Matter has, contained within itself, the same quality attributed to consciousness, the origin of existence. And consciousness, as a substance, has the quality of becoming material. In this respect, the field of quantum physics might present serious possibilities to answer some of the questions about the nature of the mind. Yet all traditions, philosophical and theological, have advised that not being overly attached to either mind or matter is what constitutes the harmony and beauty of being human. Therefore, every part of the whole, the individual and the community, must be taken into consideration prior to action. Presumably, there will always be more states of consciousness to be experienced, but at the present stage, the polarity of spirit and matter, of individual observation and solidarity remains the "original model" for human life on earth. Needless to say, to think that some states of consciousness are more desirable or more perfect than others is to fall into a mind-trap. But to keep the mind still, in balance outside of the pull of opposites, is using the mind as a mode of expression for compassion.

Krishnamurti precisely insisted, not on the meaning of the ancient texts, but on the presence of this passion for life without judgment about it. Overcoming cravings for physical pleasure, emotional satisfaction, or mental distractions are

final aspirations which have little value in comparison to a willingness to participate with body and mind to the nature of life. The unity of opposites, going beyond all duality, is something to be achieved in the socio-cultural world here and now through an inquiry about primary functions such as: feminine/masculine; physical/spiritual; emotional/intellectual; right/left brain, and relating these to every domain of discord or tension. If too much mirroring in the external world means that one needs to overcome introspection, a correct use of subjectivity facilitates the presence of empathic behavior. Subjectivity can be considered as an attempt to experience the infinite inside the finite. But one needs to be clear about the value given to personal experience. For experience pertains always to the personality. The result of sane, attentive subjectivity is to be what we are in essence: what we perceive as our ideal and our vision from the perspective of the ego is latent in the core of being. Being able to stabilize the personality between antagonisms is not only a root for right living, but more importantly, it is the individual's response to the common destiny of all. Once this state of being is established through seeing (attention), a spontaneous experience of the sacred can occur. Therefore, to go beyond the forms does not mean fleeing from the material to the spiritual, or being content to adopt an objectivist's viewpoint about the world. The middle-way is a positive understanding of human nature as the starting point.

## II - A Network of Holistic Solidarity

The process of change suggested by Krishnamurti means that freedom is accessible not only or necessarily in religion, but unconditionally. The reason why Krishnamurti can say that each of us in the world has components not alien to the Jungian psychology of the collective unconscious, to alchemical mysticism, and to Tibetan Kundalini Science, if one wants to extrapolate. But as usual, Krishnamurti not only makes the matter simpler, he also brings the questions to the root of the problem. It is the lucidity acquired through seeing "What-Is" which ultimately makes it possible to have a meaningful appreciation of solidarity and a sense of wholeness, but not until freedom is realized:

We have to create a new world...actually we have to create a totally different kind of world where we as human beings are not battling with each other, destroying each other, where the one does not dominate the other with his[her] ideas or with knowledge, where each human being is actually free, not theoretically. And in this freedom alone can we bring about order in the world.<sup>8</sup>

Indeed, there are scientific approaches which support the value of the formless for inquiry, in transpersonal psychology, biology, physics, and natural medicine. And while there may even be an unconscious consensus to participate into a physical reality which, as said earlier, is created with the mind and called reality, how is this reality being discerned? Despite the scientific knowledge available on the theories of mind and

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<sup>8</sup> Krishnamurti. Talks and Dialogues, Saanen 1968. Berkeley, CA: Shambala Publications, 1970, p.11.

matter, a great incoherence abides between scientists who are rationally inclined, and the average person who is trying to understand in practical terms, feelings and emotions on one hand, and the mode of his/her participation in the community, and in the world. As a human group on this planet, to know what is meant by reality is crucial indeed. If modern physics is inclined to bring about an ontology and to investigate new approaches to the nature of human experience, the reliance on new models or paradigms needs to be complemented and sustained by a powerful aspiration to participate to this reality. It means that human passion and struggle for life need to find expression beyond the use of mechanisms. Perhaps, it is time to start considering more seriously the fact that consciousness implies more than subtle interactions inside the brain. Why not acknowledge more possibilities for consciousness in general, more than the usual choices?

Krishnamurti understood right at the beginning of his public lecturing that the willingness to be aware is not even present in most of us. I would argue here with Krishnamurti and Huston Smith that wisdom is not to be cultivated or possessed. Wisdom, and its counterpart in compassion, transpire from the individual who has learned through the ways of the self how to harmonize heart and mind. Where there is wisdom, there is no ego, or like Krishnamurti says succinctly: "Anonymity is greatness". Of course, the task seems immense to educators in particular, if not delusive. Firstly, the experiences that will lead to discernment

between about the self must come directly to the students; secondly, the teachers should be available when the experiences have occurred; thirdly, none of this, including self-confidence, can be taught with textbooks and grading. Again, we could make the claim that philosophy is not psychology, and rightly so. That is why Krishnamurti was never particularly in favor of teaching a specific discipline which would emphasize the analytical and the dualistic aspects inherent to thought, but rather he recommended a form of psycho-spiritual approach to education. He may not have objected, I assume, to a kind of mind/science in accord with the current aspects of scientific work on the nature of consciousness.

Nevertheless, this new kind of education is not for the conventionally oriented, and requires the sort of reforms which are cumbersome in a system heavily anchored in administration and bureaucracy. First, there is the question of the orientation and training of the teachers themselves, without mentioning personal goals, the pressures involved in academia, as well as in maintaining the reputation of the institutions being served. Here in the United States, where the crisis in education is already out of proportion with the needs of students-- particularly in high schools and junior colleges--a possible solution might be to teach parents how to tutor their children, and then proceed to reform the system in place. It is up to the parents of the future generations to decide if their goal is to educate their children on their own or with the help of private

tutors, possibly found in their own families. It looks as though such alternative should at least be a possibility under consideration. Unfortunately, it is so intricately linked to the economy that the idea will be slow in finding its way and develop in households already buried in debts, uncertain about the primary job which will provide for all members. But there is a level of determination and some priorities which are manageable and viable for everyone. Already, a large number of citizens in developed countries leave large cities to open communities in small towns and rural areas. These people are somehow pioneers to a new way of living and learning. It is clear that communities who choose to undertake fully their children's education are willing to continue their own education in the first place.

As is easy to imagine, Krishnamurti had great faith in people and in their capacity to understand with mind and heart the possibilities for change. Each of us needs to face the rebellious, resistant personality which gets in the way of flowering, to use his own analogy. Once touched by the eventuality of disaster and facing even extreme adversity, the answer is to always start within oneself. In practical terms, there are ways to act through the negative by not contributing, supporting, or defending groups and organizations which are not, in the slightest manner, service-oriented, or which are, or have been involved in unethical behavior. But if one is willing to educate, or share with someone the activity of learning and do it

with vitality, vigor, and passion, the only viable means to achieve this is through compassion. Compassion is unbroken, it preserves its wholeness under any circumstance. Compassion in education means looking at the questions without goal, without the pressure of acquiring sufficient and precise knowledge fast-leading to lucrative jobs, position and title in a society which is already in great part corrupt by the greed for power and class. Compassion leads to the opening of the person into their deepest self-knowledge, opening one to the sight of their true mission, with no connection to manipulation and control over others.

It is understandable that no one bearing this outlook on education will have the support of a society which is overly concerned with economical survival and developing skills related to materialism. How then is one to redesign a psyche which has been conditioned by the greed for technical and intellectual knowledge, in and around of itself? How to bring a mutation, says Krishnamurti, as opposed to yet another transformation, to the people who are to learn; to be educated without repeating the same fragmentation brought about by the breaking down into categories of thought, of things to learn, to do, and to analyze? For something true to happen, the brain must break its own limitations, physical and psychological, in order to let intelligence, the compassionate movement of consciousness be freely itself. The greatest paradox of course, which existed in the time Krishnamurti was alive and persists heavily, is that in

one way we are too educated for anything new to be learned, or so it seems; on the other hand, we are primitive in the use of our minds, because we do not want to simply see or listen, we reason with the brain only. The act of knowing is an event of the total person: body, mind, awareness. Not a popular idea in modern-day science where brain interactions have supremacy over the intuitive mind:

Your brain, which is matter, is the accumulated experience of a million years, and all that evolution means energy. And so I'm asking myself--you're asking yourself--is there an energy which is not contained or stimulated or held within the field of knowledge, that is, within the field of thought? Is there an energy which is not put together by thought?'

This is complicated by the fact that time has become an extraordinary factor in education: children, teenagers, and young adults spend more years in school than has ever been the case, with ever fewer chances to find adequate employment, receiving a form of knowledge which does not even touch the edge of the intelligence Krishnamurti talked about. One possible answer to the quality of a better education is: togetherness and the willingness to doubt and to question. That in itself provides an energy which is different from thought. The energy to learn is brought about by a discipline which consists of dying to each moment, by the capacity to die to attachment to people, things, and to the self itself. This does not mean the rejection of emotions, or of aspects of life such as family, work and play.

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' J. Krishnamurti. The Future Is Now. HarperSan Francisco, 1989, p. 139.

Rather it means not taking anything as a bargain for some new experience or convenience, which attachment typically is about. In that state of impermanence of thought and emotion lies lasting freedom. If, like Krishnamurti says, "We read the book of humanity which is contained in each one of us," it is not only that inquiry will be made possible, but certainly the sacred will become apparent without the need for many formalities and rituals which are the obsessions of secular and religious education. We are so broken up as to no longer be able to ask those questions without the extreme efforts of concentration. Attention, which Krishnamurti describes as seeing with care, means simply avoiding negligence, rather than constantly seeking the outcome of thought. Is it surprising that humanity is neurotic, mentally unhealthy? Few people want to change, to "mutate" into psychological freedom. Therefore, education might as well start questioning the nature of a healthy mind. How the mind, by cultivating positive non-attachment, is able to inquire not into itself, but into life, with depth, and not just ordinary sensory hearing and seeing. It is conditioning which makes people not want to hear, keeping things as they are even if, on the surface, there seems to be interest in different states of being and a vague sense of freedom because of the possibility to make choices. The demand for a healthy mind should come from within first; it is not a demand to be made in some abstract world outside. The world is shaped by the thoughts of people who inhabit it, and are, or are not, willing to learn the rhythms of

being. It may be the case that the absolute necessity we have invented to maintain attachment is what creates the resistance to change, particularly in the way we seem to educate ourselves. If we are broken up and cannot see the whole anymore, it is not racing and possessing which will bring back energy, it is seeing things as they are and supporting each other to change radically. Should the common roots of our religious, artistic, and intellectual heritage and their expressions be traded for economic purposes, there is no question that business and politics will contribute to separate humankind for the sake of personal power and control. Krishnamurti spent many years explaining that freedom and knowing rest in great part in the potential to distinguish between the role of information and the acquisition of knowledge. There is a sea of information at hand which provides for a fleeting sensation of being connected with the world in a comfortable way. But truly, if the motivation to know were as intense as the will for power, the world would be unified. Real knowledge is what is built concretely with body and mind. From the great masters in mysticism we learn about the importance of our relationship to the universe:

No individual exists in its own nature, independent of all other factors of life...Since no first beginning of any individual or of any inner or outer phenomena can be found, it means that each of them has the totality of the universe at its base...All individuals (or rather all that has individual existence) have, therefore, the whole universe as their common ground, and this universality becomes conscious in the experience of enlightenment, in which the individual

awakens into his own true all-embracing nature.<sup>10</sup>

Even if Krishnamurti does not pursue the goal of enlightenment, he mentions another essential point: the fact that there are great limits to assumptions about truth, events, and ideas. Truth is the presence of energy which can be seen circulating in physical beings and can be channeled by the hands of a healer. In sensitive, sentimental terms, it is the "impossible dream" which human beings aspire to unconsciously because they have forgotten it. In order to relate consciously and honestly with The Other (to put it in theological terms) there needs to be space in the heart and intention in the mind. This means pulling out the emotions and observing the mind in order to create a genuine link, a connection. The physical world does not slow down nor waits: matter develops in part at the speed propelled by technological advancement, which is enhanced by human thought. Instead of retrieving from the world, a total release from fear, a let go of the glue of emotions and a catching up with the world is what makes it compassionate and cheerful:

But you have to have the energy to see, which means giving your heart and mind to look--not looking with eyes full of fear.[emphasis mine.]<sup>11</sup>

Truth, or The Other in a religious context, is whatever provides the opportunity to let go of dependence, desire, and attachment.

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<sup>10</sup> Lama Anagarika Govinda. Creative Meditation and Multi-Dimensional Consciousness. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1976, p. 10.

<sup>11</sup> Talks and Dialogues, Saanen 1968. Berkeley, CA: Shambala Publications, 1970, p. 29.

To see truth is to realize that the alienation, the pain and suffering inflicted on each other are the same regardless of any condition. There is no ladder going from the lowest to the highest degree in consciousness development nor in mysticism. There are no rewards, punishments, and fear that apply to compassion. Compassion is silent, and silence itself becomes a way to share with the community at large. That is so because when mental perceptions resonate in the echo of empty words, the real issues have no chance to unfold. Therefore, attention is a growing service to humanity. It makes of the creative potential of the mind its constant focus. In this way, the connection with truth becomes the authenticity and the phenomenon of compassion: sharing well-being generously is what provides meaning to human life. Perhaps the ultimate answer to the existential sense of limitation is this freedom seen in the exchange between the observer and truth itself. Personal connection at the fully conscious level therefore has a serious collective effect: it is the core of compassion.

### III - The Sense of Universality

What distinguishes the people who are motivated to take a conscious journey into life is their ability for mutual unconditional love. Having total acceptance of the human condition as the foundation of their endeavor, together with love of truth, goodness, and respect for the natural world, the driving force in their lives is never extinct. If life becomes a

potential for living the truth, loving-kindness becomes a natural instinct. It means seeing the substance underneath the forms and knowing compassion instead of practicing idolatry. The recent fascination with nuclear weapons and the glamour of technology, so highly emphasized in written and visual fiction, can be interpreted as a vast unconscious form of idolatry:

The thinker, seeking security, takes refuge in an idea which he[*she*] calls God, religion. But that is not religion, that is merely an extension of his[*her*] own egotism, a projection of him[*her*]self. It is a project righteousness, a projected respectability; and this respectability cannot receive that which is Truth.<sup>12</sup>

We need to ask if we can be educated, for the sake of compassion, about the function of consciousness? The crisis in consciousness is not new, only it is becoming more acute, more spectacular as the confusion between essence and materialism accrues.

Philosophy creates new ideas to replace the forms of thought which have become culturally obsolete. This mechanism makes it more clear that the seat of consciousness is breaking away. Perhaps, one should ask what the meaning of consciousness is, especially since the times when human beings functioned through mythical images are long gone? Or does modern society inevitably create myths suitable to its conscious evolution? It seems to have been a theme adopted by Krishnamurti, who wanted to make a distinction between education and knowledge. Coming to the awareness of one's essence is part of a holistic education. It

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<sup>12</sup> "Excerpts from J. Krishnamurti's Talks and Writings." Madras: KFA 1990, p. 60.

is such an arduous mission to teach the intellect how to perceive the wholeness of the person and not reject invisible aspects of the mind. In the ways of Krishnamurti, Christmas Humphreys has written about the issue of finding a common ground for education:

The most important field of human activity today has no accepted name. It includes a part of religion, philosophy and ethics, of metaphysics, mysticism, psychology and social service. It concerns the development of character, the cultivation of the best and the elimination of the worst of the complex thing called self. It is the whole field of the inner life as distinct from the world of everyday affairs, and yet it has immediate effect in the littlest occupation of the day...It concerns the right relationship of all parts to the whole, and is therefore the concern of all humanity.<sup>13</sup>

But this curiosity about discovering the nature of consciousness should not reinforce the personality; on the contrary, it should help shedding the ego. A healthy sense of ego-less-ness is proportionate to a sense of being connected to the environment, of not feeling estranged from nature. In many cases, it means reassessing one's profession, making an attempt to be of service in a social or ecologically-oriented way. This sort of change brings compassion back at the foundation of personal ethic and that of justice. It also goes hand in hand with a different concept of history which is non-linear, without final causation and its inevitable gloom: a history moving in a circular way with compassion as the axis. In such a universe, what becomes inevitable is not nuclear catastrophe, but the global converging of humanity. It is evident in the rebellion and frustration of

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<sup>13</sup> Christmas Humphreys. Walk On. Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1971, p. 5.

so many communities and ethnic groups that ethics in the new-born millennium can hardly be dictated solely by the patriarchy of most religions, nor by some authoritarian, divided justice system. Justice can be dictated in many ways with certain adaptations. But generally speaking, scriptural or secular laws seem to have an equally discouraging effect on people who understand personal ethics as the exercise of moral decisions made in relation to social actuality and change, and inclusiveness.

And at this point it is necessary to ask another question: Who or what is going to provide a concrete change in human perceptions? Is it small communities on their own, or a system of education presenting a holistic view of the world and offering an ontology based on mind/science? How would such education be defined, with which criteria, since most metaphors are not necessarily compatible with the discoveries of modern science? Every human being has the potential to become more aware, but how many people will have a chance to even be exposed to new views about the mind? Consequently, many concepts have to be reformulated. Whatever systems prevail, meditation seems to be the answer. Teaching how to make use of human limitations, communicating a correct attitude toward death, integrating intuitional potential into concrete service to humanity are all inherent to the practice of meditation. One can hardly teach ethics in a very pragmatic sense more than one can teach meditation in a realistic way, because both topics are subject to

experiential, holistic knowledge of the body, mind and psyche. Equally important is to avoid dogmatism and remain extremely attentive to the content of questions, for like Krishnamurti said about public talking, it is in the questions that the most important answers are to be found. Consequently, education should support free thinking and standing for one's own ideas, with skills for discrimination well developed, and an ability to keep asking meaningful questions. Education should provide young adults with a perspective whereby the abuses and exaggerations from massive misconceptions can be avoided. For any discipline can open to a view of the total meaning of the quest for knowledge. The responsibility of education should be to inspire the love of learning prior to the acquisition of factual information. The function of a holistic education should be to help see beyond appearances. This means giving a thoughtful approach to texts (religious or non-religious) which introduce divisions or accentuate diversities. It means that a conscious interpretation of readings, together with discrimination between intuition, opinion and assumption, and respect for a cosmopolitan education, are well in place in the minds of educators and in the structure of the institutions. To teach young persons how to acquire a sense of civic participation and mental well-being requires a lot of clarity and endurance on the part of the teachers. New learning principles should include capacities given by educators for multiple ways of knowing through dialogue and integral visions of creative expression such as: group

studies between students of different cultures; meetings with organizations which promote multi-culturalism; working with museums, health care companies, and non-profit organizations. A great part of the healing of communities can happen through learning how to integrate world views and changes in human systems brought about by technology and cultural interaction. An education which is integral (essential to wholeness) follows a process of unity between humanness, the natural and materialistic world, and the mind.

Prior to seeing the link between values and ethics, one may ask: Are human beings now seeking self-preservation more than justice? The nature of the fragmentation and the tensions of society contain most of the answers to what is needed for change. The increase in violence within groups is usually proportionate to the increase of violence within the individuals themselves. Perhaps one of the greatest delusions found in religion in the modern world is the expectation that religion should be the sole provider or regulator of morality. Krishnamurti clearly states that truth is yet another dimension beyond matter and mind. Truth touches the heart of every human being who tries, with passion, to discover it: this is when it can be defined as compassion. Scientifically, the reality of compassion may never be identifiable, but for someone like Krishnamurti as for many others the knowing of it is a fact. Compassion always acquires levels of tangibility when conflicts are resolved, or when silence falls upon the self as a "blessing":

It is only in that silence, which is very active, that you will see, if you have gone that far, that there is a total revolution in the psyche. Only such a mind can create a new society. There must be a new society, a new community, of people who though living in the world, are not of the world.<sup>14</sup>

Consequently, we need to continually observe the distortions which we see in each of us. A great part of human life which consists in finding areas of disharmony and conflict and understanding them, could become education into a reality built with truth, energy, and loving-kindness: in other words, learning to be human. Lama Govinda says: "To embrace one's humanity does not mean self-indulgence, but self-honesty, a crucial quality of the authentic spiritual aspirant at every stage." Submission to gurus who invariably have had mystical experiences may take one away from the conceptual, but sometimes at the expense of the acceptance of what it entails to be human, through too much negative self-denial: "One cannot abandon the world, hoping to understand oneself, or be so tangled in the world that there is no occasion to comprehend oneself." (Ojai, 1936). At this stage, compassion and making moral sense of oneself becomes a physiological event, an organic penetration of energy altering selfhood. Like Krishnamurti explains and reiterates, the energy-dimension of consciousness is more than a transformation: it is a total shift into the trans-rational which harmonizes the total person with the environment. The pre-rational stage is of the

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<sup>14</sup> New York 1966. In "Excerpts from J. Krishnamurti Talks and Writings." Madras: KFA 1990, p. 70.

imagination and includes the danger of intellectual or emotional disintegration, while the rational is a stage of integration which has its limitations. Therefore, the psycho-spiritual domain goes further away from the imprisonment of a given part of consciousness, which the culture of Descartes and its quest for rational certainty has been promoting for so long.

Even if all forms of thought make use of concepts in the end, and even if it is useful to look at imagination and reason as two poles attracting each other's equal force, much psychological meaning can be lost because of the insistence on the conceptual. In the twentieth century, scholars of the caliber of Carl Jung, Mircea Eliade, and Joseph Campbell (a long time friend of Krishnamurti) have made much effort to describe in different ways the losses and gains of moving from the mythical to the logical. What the conclusion might be is that we are not historical beings exclusively, nor completely. The only problem with myths is that they are created with imagination and conditioning. It seems to me that Krishnamurti is substituting the mythical trap with contemplation of nature ("Which is not created by thought") thereby perpetrating the Asian tradition of respect and contact with nature both philosophically and physiologically. What Krishnamurti is trying to investigate and to show is that the truly awakened consciousness (which we often qualify as the spiritual) undoubtedly is connected with the nature of consciousness present in the universe, this being truth itself. What Krishnamurti vehemently rejects is the idea of a

path or method to the effect of experimenting or experiencing, which would cause dependency on a thought-structure and reinforce the ego. Therefore, an improvement in the crisis of the psyche is no longer to be found solely in faith and mysticism of various traditional and non-traditional religions and philosophies, but in the study of mind. Mind, or consciousness research, look like promising areas for more questions to be asked and more reflecting to be done without the certainties and securities provided by logic or reason being imposed in the dialogue. Despite a tremendous transformation of the cosmology we have known for hundreds of years, and the open possibilities offered in education to access the content of this cosmology, the realization of the universality of consciousness is still not made visible. The problem is not so much that the old myths and beliefs cling to brain memories, it is the reluctance to try something new and make connections with the unknown which are prevalent and pervading. Krishnamurti distinguishes between a morality based on conditioning and lack of freedom which becomes immoral because it is inevitably entangled into the obligations brought about by attachment to belief systems, and an ethic grounded in seeing. When violent means are used to bring about what we call moral ends, the price connected to the power of the means is always paid by the people who should benefit from the so-called moral results. One might suspect that occasionally the intention to help, rescue, or alleviate suffering is an unconscious desire to make other people feel grateful,

cooperative, or perhaps co-dependent. In a similar fashion, Mahatma Gandhi used to say that there is pleasure in seeing other peoples' faults or forms of suffering. We may judge and consider that neither the Buddha, nor Christ, nor Mohammed, or any prophet or guru have failed. Only the standards of these teachers have not been, and are not met. But is it worth the evolution of humankind to reflect on whose responsibility it is to throw the blame, or how and why this is happening? Krishnamurti was able to say the following out of his own perception of the world's predicament:

If I were able to feed thousands of people tomorrow by some miracle, they would only be starving again the day after tomorrow, they would be in the same conditions which made them hungry. What we are concerned with is the changing of conditions. How do you change them? By tackling the principal thing that creates bad conditions, and that is selfishness, lack of affection, brutality, and so on. You will say that this is a very long process, but it is the only way...<sup>15</sup>

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I think that the same words could be used this day to refer to the world crisis. Is it worth the solution to keep analyzing the crisis? Ultimately, everybody knows that physical and psychological freedom is extremely relative. Freedom is a space in the heart. If leaders do not deem it rational and mature enough to find freedom in the intelligence of the heart, they will not bring adequate forms of freedom in the countries where

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<sup>15</sup> In "Excerpts from J. Krishnamurti's Talks and Writings." Madras: KFA 1990, p. 10.

they make the rules operative. The art of service is a moral imperative, but the first imperative is to govern oneself completely. We have the right to think that the expectation that some perfection through evolution will manifest itself in future time has no validity during a worldwide spread psychological crisis. The motivation to compete for the sake of goodness has had disastrous consequences for the economies of particular nations, but mostly for the psychological development of those nations. Clearly speaking, competition has become an illusion. Any good produced in a given part of the world is made of various parts manufactured in other parts of the world. Why continue to call competition what is obviously teamwork? Krishnamurti says:

The only thing that really matters is that there be an action of goodness, love and intelligence in living. If goodness is an affair of the individual or of the collective, according to one's particular preference or decision, then it is no longer goodness...Goodness flowers only in freedom from both...Lacking goodness, we divide the world into the individual and the collective, and further divide the collective into innumerable groups...<sup>16</sup>

Besides, to do the good for its own sake requires a higher standard of emotional and intellectual balance at the very foundation; it means being able to face the nature of goodness fearlessly, and act on it choicelessly, but with the awareness which seeing the good without judgement provides. However, the crucial question seems to be: are we, as humanity, asking for peace, or are we giving up because we think we have failed?

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<sup>16</sup> Krishnamurti. The Second Penguin Krishnamurti Reader. p. 302.

## CHAPTER 7

### Science and the Religious Mind

It seems to me that it is so important to understand and to be in the state in which the mind is completely religious...A religious mind is not burdened with any ideologies or dogmas or assumptions, but is concerned with the fact, with "what-is" and going beyond it.<sup>1</sup>

The relationship between the science of our days and spirituality can be approached with one question: What does it mean to be a religious person in the twenty-first century? To start investigating about the existence of a link between science and religion, we will discuss with Krishnamurti the paradoxes and similarities between the different religious traditions and the speculations of science on the nature of the mind. Science, which technically describes the physicality of the universe, tries to keep an open dialogue with the predominant theological views, and particularly with the Christian establishment. The situation is different in the Orient, where the nature of the mind has been explored since time immemorial. Consequently, we find a large body of oral and written instructions about the mind

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<sup>1</sup> In Talks and Dialogues Saanen 1968. Berkeley, CA: Shambala Publications, 1970, p. 40.

in its physiological aspects, but also in its subjective, philosophical, and spiritual components. Even if most of the esoteric literature is difficult to grasp or unappealing to most, one can see from it that for the ancient yogis, the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical features of human beings were tools used to grasp an understanding of the nature of reality and of our connection with the universe. Consequently, Eastern philosophy and science are intimately linked to each other; in fact they complement each other to the degree of being inseparable. Eastern scientists and spiritual teachers have always been involved together in the spiritual quest and in mind/science research. I am borrowing the terminology of mind/science from a book published in 1993: the proceedings from a symposium sponsored by Harvard Medical School to which the Dalai Lama participated<sup>2</sup>. Based on these discussions, it is clear that the standpoint of the Eastern tradition is to maintain the practice of meditation alive in order to pursue consciousness research at a deeper level.

Because Krishnamurti did not straightforwardly describe meditation as a tool to understand the nature of reality, or the operating mode of consciousness, it might be prudent to limit the scope of the topic to what seems to be essential to both science and the religious domain. As seems to have been the case when

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The Dalai Lama and participants. MindScience, An East-West Dialogue. The Harvard Mind Science Symposium. Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications, 1991.

Krishnamurti was conversing with priests and psychiatrists, science and religion are trying to honestly question the following points: 1) the nature and perception of time (physical and psychological); 2) the nature of mind and of states of consciousness such as subjectivity, extra-sensory perceptions, paranormal states; 3) the influence on the brain of computer technology and virtual reality. These are profound and complex topics for reflection, which Krishnamurti always managed to place in the proper context for discussion, with particular focus on the implications that investigation into the mindfield could offer to the improvement of psychological health:

If each one of us thinks that we are separate individuals psychically, what we have done in the world is a colossal mess...Each one thinks he has to do what he wants to do , fulfill himself[herself]. So he[she] is struggling in his[her] separateness to achieve peace, to achieve security, a security and peace which is totally denied by that.<sup>3</sup>

## I - Science and the Mindfield

Leading the research into the nature of consciousness and time, astrophysics, quantum physics, neurology and biology seem to be the salient sciences. From the medical point of view, modern technology allows to assess inner states of consciousness, namely the observation of thought processes in the brain. In terms of philosophy, however, metaphysics and theology are the official meeting ground for the encounter of consciousness with

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<sup>3</sup> In Questioning Krishnamurti. San Francisco, CA: Thorsons, 1996, p. 84.

itself, or how life operates within consciousness itself. In modern days, both consciousness study, or philosophy of mind, imply going beyond the psychological boundaries of language. For early modern philosophers and for Krishnamurti as well, inquiry starts where conceptual and logical interpretation stop, therefore escaping the limits of thought and attempting to find roots in unpolluted intelligence. Furthermore, one wonders about the nature of objectivity at a time when physics is contemplating the possibility that a great part of what we call the reality of the universe might be construed by modes of consciousness which we cannot fathom. What does this openness into the unknown show about the impact of the sciences on the humanities? For religious thinkers in particular, the aim of a meaningful ideology is to provide an understanding which is pre-linguistic or at least pre-reflective. This is precisely what Krishnamurti tried to do. Away from the activity of thought, an expansion of being may occur which can induce moral and creative acts. Lama Govinda, though unsympathetic toward Krishnamurti, nevertheless formulates statements which are usually compatible with his views:

...The Buddhist thinkers of India have drawn the epistemological conclusions, which however went so far beyond the capacity of human language, that the scholars of that time were compelled to take refuge in paradoxes, beyond which no further philosophical development was possible. The human mind had arrived at the boundaries of thought.

Thus, only the way beyond thought remained: the way of an extended or enlarged consciousness, reaching beyond the frontiers of discursive thought...<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Lama Anagarika Govinda. Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism. London: Rider & Co., 1959, p. 263.

As we will see in the rest of this chapter, one of the tools for change that modern science can use is that of being able to offer new dimensional perceptions of reality, of cosmological insight, nowadays taking the observers through the question of who is the observer and what is the observed. It would be interesting to find out if all the religious symbols for unification come together to join and support the data of modern physics? This is the sort of questions which Krishnamurti would also like to ask, I imagine. Could the union of ancient wisdom and modern technology help prevent catastrophes and the violence resulting from the thoughts of human beings, or unveil the mystery of the operation of consciousness for the benefit of humanity? Krishnamurti does not for a moment think that any form of knowledge would redeem the world from its predicament. He does not preach for the practice of virtue, however, but reiterates the importance of seeing, and the freedom which ensues. And this, to him, is the quality of the religious mind which has the precision and sharpness usually attached to scientific endeavor:

To be new, the mind must be alone. For eternal creation to be, the mind itself must be in that state to receive it. But as long as is full of its own travails and struggles, as long as it is burdened with knowledge and complicated by psychological blockages, the mind can never be free to receive, to understand, to discover.<sup>5</sup>

But needless to say, to the average person, being conscious implies being able to exercise thought, emotion, and body

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<sup>5</sup> In On God. HarperSan Francisco, 1992, p. 114.

sensation simultaneously. It rarely occurs to one to inquire whether integration can be felt when thinking is being reduced. And in practical terms, being conscious beyond the conceptual may never be part of the experience of most human beings. The brain has its own ways of operating which defy the capacity for the self to see and discriminate. This function seems to really be part of a safety mechanism which the mind/body possesses for survival. The great sages and mystics have, in various ways, directed humanity toward mastering the ego and controlling the thought process with the strongest goal to perceive the seat of pure consciousness. This unity of consciousness invariably takes the person out of their ordinary concept of space and time as the illusion of an observing ego vanishes. Unfortunately, this constitutes such a challenging and disorienting experience that most individuals for whom everything is built on conceptualization and thought-dependency for self-identity cannot conceive of the utility of such endeavor. However, a shift from the over-emphasis on the rational to an unqualified state of consciousness may be initiated by science itself. Science is unintentionally pioneering the rediscovery of mystical awareness, and perhaps stimulating psychological change. Based on general observation, one can see how human beings are deeply passive about their lives even when they appear extremely active externally. Nevertheless, if humankind is connected to the rest of the universe as it must be, the conscious energy of individuals must be highly interactive and transformative. In

fact, Krishnamurti maintains that the consciousness of humankind is an "inseparable whole."<sup>6</sup> We can extrapolate that for those religiously-oriented scientists, a divine plan might resemble more an eternal platonic idea of form than a creation theory. Sir James Jeans, and Eddington, both use metaphors for the description of the universe: the former mentions an "idea" and the latter "a mind". The thought-life creates a pattern, and from there through constant evolution, one can see that duty corresponds to an activating principle which, naturally, is also present in human beings. For those believing in karma, it is the theory which explains the adequate performance of the use of free will, combined with the predispositions of the individual and inner and external conditions.

Unfortunately, consciousness is too often being studied in opposition to matter which leads many to say that thought interferes with matter, or that matter corrupts mind. But other views converge in saying that, in the manifested universe, there might exist a link between energy, substance, consciousness, and matter. The "materiality of matter" is what shapes forms through heredity and evolution and constructs memory patterns, as biologist Rupert Sheldrake<sup>7</sup> would explain it. Matter without form might look transparent and non-immanent, but it participates to life nonetheless, in fact is the source of life itself, while

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<sup>6</sup> In Questioning..., p. 84.

<sup>7</sup> Rupert Sheldrake. The Presence of the Past. New York: Random House, 1989.

physical matter is indispensable in order to operate as living beings on earth. Similarly, it is quite regrettable that the notion of nothingness be underrated in western metaphysics, except by a philosophers like Heidegger, or some of the deconstructionists like Derrida. Therefore, religion might choose blind faith over contemplation, revelation over inquiry, and science might place the observer above a detached, distant object that he or she observes. In India however, and much later in Japan, the feeling of emptiness has always been a very profound religious form of knowing which helps differentiate between the active tendency of a mechanistic, materialistic metaphysics, and a meaningful explanation of the void where everything is potentially contained, and internally active. This tends to demonstrate that in Eastern philosophy, we find less tension between idealism and empiricism, being and becoming, good and evil, namely between opposites. The important questions are not about the nature of subjectivity, which is asking what is thinking, but about what is beyond thinking, which involves the possibility to be aware:

To them...[those who stressed the historical and human personality of the Buddha] a human being was not only a physical reality, because the concept of Man included the infinite possibilities of the Spirit and the boundlessness of the universe. Thus the contradistinction between realism and idealism did not yet exist.

and:

...From the aforesaid it will have become evident that we are not concerned here with a subjective idealism, based on logical speculations, concepts and categories, but with a doctrine which is founded upon the reality of the mind and

its deepest experiences.<sup>8</sup>

At this point, it seems relevant to stress the relation of Krishnamurti to his own culture and, granted that we assume he was able to overcome some of his own conditioning, take into consideration the knowledge he carried subconsciously when he talked about freedom and the nature of consciousness. It is particularly striking that the very notion of non-dependence upon belief systems, therefore freedom from the known, happens to be one of the most powerful feature of Buddhism, where nothingness is a kind of active non-movement of entropy, the never-ending, never-beginning, formless energy of consciousness. This is extremely similar to Krishnamurti's description of the passive activity characteristic of letting go of fears, of conditioning, of knowledge, and also to the fact that thought itself is a chaotic movement in the nervous system:

...Whatever movement a conditioned mind makes, whatever movement a conditioned mind follows, it is still conditioned; therefore, one asks, can it remain completely with the fact alone and nothing else?<sup>9</sup>

As we know, even if modern science seems to be preoccupied with lofty ideas such as the origin of the cosmos, its age, its duration and direction in time, and ultimately its survival, it has traditionally always turned to religion to account for common ground between the two disciplines. "The discovery of a

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<sup>8</sup> Lama A. Govinda, p. 217.

<sup>9</sup> In Talks and Dialogues Saanen 1968. Berkeley, CA: Shambala Publications, 1970, p. 39.

fundamental, verified law of nature is an inspiration of God," said Einstein. "The existence of the laws of nature is the greatest of all miracles," said Schleiermacher. Whether the existence of God or of the Ultimate Principle is immanent or not, human free will "weaves" (with determinism, chaos, chance, and energy) "the seamless coat of the universe," as described by Alfred North Whitehead. Whitehead said that God is not an entity separate from the universe. In Hinduism and Buddhism we are told that there is a process present in human nature which resembles a sort of "dependent co-origination." This might be the case if we note that in every creation theory the nature of time, whether it has a beginning or none, has always been a mystery. It would then seem evident that scientists should be compelled to look at metaphysical issues, not because they have a special interest in philosophical inquiry, but in part because the data from quantum experiments lead them to question the nature of consciousness, and consequently the way the universe looks. As Gribbin says it: "when the electron is not being observed, it exists only as a wave of probabilities; unless someone is watching, nature herself does not know which hole the electron is going through."<sup>10</sup> And even more explicitly, in the words of Fred Alan Wolf:

"If the world exists and is not objectively solid and preexisting before I come on the scene, then what is it? The best answer seems to be that the world is only a potential and not present without me or you to observe it. It is, in essence, a ghost world that pops into solid existence each time one of us observes it. All of the world's many events are potentially present, able to be but not actually seen or

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<sup>10</sup> 1984, p. 171

felt until one of us sees or feels."<sup>11</sup>

While it might be demanding to adopt a view of the universe that extreme in its participatory emphasis, it should perhaps not, after the discoveries of quantum physics, be rejected as absurd or implausible. In a somewhat similar fashion, when talking about the observer and the observed, Krishnamurti was pointing at the difficulties we create in our lives with the perceptions of events which shape what we think is our individual reality. He seems to say, with the physicists, that it is the observer who observes carefully who gives origin to something rather than nothing. But the observer and the observed are identical, which evidently, is somewhat difficult to feel factually:

So long as there is the 'observer' and the thing observed there must be duality and hence conflict, the mind becomes twisted; and that is one of the most complicated states, something which we must understand...Is it possible to go beyond the 'observer'?<sup>12</sup>

But we may admit that, altogether, science has non-overtly reached the stage where it can feasibly describe the world as a process, no longer as matter building on itself mechanically. Events and interactions are perceived holistically as a kind of still-motion coming from an absolute origin, followed by a "participatory dance" of electrons. If it is the energy in the

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<sup>11</sup> Fred Alan Wolf. Parallel Universes. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988.

<sup>12</sup> In Talks and Dialogues Saanen 1968. Berkeley, CA: Shambala Publications, 1970, p. 93.

universe that takes material forms, then this energy on our planet can be transformed to dimensions infinitely more valuable, harmonious, and aesthetic than the mere manufacturing of objects which sole purpose is to be acquired and quickly disposed of. A world composed of fields of interactions could potentially, and in practical aspects as well, replace the sight of unlimited clusters of dead material parts (with the exception of machines sustaining and protecting life, health and education). Consequently, the possibility for expanding current beliefs and interpretations of the nature of the universe and consciousness rests in the potential energy of our intentionality, of the infinite qualities of meaning and action which the truly religious mind can achieve.

## II - Modern Science and The Reign of Conformity

If there is sufficient scientific evidence that empty space contains a background of primal energy, the matter sharing the same space becomes a relatively small phenomenon, compared to the force of that energy. And the presence of this energy can become a challenge to be interpreted on theological grounds. It would seem to leave less of an alternative to the classical role of the personal Creator-God in conducting the mechanism of a universe formed out of nothing for a definite purpose. Supposing that science would contradict revelation with empirical data, what would be the impact on both the religious and secular communities? As an example, when interviewed on the topic of

science and religion, the Dalai Lama said that, should science discover something utterly different from the principles and the cosmology described in Buddhist scriptures, then Buddhism would have to change... A fairly strong statement of honesty and clarity of intention. But the history of western religion shows less intent for allegiance and flexibility toward science. Can a scientific description of creation be integrated into a Grand Unified Theory and a Grand Unified Theology? Science itself leaves questions to be answered by theology. But how long should the belief in God and creation remain an adaptation to the pressure of dogma? Should the unity of consciousness proliferate into various theologies? To understand the sort of relationship between science and religion in the current times, it might be useful to introduce broadly the scientific theory which David Bohm, a long-time friend and interlocutor of Krishnamurti, had elaborated. A brief outline of this research might help to appreciate the description by Krishnamurti of a mind which, freed of the influence of empirical scientific data, remains utterly religious, therefore capable of a totally humanistic, conscious revolution. It is quite evident from the literature that many individuals having a strong appeal for mysticism, as well as people who share liberal religious perspectives, would understand the sort of world which David Bohm had been inspired to construct. In a recent rendition of Bohm's ideas, Kevin

Sharpe<sup>13</sup> draws four major points out of the "Theory of the Implicate Order" which summarize the metaphysical questions being placed into the scrutiny of modern physics:

1. That reality has an infinite depth;
2. That the different parts of reality are connected to each other;
3. That the movement is constant in the universe;
4. That hierarchical systems are present in the universe.

What Bohm calls "the artificial separation of process" gives an illusory, deterministic aspect to a process which cannot end, but is continually evolving through change. Whether this process happens to take the form of a theology, of a poem or a symphony, is irrelevant to Bohm, who thinks that what he calls the entire thought-system, over-used or abused, is also a form of process. This is a powerful statement which does not necessarily satisfy contemporary physicists and theologians who are seeking, through an infinite variety of metaphors and abstractions, a synthesis such as a theory of Unity, or a theory of Everything.

Bohm sees physics and science in general as creative sacred endeavors: the human intellect draws a map or a painting of the universe, be it through images of God, or through the use of scientific technology. The holomovement and the undivided wholeness of Bohm's world are immersed in ether, the medium

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<sup>13</sup> Kevin Sharpe. David Bohm's World, New Physics and New Religion. Cranbury, NJ: Bucknell University Press, 1993.

where spirit, mind and matter have their origin. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that Bohm's statement about ether permeating the universe would seem to have its parallel in the Hindu cosmology: the Sanskrit word for ether (Akasha) appears in the Vedas. But this in no case means that the ancient Hindus had made a discovery about the cosmos, at least in a way similar to modern science. It is also interesting to note that after Newton, and Einstein's reluctance to admit the presence of ether in the universe, ether now reappears under the concept of fields. Bohm suggests that each part of reality contains some information about the whole. This implies that each separate part of the universe is a replica of, and contains the universe, simultaneously. It also provides for an appealing metaphysical concept in terms of unity and wholeness.

Bohm, like many other scientists, has gone very far into the deconstruction of material elements to produce a theory which is sound, and has the potential to bring a broad concordance on the fundamental aspects of reality with the following major ideas:

1. The energy in the universe is everlasting and indestructible;
2. Consciousness is not limited to the physical body and may continue after death;
3. Consciousness can be used as a model to understand the nature of reality, both in a scientific and religious way.

The "Holomovement" in David Bohm's theory represents the permanence of change, the ceaseless motion of the energy in the universe continuously transforming (giving a different shape) to every piece of matter, thereby creating different planes of reality. For Bohm, the Implicate Order which contains everything unfolds into the Explicate Order which is the world of perceptions we dwell in. Perhaps another quotation from Lama Govinda might contribute to make these ideas accessible even further:

The only reality, which we could call "absolute", is that of the all-embracing whole. Each partial aspect must therefore constitute a lesser degree of reality--the less universal, the more illusory and impermanent. To a point-like consciousness, the continuity of a line is inconceivable. For such a consciousness there exists only a continual and apparently unrelated origination and passing-away of points.<sup>14</sup>

From there to deducting that Bohm is a mystic would mean to take a giant step into the relationship between science and religion. What is crucial here is the understanding that Bohm's world is one where wholeness prevails. The Holomovement, the Implicate and Explicate Order, are explanations about the cosmos. Bohm's view could even be compared to the macrocosm and microcosm of the alchemists. Out of his three scientific principles, one can derive a picture of consciousness in the universe as being one, but becoming fragmented and antagonistic in the physical body of human beings. Underlying the two orders described by Bohm there

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<sup>14</sup> Lama Anagarika Govinda. Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism. London: Rider & Company, 1959.

is a "Beyond" which he himself depicts as follows:

Beyond the explicate and the implicate, beyond the holomovement, there is something about which we can say nothing except that it is. We cannot in any way approach, measure, or know it. It eludes the grasp of thought, but is the source for all.<sup>15</sup>

Much like Krishnamurti, Bohm says that the capacity to see "What-Is" and to penetrate the Beyond is to have a real insight, therefore holding the quality of intelligence from which goodness and the sense of the sacred are altogether felt by human consciousness. A meditation which leads beyond thought releases consciousness from tightness and constraint, allowing one to see above the Implicate Order into the Beyond, a source of renewal and purity. However, Stephen Hawking has commented straightforwardly upon David Bohm abandoning the domain of physics altogether, to try to provide a version of the universe based on his own mysticism, which he tries to explain with the terminology of modern physics. Whether Bohm is an extremist may be more evident to his colleagues than to the average reader. However, the idea to keep in mind is that of a tendency for liberal religious thinkers to be influenced by, and to occasionally corroborate the findings of modern science. From this standpoint, and leaving aside different conceptual approaches which science and religion insist on using inconsistently, there remains the question of scriptural authority and interpretation. As mentioned earlier, the strength

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<sup>15</sup> "Creativity, Natural Philosophy and Science." Tape #2071 from "New Dimensions Tapes", San Francisco, CA. 1991.

of religion over science, at least in the western world, has been in its ability to reinterpret scriptural instructions, create new theologies around new scientific discoveries. This is done partly through the art of learning new hermeneutical methods. In Krishnamurti's world however, there would be no impact from scriptures or mentalism, because the starting point is entirely non-conceptual. An act of willingness from the self is inevitably doomed to failure, since human consciousness is not capable of operating in a non-dualistic way, and because the duality implies that any decision whatsoever includes the ego. But Krishnamurti maintains that psychological freedom is possible through meditation. The understanding of meditation as he sees it can be grasped, I think, in a continually renewed attempt to see "What-Is" without argumentation and interpretation. This would be the only guarantee to not risk falling into a method or a practice for meditation:

But no system or method--which implies imitation, conformity, following, and thereby fear--has any significance whatever for a mind that is enquiring into this whole question of meditation, a question which needs such a very delicate, highly sensitive intelligent mind.<sup>16</sup>

Nevertheless, there is an attempt from the self which consists in finding unity between this individual consciousness and the totality of "What is most real," a definition of truth accepted by Krishnamurti during his dialogues with Father Eugene

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<sup>16</sup> In Talks and Dialogues... p. 88-9.

Shallert.<sup>17</sup> As we can see, Nirvana or Paradise are verbal attempts commonly used in order to qualify this longing for unification with the totality of everything. Similarly, Krishnamurti says that through observing the movement of thought, the mind eventually comes to a moment of emptiness when the observer and the observed merge, even if momentarily. It is the non-movement of thought--or thought when it is in its place--which transcends the human dualistic feeling of time and space. David Bohm does not mention the word God any more frequently than Krishnamurti does, and yet the sense of the divine permeates even in his technical description of the world. Why is that so? In smaller circles, Bohm did say explicitly that God is what is behind the Holomovement as a mystery. And what is meant by God is beyond rational conceptualizations for both Krishnamurti and Bohm. God with human attributes, personal or objective, is a God which at times becomes the idol and the property of human activity, wishing to trade worship and prayer for a sense of security. Or is God the universe itself, like some recent theologies would support the idea? Are we still re-thinking a modern pantheistic view of a transcendent universe, or following what in modernity is called Panentheism? If this is the case, we have not even started to attempt to see things as they are, and most importantly, to admit that we don't and may never know.

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<sup>17</sup> See Questioning Krishnamurti. San Francisco, CA: Thorsons, 1996.

Based on all of the above, it comes almost as a surprise to learn that Krishnamurti did not particularly like nor praise science. He said that he was too concerned with the violent events and negative attitudes in the world, and about the ways to protect humanity from psychological and material destruction, to feel interested in lofty technical conversations with scientists. Nevertheless, he repeatedly met with great scientific minds. He accepted many times to give public lectures for organizations such as the Observatory at Los Alamos, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and several renowned universities around the world. But this may not be a total contradiction... Krishnamurti knew that modern science is influenced by metaphysical conceptual frameworks categorized into objectivism, positivism, reductionism, or logical empiricism, and that scientific truth is the verdict brought by empirical data. But in the past few years, the astounding assessments of quantum mechanics and the equivocal situation caused by the interaction between the observer and the observed--in other words by the touch of consciousness--has captivated scientists. This "action at a distance", also called non-local causality, has brought about new models and paradigms for modern science. As a result, the non-separation between the observer and the observed (for example between the physicist and the electron, or the black hole) makes quantum physics appear as a somewhat more metaphysical endeavor than has ever been the case in the history of science. With such turn of consideration, scientists are less

reluctant to adopt a positive attitude, even show an interest, for what continues to be classified as paranormal or parapsychological phenomena. Modern science is studying different states of consciousness and finding itself wandering into the areas of ancient wisdom traditions such as Chinese, Indian and Tibetan psychology and natural medicine, as well as the Native American world view. However, what are the tangible benefits for humanity from the influence of modern science, even when a rapprochement with ancient metaphysical wisdom is taking place? The results might be primarily the feeling of a universal sense of holism. A global relationship towards nature would consequently become one of cooperation, but also one of respect, deep reverence, and appreciation for the natural world. Rational decision-making and personal choices would include peoples in their geographical connections together with purposeful, positive attitudes for the planet, its life and protection. A way to reduce the damage to the ecosphere, the slaughter of animals, desertification, and other modern threats would be easier to envisage. Distribution of means of energy and food, means of education and health care, nurturing the elderly, could be seen as part of healing the earth and the populations who suffer most. Secondly, a newly increased motivation to study the nature of consciousness and that of time, for which meaningful coincidences, extra-sensory perceptions, and other paranormal states are probably a beginning point, would legitimately fall into the domain of a science gradually becoming another relevant

aspect of holistic education. But most importantly, a holistically-oriented scientific community could help the advancement of a social structure fully grounded in this participation with, not only the cosmos, but the ocean beds and the entrails of the earth. A reality which would be described in consistent terms, not separating nature from religious subjectivity, would seem more encompassing of the same aspects of goodness for all.

But it does not seem that new planets or new life forms are the answers to what the religious mind seeks. Somehow it is of great importance for a large number of people to find regularly new images to live by. To that aspect of things, Krishnamurti surely would have interesting comments to make with a few scientists. Primarily, one might think, because of the deep understanding of nature which he shares with other oriental sages, but secondly in terms of what the mind needs to question. Should new planets be the cause for a profusion of metaphors and technological myths to take us on some new quest? A more critical question might concern the inward-outward aspect of this connection between the mind and the universe and how it can be felt in this day and age. What are the planets made of, or whether and how human beings under their current morphology could live on any of them, seem like queries about practical aspects of survival. Skepticism and fear resurface rapidly within already cramped belief systems. To this day, we continue to talk about and study the forms of the sacred which are expressed in symbols

and architecture. What science may be pointing at is that not only are the forms becoming obsolete, but that connection does not have to take specific forms. As we said before, Krishnamurti and David Bohm question the value of myths, and neither of them sees secular humanism as a new religion. David Bohm had the intellectual courage to present his theory as having potential to grow from a scientific theory to a metaphysics. I personally consider the tendency to further consider this potential as theology a considerable extrapolation into his work. What transpires from the attempt to reconcile scientific research and the vision of the sacred is a need for connection between what is real in the world and service to humanity. If an occurrence such as the Big Bang is only a ripple on a vast sea of energy from which numerous universes manifest intermittently, why not consider that life itself belongs to something greater than what we call existence, and admit that it is currently illusive to our understanding? Consequently, death may not have to be an end in itself, but rather an adequate transition over the only horizon we see at this point in space and time. These preoccupations would not deter Krishnamurti from discussing the state of a mind which is religious, which, of its own active quietness creates the sacredness of the environment:

So the man[woman] who would receive Reality, not seek Reality, who would hear the voice of the eternal, whatever that eternal is, must understand relationship.

When the mind can die psychologically to all the things it has gathered for its own security, it is only then that

Reality comes into being. (Sydney 1955).<sup>18</sup>

### III - The Soul of Chemical Atoms

In this section of the chapter, we will continue to investigate into the relation between spirit and matter. While it may still be perplexing to accept the idea that matter is more than what is perceived by the senses, the fact is that trying to find out if there is a trace of consciousness without matter means raising radical and intellectually embarrassing questions. But this is precisely what Krishnamurti endeavored to do tirelessly. When it came to questioning the nature of the religious mind, Krishnamurti had several interlocutors, most of them still today prominent thinkers in the field of theology and religion, be it the Christian faith or the Hindu and Buddhist traditions. In a few words, what Krishnamurti was saying about the sacred is that it should be the unifying factor of all cultures. Meanwhile, religion has been one of the most separative and destructive element in communities and within nations themselves. Theology however, especially in the Judeo-Christian tradition, has developed a precise and fixed foundation based on some level of acceptance of the scientific description of reality. Nevertheless, the purpose of mainstream religions and of the theologies which gravitate around them, is to enhance

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<sup>18</sup> In "Excerpts from Talks and Writings." Madras, India: KFA 1991, p. 61.

the capacity of human beings toward the virtuous and the good life. To these philosophical imperatives, science has added its own notions in some particular instances, such as: 1) Free will can be seen as an analogy for quantum uncertainty; 2) The question of evil can be analyzed in view of the chaos in the universe, to the extent that evil would be akin to the tension created by the pull of opposite forces in the universe.

By the same turn of events, the difficulties which science encounters in the study of consciousness are often more religious in nature than would be expected. To see wholeness implies being responsible for keeping it whole. This is why physicists are perplexed when confronted by fragmentation and chaos in the universe. Human interference, from the observer's standpoint, becomes altogether the source of the chaos seen, the form which the chaos takes, and the locality resulting from an illusory sense of separation from the object seen. Therefore, it may be the case that the consciousness permeating living organisms is the very principle transforming itself. This implies that energy in an extremely concentrated form must be contained in consciousness. The present convergence between science and religion tends to testify that both include visions which are based on the nature of consciousness.

If Krishnamurti is to be considered as a religious thinker, this might bring one to say that, ultimately, the feeling of wholeness is beyond both science and religion. It is more likely, but infinitely more demanding, to encompass wholeness

into sincere acts of compassion and healing. It looks as though, for both science and religion, the more it discovers and explains, the deeper the mystery gets. Lama Govinda said: "It is very interesting...that in modern physics the more logical you are, the more wrong you are. This shows very clearly the limits of our logic."<sup>19</sup> But one cannot condemn scientific endeavor based on the principle that we create reality through our thoughts. Like Albert Einstein and Leopold Infeld<sup>20</sup> wrote together in 1938, science, with new ideas, invents images of reality with the purpose of finding a connection between what the senses feel and what is in the universe. The more accurate the link is felt between theories and facts, the more we trust the images we create. To this, Krishnamurti would answer that we should never pursue an understanding of truth based on images, because as is easy to correlate, there is no image for truth. Krishnamurti's preoccupation is essentially about freedom, psychological freedom of course, but when it comes to defining the religious mind, it tends to shatter the foundations of theology for the two major principles it implies:

- 1) One understands religion when one has become free;
- 2) Traditional religion does not always provide freedom.

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<sup>19</sup> Lama Anagarika Govinda. In Renée Weber, Dialogues with Sages and Scientists: The Search for Unity. New York: Viking Penguin, 1988.

<sup>20</sup> Albert Einstein/Leopold Infeld. The Evolution of Physics. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1966.

In his explanation, Krishnamurti never condemns religion, but maintains that religions have failed to free humanity from conditioning, and perhaps more importantly, have failed in unifying humankind:

...We are concerned with peace, with ending war, with living in a world in which this terrible violence, separation, brutality and all the rest of it is to end, and it seems to me that is the function of any serious religious man[woman]-because I feel religion is the only factor that unifies Man...not politics, economics, and so on. But instead of bringing Man together religions have separated Man.<sup>21</sup>

The premise of freedom also implies that the human being has inherent freedom at the start--except for the unconscious material brought genetically--but that society inevitably condemns him/her to conditioning. Western psychology, much like the Christian faith, is convinced that the drive to hate, like anger, are inherent to human nature. Krishnamurti says that a natural state of freedom is inherent when one wipes away any trace of conceptual thinking:

Goodness flowers in freedom, it doesn't flower within the laws, any religious sanctions, or any religious beliefs.<sup>22</sup>

Even if unconscious memories are not accessible through volition, Krishnamurti recommends and suggests that we undo the unconscious conditioning as well, since it is part of the same content of consciousness:

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<sup>21</sup> In Questioning Krishnamurti. San Francisco, CA: Thorsons, 1996, p. 40-41.

<sup>22</sup> In Questioning... p. 44-5.

Now, is it possible to completely empty the mind of the 'me'? Not only at the conscious level, but at the deep unconscious roots of one's being.<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, this is done instantly in order to escape the masquerading which a method (including religion) would bring to the mind. Father Eugene Shallert supports and reinforces this idea by stating that it is our lot to have to go through this enterprise of undoing the self, conscious and unconscious:

'Not to belong' is the price one must pay for being and loving and seeing anything.<sup>24</sup>

Perhaps, truth is the connection itself which may occur when we meet one another without judgment and without the image. Therefore, the question here might be whether science and religion are pursuing truth, or looking for a justification of the capacity to construct mental images. All inventions come out of thought, said both Einstein and Krishnamurti. Meanwhile, "What-Is" remains uninvented by thought and utterly present to our observation, however limited it might be due to the interference of mentalism. And supposing that science invents images of reality, and that religions continue to provide images for God, we are still trapped in the conceptual. Did Krishnamurti really suggest a way out of this? Was he trying to explain that he had found the connection between the world of inanimate matter and the source of reality? I think that his

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<sup>23</sup> In Questioning... p. 47.

<sup>24</sup> In Questioning Krishnamurti. San Francisco, CA: Thorsons, 1996, p. 69.

answer might be to discover a passion for life and truth, like the one which inhabited him. If it takes great courage to see the world as being harmonious and beautiful, at least it takes extraordinary desire to find out about its structures: not only the vastness of space, the depths of the oceans and the earth's crust, but also the intricacies of the human flesh and the mysteries of the mind. Out of this passion, the alliance of the religious-minded and the laws of science might be borne. Propelled by this passion, science and religion can sustain, and occasionally formulate the possibilities which become the terrain where all communities can find a home. Krishnamurti described this passion as the intense, non-intended observation which, to him, characterizes the religious mind:

Do not try to seek out what Truth is, do not try to find out through listening to me, nor try to feel what it is. Such effort is futile. Even though you may feel it occasionally, do not try to hold on to it, but remove the cause of resistance and you will know...That is the only natural, human way. Becoming aware of yourself, you are conscious of your own bondage; in the movement of awareness you find out all that you are holding, and through that movement alone you are liberated. This is the assurance of true intelligence, of discernment.<sup>25</sup>

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In closing, it might be important to see why science cannot afford to reject analysis for the sake of an immediate contact with truth; science is limited by its self-imposed requirement to

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<sup>25</sup> In "Excerpts from Talks and Writings." Madras, India: KFA, 1991. p. 65.

show a physical view of abstractions. The preoccupation of scientists to draw theories which are not only logical but elegant goes hand in hand with a desire to find beauty and harmony in the universe: a concept which is not typically scientific:

You know, without love and beauty there is no truth, there is no god, there is only a morality which becomes immoral.<sup>26</sup>

But as it is the case, some of the highest achievements in science have already been employed on several occasions toward the destruction of human beings. Such are the limitations of the conditioned dualistic mind. One would hope that this could change in no time if there was a willingness to enlarge the still narrow state of consciousness which is our lot. The feeling of awe, characteristic of "liberated" religious persons parallels the amazement of the astronomer. Enchantment is not a branch of witchcraft or a dangerous form of magic, but a genuine feeling conducive to a passion for life. From the perspective of Krishnamurti on the nature of the sacred comes the following:

If your mind is free from the idea of the future, not imagining the inconceivable, but living in the present, then in the very penetration of the many layers of craving there is the realization of the ecstasy of Life. In this way you bring about order in the world of chaos. Though you become a supreme individual in your aloneness, you have lost all its particularity, and you are like the winds that move, that have no resting place; you are like the waters that fit into any jar. But if your mind is burdened with the future, with

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<sup>26</sup> Krishnamurti. In Talks and Dialogues Saanen 1968. Berkeley, CA: Shambala Publications, 1970, p. 195.

idea, you will die, your peace is but stagnation.<sup>27</sup>

And in terms of scientific goals, we are not far from the alchemical process which was condemned by science centuries ago. Ironically, is it not the fate of science to rediscover the function of energy patterns in the human body, which it long ago rejected fiercely on the ground of irrationality? In the end, let Lama Govinda, with his thorough knowledge of the religions of East and West, remind us of the role of religion and science in the life of individuals:

...Verily, there is a realm where there is neither the solid nor the fluid, neither heat nor motion, neither this world nor any other world, neither sun nor moon...There is, O monk, an Unborn, Unoriginated, Uncreated, Unformed.<sup>28</sup>

He who has realized this, has truly found the Philosopher's Stone, the precious jewel, the prima materia of the human mind, nay, of the very faculty of consciousness in whatever form of life it might appear. This was the real aim of all great alchemists...<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Id. p. 65.

<sup>28</sup> Udana VIII. In Lama Govinda, p. 58.

<sup>29</sup> Lama A. Govinda, p. 59.

## CHAPTER 8

### A Call for Being and Action

There is no ground for compassion, it doesn't stay at your convenience. That beauty, love, truth, is the highest form of intelligence. When there is that intelligence there is action, clarity, a tremendous sense of dignity. It is something unimaginable.<sup>1</sup>

What characterizes a good teacher and a valuable teaching is the potential for practicality. This is even more of a priority in a world where poverty, lack of health care, and unemployment are the greatest threats. Most of what has been made available through technology, for protection or well-being, remains inaccessible to two-thirds of the world population due to inadequate communications or lack of funding. In addition to this, minimal education and transportation--which are both essential for finding employment--are often first on the list of unattainable luxuries. In this chapter, it is intended to demonstrate that compassion is the pivot, the axis on which it becomes possible to be fully present in our existence. The predicament we all share can be rephrased by asking how does one learn to live an existence freed from fear, conflict and

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<sup>1</sup> In On Truth. HarperSan Francisco, 1995, p. 133.

conditioning, with no effort to achieve goals and climb the social ladder. It is because social fragmentation still blatantly abides everywhere that it is timely to be concerned with the practical aspects that the intelligence of which compassion is a part can offer. Compassion has a narrow definition because it is easier to emote about it than it is to observe it. Compassion is not a popular term. It figures as an obscure feeling not worthy of being mentioned by political organizations, and becoming an active part of negotiations. Compassion is distinct from charity, which usually implies self-imposed donations of goods, deeds, or time for the satisfaction of moral imperatives; compassion is different from goodness which demands the exercise of virtue and courage; it seems somewhat similar to altruism, which may or may not involve awareness, but is of a more subjective nature, as well as sometimes goal-oriented. Compassion is basically unknown and wrongly perceived. We recently had, however, an occasion to observe it, at a historical time when the Tibetan population and the Dalai Lama were able to endure considerable suffering and adversity; when political prisoners in South Africa remain sane during months of isolation and torture; or when the Berlin wall crumbles out of the realization of the anger it symbolizes; or when an international conflict is avoided through seeing the dimension of its potential for devastation...

In the previous chapters we studied the impossibility to separate the purpose of relationships from the true,

compassionate life. Like spirit and matter which are ultimately one, the still-motion of compassion is active and influential within all stretches of life: 1) in one's personal sense of being; 2) in one's particular proximate environment; 3) in the world at large. It remains to be explained how the existential preoccupation deeply ingrained in human consciousness gives space to the healing sensitivity of compassion which comes unthought of:

Without passion, how can one be sensitive? To be sensitive is to feel you neighbor sitting next to you; it is to see the ugliness of the town with its squalor, its filth, its poverty, and to see the beauty of the river, the sea, the sky...How can you feel a smile, a tear? Love, I assure you, is passion.<sup>2</sup>

#### I - The Call to Being

We are wonderers and, like Krishnamurti says, we are the world, which we shape with thought, language, and action. We rarely have the courage to let go of what, in this day and age, provides security and comfort, but does over time bring suffering in body and psyche. So dark is the picture at times, that people like Krishnamurti have called for a sense of perspective and serious observation of the self. Relinquishing the psychological need for determinism, final causation, fancy ways to seek reassurance of self-identity, which create even more competition and also war, is a prerequisite in order to see the continuous movement of consciousness inside and outside itself:

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<sup>2</sup> In Collected Works. Vol. XI, p. 251.

Austerity is really an extraordinary simplicity, not in clothes, not in food, but inwardly. This austerity, this passion, is the highest form of total negation...Then the mind is no longer capable of striving. Then you do what you will, because then there will be love.<sup>3</sup>

Only to the extent that it is deeply felt and not feared, sorrow can be eliminated through a conscious act of authenticity, an act of pure intelligence. Probably what drives an increasing number of people to flee the conditions of city life is a genuine experience of sorrow, suffering, and longing. Consequently, the potential to act away from conditioning, and with understanding of what the self is not, is a most conscious, virtuous act. This generally happens in fragmentation: through projection of thoughts and attachment; through reflection and mirroring of one's attitude and actions in others; and finally, eventually, in choiceless awareness. If one could experience the deepest layers of consciousness, one would know life and being. As Krishnamurti says:

The discovery and the experience of all the layers of consciousness is the beginning of true meditation. In the tranquillity of mind-heart is wisdom and Reality.

Reality is to be experienced, not speculated upon.

It is difficult to so die if you are in the process of becoming, if you are gathering, sitting on the stump of dead accumulation.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> In On God. HarperSan Francisco, 1992, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Krishnamurti. "Authentic Report of Sixteen Talks given in 1945 & 1946." Ojai, CA: Krishnamurti Writings Inc., 1947, p. 35.

It is very similar to what most healing arts practitioners have said: "all pain is separation." Pain is the signal that the self longs to reunite with the source. To increase attention requires work at the physical level, added to a firm conviction that self-knowledge is the door to a life which can be free, relational and fulfilling. The task of a teacher is nothing more, but nothing less than what Lama Govinda expresses in one paragraph. These are the comments of a teacher, contemporary of Krishnamurti, who had a similar vision, but had deliberately chosen early in life a path of devotional religious practice:

The help of a teacher is therefore not something that comes from outside or that is pressed upon those who are helped, but it is the awakening of a force which dwells in the innermost nature of every being, a force which...enables us to meet fearlessly every situation and to convert it into a positive value, an asset, a means of liberation.<sup>5</sup>

If Krishnamurti insists so heavily upon the necessity to break away from the conceptual, without fear, in order to achieve a revolution in the psyche, it is indeed because he had himself felt this intimacy of functions between body and mind, namely the free flow of diffused energy. The comments about his radiating physical presence, and his gift as a healer (even if not made public) testify to exceptional integration and centeredness of being. The meditation which he recommended, namely to be highly conscious in the observation of life circumstances and events, is the confirmation of his teaching. The effects are induced in a

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<sup>5</sup> Lama Anagarika Govinda. Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism. London: Rider Publications, 1959, p. 233.

synergistic relation with the body, seen by others as a powerful and loving act of presence. Therefore, the psychic self-disclosure which may arise as a result of healing body and mind has little to do with spiritism, occultism, and extra-sensory perception which may be appealing even to someone highly motivated to open to others and be of service. The sort of acute perception which Krishnamurti and other religious thinkers are describing is, to them, the very nature of intelligence: a synchronized rhythm of brain functions, intuitive lucidity, and graceful simplicity. The art of healing only occurs because compassion is absolutely unintentional. The capacity to be present for others is not calculated, does not imply self-sacrifice and renunciation of any kind. Compassion is made visible when the movement of the observer and the observed is seen, and therefore comes to an end. Compassion is an open magnet through which energy radiates. Liberated from thought and conditioning, the energy present in the body is naturally disclosed and attuned, receptive to others in relationships. An integrated body/mind feels no longer only through the senses, but capable of dissolving into a space of psychological freedom where energy dwells. As the poet Emerson says in the opening paragraph of Self-Reliance: "A man[woman] should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within"... When Krishnamurti speaks of the urgency to be healthy-minded, he is clearly thinking in terms of the operating of the brain cells: feeling and observing without the words, away from the confusion

of language, can bring change at the cellular level in the body and the brain. While no scientific evidence of this being exactly the case is presently available, the possibility of the occurrence is not rejected by neurophysicians. From what we can observe among charismatic individuals, it takes a high level of conscious energy to develop the kind of presence which is not the result of cosmetological mimics or speech tactics:

...This is the fact: the brain cells hold the known and when the brain is completely stable, completely still, there is no verbal statement or communication--the brain is completely still. Then what is the relationship between the brain and that?<sup>6</sup>

...To put the whole thing differently: We will call 'That', for the moment, infinite energy and the other, energy created by strife and conflict--it is entirely different from 'That'. When there is no conflict at all the infinite energy is always renewing itself. The energy that peters out is what we know. What is the relationship of the energy that peters out to 'That'? There is none.<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, it looks as though pain and suffering are factors of deterioration in the brain cells, while at the same time the seeds of activity are contained within the cells. And one can see the importance of a constantly renewed intelligence in view of the nature of the thoughts which contribute to destroy the cells. And to a certain extent, one sees the difficulty of modern civilization to attempt providing a metaphysical foundation for the nature of goodness. Through insistence over the perilous facets of human nature, rampant cynicism and over-

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<sup>6</sup> In The Network of Thought. p. 34.

<sup>7</sup> In Exploration Into Insight... p. 35.

dependence on belief systems, the rebellious and perverse human temperament has grown further, in antagonism to too much indoctrination and taboos around what evil is, or is not. It is clear from reading Krishnamurti that neither goodness nor compassion can co-exist with psychological bondage, for that is the root of fear which generates evil. We need to repeat again here that Krishnamurti's endeavor is totally one of freedom, physical and psychological. For him, goodness comes out, or is, seeing "What-Is". It is the prison of thought which is the road to ignorance and consequently wrong-doing. From the dialogues with Pupul Jayakar is an explanation of change:

Pupul: What is the nature of the field which needs to be prepared, to be able to receive that which is limitless?

Krishnamurti: Are you cultivating the soil of the brain, of the mind, in order to receive it?...I say as long as you have motive to cultivate that soil in order to receive that energy, you will never receive it...Can the mind keep itself empty? Then, there is that energy. You don't even have to ask for it. When there is space, it is empty and therefore full of energy.

Pupul: And the nature of that is the transformation of the human mind.

Krishnamurti: When the movement of the mind from the centre to the periphery stops, time stops. When there is no movement of selfishness, there is a totally different kind of movement.<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, compassion may surface in specific parts of the world, and in private acts of generosity which are not necessarily noticeable. But isolated acts of violence, as well as war and terrorism are still blatantly contradicting the

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<sup>8</sup> In Exploration Into Insight. Madras: KFA, 1993, p. 98-101.

possibility of change. Toward the end of his life, Krishnamurti showed signs of pessimism and discouragement in view of the pervading violence in the world. He said that people "were not listening," thinking that his life pursuit of talking about freedom to large groups had been in vain. But much earlier in his life, he had also said that if only a few persons would hear and see, it would be enough to produce change:

It seems so urgent and important that we bring about a new generation, even half a dozen people in the world would make a vast difference. But the educator needs education. It is the greatest vocation in the world.<sup>9</sup>

Personally, I also tend to think that global change cannot be brought about by one teaching or another. It is more likely that something radical could happen in the human psyche as a result of many paths, many teachings, and many inspirations like the one Krishnamurti offers, which are taken only as stepstones. This is not a plea for pluralism, because the facts about conditioning exist and are extremely powerful, misleading and deceiving. I would rather keep in mind that the truth which manifests in compassion is not to be cultivated or analyzed. Like truth, compassion is not of the mind: it is of the body/mind, an organism which is together the bridge and the water it stands upon. Unfortunately, it has been the major concern of modern psychotherapy and psychiatry to still these waters with chemical drugs and reinforcement of the ego.

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<sup>9</sup> In Krishnamurti To Himself. His Last Journal. HarperSan Francisco, 1987, p. 128.

Therefore, fully in line with the event of compassion is the understanding of death. Like the Dalai Lama explains it, "the study of our current impression of death is key to whatever amount of spiritual progress humanity will make." Death is not the enemy to be conquered through the means of technology, eschatology, or reproduction of the species for self-perpetuation. Death is an opportunity for change and for growth in consciousness. Moreover, death of the physical self is an example, an analogy to follow for living in the moment, and seeing timeless moments. This process is not felt without a brain, but it involves energy outside the brain. A quote from Lama Govinda may sum up the evidence to reconcile the passage of death with consciousness studies:

For all who are familiar with Buddhist philosophy, it is clear that birth and death are not phenomena that happen only once in human life, but something that happens uninterruptedly within us. At every moment something within us dies and something is reborn.<sup>10</sup>

Krishnamurti says it in different terms and with imperative emphasis when he mentions the issue of ending suffering:

Only when there is an ending does a flowering take place...Test it out. That's what I mean when I say that you must be serious; serious in the sense he knows he is frightened, greedy, he is aware of his own peculiar pleasure, and without argument, without suppression, he ends it--with ease, with grace, with beauty. Then you will see a totally different beginning. Because then there is an actual facing of nothing, which is death, which is to invite death while living...Then out of all this comes a strange factor, the factor of supreme intelligence. That intelligence is based on compassion and clarity, and because of that

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<sup>10</sup> Lama Anagarika Govinda. Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism. London: Rider & Co., 1959, p. 123.

intelligence there is great skill. So if you are serious, then act, do, not pursuing some vague theory or ideal, but end something that you hold most dear--your ambition, whether your spiritual, physical, or business ambition--end it. Then you will see for yourself a new flowering takes place.<sup>11</sup>

We may want to say with both teachers that life and death are as much one as body and mind are temporarily one. Energy goes into a process of crystallization until it acquires the shape of a body for a given period of physical time. The attachment to one stage or another of this crystallization is something that consciousness is capable of transcending: "When you end attachment completely, then love is."<sup>12</sup>

In the following section, we will try to underline some of the practical aspects of deep change, or revolutionizing the mind (to use Krishnamurti's terms). The fact has tremendous intensity. If such idea implies the presence of energy within the psyche, then consciousness can be seen as the bridge between the brain and truth. In any case, the nature of self is what needs to be understood. Centering consciousness completely in the brain is limiting it to what are only its causes, its manifestations, thereby trespassing the source providing the effect. What is meant by a phenomenon of compassion presupposes a phenomenology of silence. Through the act of silence, the fulfillment of being attuned to the real is the transformative

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<sup>11</sup> Krishnamurti. On Mind and Thought. Harper & Row San Francisco, 1993, p. 72.

<sup>12</sup> In The Network of Thought...p. 71.

factor in the act of living. That this transformation is a pressing need is made evident in view of the intensity of the fear and greed which is absorbed by the largest part of humanity through the "abuse of reason" and the incapacity to change of most religious beliefs. Compassionate living is not intentional, but is lasting during suffering, because the power which heals is the same as the power which destroys. Only can it be seen and felt in silence, in the spacious quality of the silent mind which is the mark of truly human intelligence. It is also within this space that compassion can work among enemies, and under conditions of physical suffering and the proximity of death which is no longer feared:

Where there is vast space, there is immense energy, not self-interested energy, but unlimited energy.<sup>13</sup>

## II - The Potential for Action

Sri Aurobindo provides a useful definition to the understanding of healing with the following quote: "It is not the body which is ill, it is the consciousness which is wanting..."<sup>14</sup> Nor is summarizing the aspects of conditioning and addiction in modern society a particularly demanding task. The major forms of addiction rest on the following patterns:

1) depression; 2) apathy; 3) greed. One can even merge all three emotions into one: Fear, based on the illusion of self-identity.

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<sup>13</sup> In On Truth. HarperSan Francisco, 1995, p. 133.

<sup>14</sup> Satprem. Sri Aurobindo or The Adventure of Consciousness. Sri Aurobindo Society, Pondicherry, India, 1970, p. 107.

And on a scale that goes from mere thinking to intuition and full awareness, Krishnamurti said that we hardly ever feel the nature of being. Over a lifetime, we see some movement happening between becoming and non-becoming, or what we translate as living and not living. Anything standing in the way of becoming is usually avoided by creating an idea of things happening in time, the ending of time being too disturbing to even envisage. It is clear that the desire for becoming reinforces the feeling of physical time which we connect to death and the end of life, and of consciousness altogether:

You thought the idea of non-violence acted as an influence by which you could get rid of violence. That is, having created contradiction through the ideal, we hope, through conflict, to get rid of violence. But we have never succeeded in doing that. It goes with brutality, outwardly or suppressed, and produces its own results. So can I be left only with violence, not holding on also to its opposite? If so, I have removed one of the causes of conflict, perhaps the major cause.<sup>15</sup>

Moreover, if moral responsibility--or the ability to respond without calculation--comes only from the demands imposed by personal interests and motivations, then the body has lost a major part of its functions and meaning in the world. Like Nietzsche says in The Will To Power:

All virtues are physiological conditions; our most sacred convictions...are judgments of our muscles...perhaps the entire evolution of the spirit is a question of the body: it is the history of the development of the higher body that emerges into our sensibility.

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<sup>15</sup> In On Truth, HarperSan Francisco, 1995, p. 45-46.

Like we mentioned previously, reactions occur because unclear reflection in the depth of the psyche impedes correct observation of facts. While right action, the result of attention, has less dependency on moral connotation, emanating as it is from a clear consciousness which understands the opposites of right and wrong. Therefore, a conscious act is a manifestation of energy which has no need to navigate through the labyrinth of unconscious memories and images. Most of our activity consists in living in the shadow of memories. The concept of healing is based on the principle of freeing the flow of energy in the body. Therefore, the urgency to avoid action based on fear necessitates a consent to soften in the physical self, to penetrate into the cellular level. The space in the heart, which Krishnamurti and many religious people describe, has literal space. The physicality of such space is less an analogy than a re-patterning of the cells in the entire physical organism, including fluids and plasma. A fear which is not completed at the physical level becomes a trauma, a fulcrum where energy is blocked, leading to a disruption of physiological patterns, of intellectual conceptualizations and memories, creating the reactions we regularly observe. Reacting is resisting to act upon the sense of being: all energy implies resistance.

"Nothing is an impediment to psychological freedom, nothing! An impediment comes into being only when there is a resistance."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> In Talks... p. 64.

It is the substance of energy in consciousness which gives to the body a willingness to heal. One heals by exploring how the body works, how it has been summoned in modern life to tame its natural rhythm. Indeed, one of the most eminent personalities in the history of healing, Edgar Cayce, expresses in a way similar to Krishnamurti the relationship between body and mind:

The mind, functioning inadequately through its creation, the physical body, is the custodian of many fears and anxieties. These can be imagined difficulties that will never happen; suppressed early childhood traumas, all carefully recorded in our amazing brains; primitive beliefs; suppressed sexual drives; implanted suggestions that threaten our control of our lives; dreams that release suppressed fear patterns (and that can become healing experiences); and conscious or unconscious cultural pressures. When we turn later to the work of transforming anxiety and fear energies to constructive expression, we will see what an important part the mind must play.<sup>17</sup>

Sadly enough, the New Age movement is sometimes misdirecting well-intentioned people by emphasizing a cult for the body which is really a reinforcement of egocentrism, even if it is tentatively spiritual. The cutting edge between legitimate needs and private unconscious desires is hard to notice and even more so to control. Under the most demanding circumstances of physical or emotional crises, the body knows how to safeguard itself to the point of not retaining consciousness if necessary. The body has its own idiomatic expression through movement and sound which indicates how the energy of life shifts. The human body is a masterpiece of spiritual wisdom, materialized into a

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<sup>17</sup> Hugh Lynn Cayce. Faces of Fear. Harper & Row San Francisco, 1980, p. 56.

potential of almost 2,000 motions and 72,000 nerves.<sup>18</sup>

But here we are concerned with the potential for awareness to whoever is in need of healing. For where a sense of being and right action is imperative is in times of violence imposed by war, contamination, poverty, hunger, racism, and other unacceptable conditions. When and how to communicate the imperative necessity of healing; to teach the meaning of the responses felt in the emotional self; to feel the compassion manifested by the presence of another; all these aspects are what holistic education is about:

...Our crisis is not in the world but in consciousness itself. It is not, how to stop a war, or reform universities, or give more work or less work and more pay and so on; on that level there is no answer; any reform gives more complication. This crisis is in the mind itself, in your mind, in your consciousness. And, unless you respond to that crisis, to that challenge, you will add, consciously or unconsciously, to the confusion, the misery and to this immensity of sorrow.<sup>19</sup>

In a book which narrates the personal spiritual journey of a French woman whose husband (a psychiatrist) was shot in the heart by one of his patients, there is a passage which poignantly describes not only compassion, but a sense of intelligence which is the ending of the moment, the death to the sense of time

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<sup>18</sup> Called "Nadis" in the Hindu tradition of Yoga: "NADI: a tubular organ of the subtle body through which flow vital, seminal and cosmic energy as well as air, water, blood, nutrients and other substances including sensations and consciousness." In The Tree of Yoga. B.K.S. Iyengar. Boston, MA: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1988, p. 176.

<sup>19</sup> In Talks and Dialogues Saanen 1968. Berkeley, CA: Shambhala Publications, 1970, p. 14.

involved in sorrow:

I alone know what it is up to me to do. I alone, in my body, knew what to do. When I went back to the house, the children ran toward me, amazed by my long absence. What about the party? Where is Papa? I answered them with my body. I held them against my stomach, my thighs, my breasts so that all the tenderness, all the security, all the words that emanated in silence from my body could penetrate theirs. "Blow on it", they used to say when they'd hurt themselves. To blow out through all my pores: that is what it was up to me to do. [Emphasis mine]<sup>20</sup>.

The mention of death and dying is pervading through all of Krishnamurti's talks and dialogues. And it is approached exactly in the Buddhist sense: a) of dying to each thought and living attentively in the present moment; b) of ending continuously in order to know how to live:

So I ask myself, is it possible to live with death all the time? Not at the end of my life but with all my energy, vitality, and all the things that go on, can I live with death all the time?...Which means the ending every day of everything I've collected; the ending.<sup>21</sup>

If a relatively simple method of body awareness can lead to compassionate understanding, why should it not become of primary importance in education? Unfortunately, if the practice of natural medicine starts to receive some consideration from orthodox medicine, it does not necessarily take into account the space we live in, nor the space we live with internally. "The first step is the last step," Krishnamurti says, and it may be

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<sup>20</sup> Thérèse Bertherat and Carol Bernstein. The Body Has Its Reasons, Anti-Exercises and Self-Awareness, tr. from the French. New York: Pantheon Books, 1987, p. 18.

<sup>21</sup> In Washington, DC Talks 1985. Den Haag: Mirananda, 1988, p. 45.

the case that this first major step is the consent to being. By that he probably meant that quality of attention which turns into a passion for living when conflict comes to an end. Particularly because it is mystery to the overly-developed intellect, attention requires a completely consenting mind:

A passionate mind is groping, seeking, breaking through, not accepting any tradition; it is not a decided mind, not a mind that has arrived, but it is a young mind that is ever arriving.<sup>22</sup>

This attunement to one's body can eventually manifest into an individual intuitive medicine which somehow predicts the failure of the organism, and foresees its weaknesses and energy blocks. The physical self needs to retreat and contemplate as much as the mind which harmonizes it, lest it goes awry when unattended. Energy medicine offers nearly 5,000 years of reliable practices. Acupuncture, Ayurveda, and Homeopathy all have the same root and the same purpose: connecting mind/body to earth and nature. Energy and compassion are inherent to the freed mind and are observable under the most negative circumstances as well as during ecstatic moments. The life force in a human being can be blocked, but does not always stop when it meets an obstacle: it can redirect itself. If Krishnamurti had engaged in dialogues about healing, the quality of his own insights would have provided increased interest for this inner capacity to feel how the body acts and demands its presence to be acknowledged. The physical self can regenerate its own cells, correcting long

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<sup>22</sup> In Collected Works. Vol. XI, pp. 97-98.

patterns of malnutrition and abuse, when the mind is free from conditioning. Krishnamurti also said that this is a process from nature itself, not an esoteric, secretive activity for cults and sects:

Is there an energy which is non-mechanistic, which is endless, renewing itself? I say there is. Most definitely. But it is not what you call Kundalini. The body must be sensitive. If you are working, clearing up the house, the body becomes very sensitive. The body then has its own intelligence, not the intelligence which the mind dictates to the body. Therefore, the body becomes extraordinarily sensitive, not sensitive to its desires, or sensitive to wanting something, but it becomes sensitive per se...<sup>23</sup>

Evidently, bioenergetics and nutritional therapy were not the declared activities of Krishnamurti but conscious living certainly was. There is hardly the possibility that he would have denied the importance, in fact the necessity to study the physical domain which is the tool for the development of intelligence. Most likely, what the ancient yogis showed through their spectacular postures, perhaps no longer relevant in this age, is what Plato described in gymnastics, and what native dances and rituals still help achieve. All aim to the same point: to release the circulation of energy in the body; to irrigate the cranio-sacral fluid; to free the breath; to expand the muscle tissues; to let the conscious upper parts penetrate into the lower levels of the unconscious where energy is blocked.

Furthermore, it is often the case that one on a journey to healing will end up in isolation or at odds with the accepted

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<sup>23</sup> In Talks... p. 100.

norms of the age. Only those individuals who are outstandingly clairvoyant are sometimes respected as prophets, visionaries, or great thinkers; but the efforts of the average person remain unknown to the community. Nevertheless, an important aspect of healing is made particularly explicit in the words of Thérèse Bertherat again: "When we live in our body, we give body to our life".<sup>24</sup> Is there a more sensical way to describe how being at home with oneself reverberates in the mirror of the environment, in one's location in the world? Too much remains mysterious about the transformation which natural healing could accomplish. We use only a few hundreds of the nearly 2,000 movements which the human body can perform. We use approximately 10% of brain capacity and 2% of DNA. Therefore, it is clear to understand why enhanced physical health provides enough psychological strength to accept the necessity of change and not build resistance. Being centered physically allows to act with a resonance to the environment. It provides for stillness of mind. The consent to feel life fully in the physical sense is an open door to life with[com]passion.

### III - Being at Home in the World

Being at home in the world implies being at home in one's flesh, more so than ever in a technological age when the rapport with nature is nearly completely lost. Air pollution has an intensity which is reflected in the cells of city-dwellers who,

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<sup>24</sup> Thérèse Bertherat, p. 66.

in addition, reinforce the effects through malnutrition and poor responses to stress. In connection with our consciousness development, the quality of our physical presence in the world is the essence of a task which is extraordinarily demanding and at the same time enhancing. To the extent that we project our presence into the environment from a sense of inner meaning acquired in our human structure can we resist building images of heroes and idols for imitation and co-dependence. Images are the traces of myths overly enhanced by scattered philosophies and ideologies. What comes from within is perhaps still an image, but at least it is not a thing which has no interiority, no depth, no direct access to truth. By being conscious of the images we project, we see at the same time the result of being present in the community, and the work which has to be undertaken:

What is important is not to pile up words, or arguments, or explanations, but rather to bring about, in each one of us, a deep revolution, a deep psychological mutation, so that there is a different kind of society, a totally different relationship between man and man, which is not based on immorality, as it is now. Such a revolution, in the most profound and total sense of that word, does not take place through any system, or through any action of the will, or through any combination of habit and foresight.<sup>25</sup>

In order to have meaning and validity, our physical presence must expand to the outside world which we experience inwardly and is part of the blue print we acquire at birth. If we are the world, we start putting order in our own house first. But there are

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<sup>25</sup> In Talks... p. 66.

instances where cruelty and unexplainable violence have invaded every territory of a community. There are also instances of individuals whose physical presence has been eliminated through incarceration and many forms of torture and persecution. And there are many cases of people who have disappeared from their own presence through extreme dementia. Healing and compassion have their place in all possible contexts: war, torture, violence, racism, gender differences, every imaginable state of conflict... While Christians particularly may insist that it is not enough to take care of oneself, it is possible to demonstrate that compassion is a fact and not an ideal when many of us start reshaping the individual psyche. Krishnamurti was actively illustrating that compassion is truth visible on the planet, that it is the deterrent to all errors. Only he would say that humanism and activism--as they may be supported with religious intent--bring with them the risks of dogma and persuasion which are the roots of conflict:

There is only one movement, which is the outer and the inner...Out of this movement there is a generosity and compassion that is not the outcome of reason and purposeful self-denial.<sup>26</sup>

Furthermore, a highly critical, not a cynical attitude towards the nature of evil and the meaning of death is crucial for the emergence of compassion. Evil and death need not be conquered like enemies but, like Krishnamurti would say, need to be questioned by one who is equipped and prepared to act with the

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<sup>26</sup> In On God. Harper San Francisco, 1992, p. 154.

freedom brought about by attention. One of the greatest obstacles to compassion is the over-emphasis of most religions on the concepts of sin, salvation, and evil. When the human condition and human nature are perceived in wholeness beyond the realm of opposites, it is possible to undo the conflicts created by a belief system. Human beings crave the security of religious and moral precepts, but truth sweeps away the good and the bad into compassion. The AIDS epidemic is a touching example of the willingness to embrace a condition which is present in each one of us: the failure to meet freedom inwardly, without attachment to the rules of the fittest or the wisest. The only way to remain sane and conscious under the face of a torturer-- abstractly or physically--is to understand and embrace humanity totally:

The flower is strong in its beauty as it can be forgotten, set aside, or destroyed.[emphasis mine]<sup>27</sup>

Meanwhile, political ideologies and religions, humanism and secular philosophies are for Krishnamurti only the various forms of a vast anthropocentric illusion. By that we mean having a cosmology which is overly anthropocentric, seeing humanity as the very center of the universe. This may seem contradictory, but it is not the case. Everything, including humanity, can be placed in perspective, in its proper order so as to be treated equally and with dignity--Krishnamurti would say elegantly, or gracefully. The tendency to accentuate anthropomorphism

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<sup>27</sup> In On God... p. 154.

(particularly in its masculine aspect only) has already had a negative impact, not only on individual streams of consciousness, but in professions such as architecture, education, and medicine. One wonders what a compassionate architecture would be which would not separate people from nature; or a medical authority which would understand the honoring of bodily energy and natural properties; and an education which would promote holistic development of body, mind, and psyche in relation with the universe. To interpret creativity essentially in terms of the human is a respectable endeavor but it is also a delusion. It denies the fact that the primary feature of consciousness is to materialize in all forms contained in cosmology, including the forms and dimensions we cannot fathom. It also gives way to a fascination which becomes a subjectivism ignoring the totality of reality. For the ones who perceive the wholeness of reality, life becomes the most serious activity, not a passive, exclusive hobby:

What is important is to live a life without effort, without a single problem. You can live without a problem if you understand the nature of effort and see very clearly the whole structure of desire...It is absolutely necessary for the mind to have no problems at all, and so live a life without effort. Surely such a mind is the only religious mind, because it has understood sorrow and the ending of sorrow. It is without fear, and is therefore a light unto itself.<sup>28</sup>

Anthropomorphism in its negative aspects leads to self-pity which is the extreme opposite to compassion. We see it everyday in the

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<sup>28</sup> In On God. HarperSan Francisco, 1992, p. 136.

effects of modern psychology which emphasizes the ego without accepting the fact that there is more to a human being than the mental order we know now. The compassionate life presupposes that level of practicality which requires not money and power or sainthood, but seeing and knowing, in other words, a more alive situation. Even to state one's limitations to oneself requires courage, but to state them before a community requires commitment and strength of character. Commitment is the essence of compassion because it means accepting to take responsibility for one's own life under any circumstances. But modern societies are governed and driven by rights. To illustrate this fact very clearly, we have the example of all the minorities in the world through history who had to fight for their rights, because other nations in the world did not live up to their most obvious responsibility to meet them as equal human beings. The same situation applies to racism, AIDS victims, and gender discrimination. All the wars and conflicts on this planet originate mostly in the fact that there is no seeing of the responsibility--the being able to respond--of compassion. Meanwhile, there continues to be the defending of utopian ideals, or having to invent new and updated human rights because of an incapacity to share the meaning of being human:

Therefore, what's your relationship? A helper? Or you have real compassion, not for me, but the flame of it, the perfume, the depth, the beauty, the vitality and intelligence of compassion, love. That will have much more effect than your decision to help me.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> In Questioning... p. 16-17.

But you see there is this whole concept...that there are people who help, not guide, who tell you what to do, then it all becomes so silly. Rather it is simply like the sun, the sun giving light. If you want to sit in the sun, you sit in it, if you don't, you sit in the shade.<sup>30</sup>

Moving along further, we can see that what really stands between compassion and personal ethics is a trade-off for psychological security and religio-political materialism. This trade-off has nothing to do with the implementation of regulations, or with philosophical and moral ideologies, but requires the basic understanding that violence or ignorance of another is equal to violence or ignorance of oneself. Nothing in the existing educational structure is preparing people for learning how individual consciousness is at all times the consciousness of a nation, and of the pervading universe. Being present with body and psyche, at work for an organization or in the ghetto, is what creates the synergy between individual energies and the energy present in the universe. From such angle, the few people who see things as they are can overcome great odds and construct meaningful living in small-scale communities without the results of fancy rationalizing. These groups are willing to connect from the unity of their conscious selves, and have little need to collect considerable information and financial resources. These ideals are more like living truths which have been experienced individually in the depth of consciousness of daily life and struggle. When criticizing and being terrified by the threat of

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<sup>30</sup> Id. p. 17.

AIDS, pollution, over-population and war, some segments of societies should stop this form of self-pitiful consternation and try to think in terms of loving touch, as contradictory as it may sound: by embracing suffering without judgment or fear, we might discover that we touch not only for the fulfillment of personal emotions or social conventions, or imposed promiscuity, but that we can touch to heal. Only when we touch with the energy infused inside of us can we start being moved, moving in stillness into a life guided by truth. The observer has then become the observed:

My concern is with one's life, actual, daily, fragmentary, stupid life. And I say, 'Can that be transformed?' Not into greater satisfaction. Can that structure end itself? Not by an imposition of something higher which is just another trick. I say if you are capable of observing without the observer, the brain can transform itself. that is meditation. Sir, the essence is the whole. In fragmentation, there is no essence of anything.<sup>31</sup>

But for one who feels that thought cannot be eliminated, the sense of responsibility for the actions that thought produces is less evident. If we lived in the present and not in the memory of thought we would have all the energy needed to bring about synchronicities and coincidences, which are fields of energy flowing harmoniously. Let us mention once again that the principle behind every form of healing is that pain is separation from the source. Pain is separation from the source of life, a longing from the heart, through the body, with the mind, of being

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<sup>31</sup> In Exploration Into Insight. Madras, India: KFA, 1993, p. 178.

one with the energy which literally shapes existence. This is how practical change can be. It has nothing to do with building an ego, that which psychology calls high self-esteem. We can touch ourselves intimately with both hands, and we can also open the hands outwardly to touch others:

All knowledge is vain save when there is work,  
And all work is empty save when there is love;  
And when you work with love, you bind yourself to  
yourself, and to one another, and to God.

And what is it to work with love?...

Work is love made visible.<sup>32</sup>

This unknown realm feels like a quiet source of passionate strength in the body. We learn about it through the many testimonies of known and unknown mystics, ancient and modern. More and more scholars and scientists agree that the "Kundalini phenomenon" is a physical manifestation of that energy which transforms the consciousness of a person towards the highest forms of loving intelligence. Mythologist Joseph Campbell and close friend of Krishnamurti has an entire book dedicated to the history of Kundalini.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, another student of Krishnamurti has recently published a book on Kundalini where he describes explicitly their experience. Obviously, people who were close to Krishnamurti in friendship or in learning came to the same conclusion that energy is visible outside of the

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<sup>32</sup> Kahlil Gibran. The Prophet. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972, pp. 29-30.

<sup>33</sup> See Joseph Campbell. The Inner Reaches of Outer Space. New York: Harper&Row Publishers, Inc., 1986.

physical body. The religious impulse seems to be contained in the shell taken by the human body, and in the mind which helps it accomplish its destiny and tasks (which many think is predetermined). Consistence and persistence in asking questions, opting for change, for the awakening of intelligence are given by grace, by the force of compassionate synchronicity, not necessarily by a Being on high, but certainly by the opening of mind and body to the core containing a seed from the source. Christians may remember that in the early mystical tradition it was considered heretical to separate God from self. Hence, the practice of prayer and contemplation along the lines of oriental practices.

In the age of bioenergetics, when we also have been able to discover that language not only reflects thoughts physically, but consequently shapes the external world, connection and integration is what creates a well-being which is complete and completed: nature, body, mind, and spirit. Swami Yogananda said: "What the world needs most is silence." Those incessant words, the verbosity which gives shape to the world we co-create dissipate into the internal rhythm of the body: a motion created in stillness, a power of goodness generated by energetic vibrations. If we come from this neutral core of still-energy, we should be free of psychological anxiety and physical illness, but most importantly from conflict and existential cynicism leading to violence. If we do not consent to observe life holistically, regardless of given private circumstances, we may

fail to ground ourselves in what nature provides: a planet and an ecosystem particularly suited to the needs of human beings. Krishnamurti's love of nature, especially his respect for trees, is a profound aspect of his communication of the unity of body, mind and spirit with the environment human beings find themselves in. Meanwhile, we are whirling in illusions, half-asleep and half-dreaming. "Doing non-doing", namely simplifying life on earth, requires seeing, knowing, and embracing every situation we meet, be it bliss or persecution. Far from picking up the neuroses or weaknesses of each other, of political factions or religions, we need to attempt seeing reality as sacred as it is in its compassionate neutrality:

The man[woman] who is seeking reality spontaneously becomes the right kind of citizen, which is not according to the pattern of any particular society or government.<sup>34</sup>

When each one of us is a light to himself[herself] then only can we co-operate, then only can we love, then only is there a sense of communion with each other. But if you have your particular authority, whether that authority be an individual or an experience which you yourself have felt, then that experience, that authority, that conclusion, that definite position, prevents communication with each other. It is only a mind that is really free that can commune, that can co-operate.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> In Think On These Things. New York: HarperPerennial, 1964, p. 211-12.

<sup>35</sup> In Talks and Dialogues Saanen 1968. Berkeley, CA: Shambala Publications, 1970, p. 10.

## CHAPTER 9

### Concluding Thoughts

It obviously behoves us to dispel the darkness which we individually have created in ourselves and in others. That is why--it seems to me--we ought to be very serious.<sup>1</sup>

#### I - Krishnamurti and the Holy Ground of Freedom

In what way is compassion a phenomenon that we can clearly recognize? Krishnamurti, like many in the past, labored in order to explain that adjusting ourselves is adjusting society. He said that intelligence does not belong to time and thought. He said that the life fully lived has the quality of the silent mind. He told us that conformity to tradition and psychological dependence upon forms of knowledge are sources of contradiction and conflict. The limits of thought only beget more limitations, and also impede creativity.

Krishnamurti's endeavor is definitely about freedom. Krishnamurti has opened a vision of psychological freedom for humankind. Even more than psychological freedom, this vision is a revolutionary quest for freedom from the conceptual. Two

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<sup>1</sup> In Talks and Dialogues Saanen 1968. Berkeley, CA: Shambala Publications, 1970, p. 8.

features are salient in the works of Krishnamurti: 1) change is immediate and irrevocable; 2) change happens only in openness to simplicity. Either attribute is deemed to be challenging because many a circumstance have justified the acceptance of a lifestyle based on automatism and the impossibility to respond to the call of nature, and to the human need for connection. Consequently, the challenge of change requires considerable energy. In order to gather this energy we need to understand the importance of psychological freedom, and the imperative to start the work individually. Each one of us is its own priest, shaman, guide, and therapist. The ultimate guru is nowhere to be found, for freedom knows its own way in the depth of one's own being. Such realization cannot be scrupulously organized.

Moreover, the awareness of the urgency of change is present in every individual. The sooner one becomes aware of the urgency, the more effective it will be for the rest of humanity which each one of us represents. There is no external force which can avail nor prevail this type of awakening. The real challenge, however, is to make the urgency of change a global vision without the authority of ideologies. We must be absolutely untouched by anything that takes away the glory of the big thing: that the grace of compassion is everything that matters. Krishnamurti says that there is a kind of religious attention which consists in asking questions honestly and with passion. The religious mind has no need for conceptual beliefs when the link with the sacred is established upon entering the

space of a silent mind. Krishnamurti's own release from the tyranny of private thought conferred him the potential to communicate a message of peace and well-being which is utterly religious. It is his personal journey into suffering, culminating in a mystical event, which directed the purpose of his life. While mystical experiences are not uncommon, they are unique for each individual. In the case of Krishnamurti, the event was followed by an almost life-long process of what could be identified analytically as a physiological transformation.

From the perspective of western philosophy, Krishnamurti starts his teachings when the impossibility to think further pierces the veil of dualism. Like many students and scholars, I find that the psycho-spiritual elements of Hinduism and Buddhism are subtly permeating Krishnamurti's talks and writings. For even if "awakened", Krishnamurti was a human being like any of us. His brain memory was inevitably impregnated with the thoughtforms we all share unconsciously. However, what he was able to convey is the fact that it is possible to lift up and unveil that which is known through memory. This, he maintains, is done in meditation, which is an immersion into life, and what activates freedom from the self:

My concern is with one's life, actual, daily, fragmentary, stupid life. And I say, 'Can that be transformed?' Not into greater satisfaction. Can that structure end itself?...I say if you are capable of observing without the observer, the brain can transform itself. That is meditation...<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> In Exploration Into Insight. HarperSan Francisco: 1980, p. 178.

Undoubtedly, obstacles to freedom can be removed. For only by leaving this perpetual quest for identity aside can insight occur and change happen to the benefit of the whole. But we must face the fact that to live in a world of unconditional love is psychologically challenging. Change happens to the extent that we see the world--especially in its violent aspects--as the mirror of what each one of us is like internally. Why is there such apprehension to look inside the mind is a question that traditional philosophy does not quite succeed to answer. The noise of the world is therefore the mirror of the violence empowered by too many thoughts and words. While the glory of modern technology on the planet is in great part entirely justified, such technology, at the edge of the new millennium, encompasses the mythical symbolism of civilization.

Unfortunately, up to the top of the highest mountains where we intend to hide, we still carry the noise for fear of the unknown sound of silence. Silence is more than a bridge to the unknown, and it is infinitely more than the density of the void. Silence has the grace of be-ness, and it is the ground of all presence. While Krishnamurti uses terms different from the above, he affirms in all of his works that silence needs to be preserved. As a result of this insistence, it is understandable that some would interpret his views as pessimistic, cynical or unrealistic because silence unexpectedly wipes away the noise of chattering minds. Krishnamurti also explains that attentive silence, if it feels like self-annihilation, nevertheless creates a spatial

abode of bliss, an expansion of consciousness:

Only complete silence can bring about a total revolution in the psyche--not effort, not control, not experience or authority. That silence is tremendously active; it is not just static silence. To come upon that silence you have to go through all this. Either you do it instantly, or you take time and analysis; and when you take time through analysis, you have already lost silence...<sup>3</sup>

Naturally, we see how Krishnamurti could provide only one more ideology to place on the list of contributions to the ideals of freedom and spiritual liberation. However, Krishnamurti clearly describes compassion as the unassuming, factual event which occurs when the rhythm of our heartbeat embraces positive and negative forces fearlessly. The ancient Yogis, the Shamans, the Christian Mystics, the Sufis have all described human potentialities. And in different ways, through stages of mental development, scientists have studied the art of integrating all the different levels of sensations and emotions. But with him we discover that to be a witness to oneself--the observer observing the observed--eclipses that moment when there is psychological space in the mind. Compassion resides in that space. Compassion is a movement from the heart, gentle but rhythmical and visible, like an uproar in the void which transcends the velocity of thought. Silence has the quality and lightness of the rare circumstances when, in love or in awe, words fail. Most everyone loses the capacity to trust the non-verbal and to validate non-doing, because the imperatives of chatter have no room for trust.

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<sup>3</sup> In "Excerpts from J. Krishnamurti's Talks and Writings." Madras, India: KFA, 1991, p. 70.

They carry the obligations of false promises, much like ordinary pleasures and satisfactions do carry a lot of noise. This tribute to silence is a plea to consider the non-conceptual as the key to change and freedom. Krishnamurti explains how the sacred is the activity of reality through us. This, I think, is compassion as Krishnamurti portrayed it for us. That is why I find that he has raised an important issue to be reconsidered in confusing times: thought, and the products of thought, stand between true being and true knowing. Like Stephen Levine says: "We cannot know the Truth, we can only be the Truth."<sup>4</sup> And in the words of Krishnamurti:

Do not try to seek out what Truth is, do not try to find out through listening to me, nor try to feel what it is. Such effort is futile. Even though you may feel it occasionally, do not try to hold on to it, but remove the cause of resistance and you will know.<sup>5</sup>

## II - From Faith to Intentionality

Society is the extension of the individual; society is the projection of ourselves. Until we grasp this and understand ourselves profoundly and alter ourselves radically, the mere change of the outer will not create peace in the world, nor bring to it that tranquillity that is necessary for happy social relationship.<sup>6</sup>

What else can we say for further study, but that a most important feature of the healthy mind is intentionality. If

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<sup>4</sup> See Stephen Levine. Who Dies? and Healing Into Life and Death. New York: Anchor Books, 1982.

<sup>5</sup> In "Excerpts..." p. 65.

<sup>6</sup> In "Excerpts..." p. 9.

compassion needs to be revisited, the next study center would be to question how we intend. Thinking is the greatest seduction for the mind which constantly wants definitions. In this respect, the glamour of thought provides not only identification but a sense of security, as well as the justification to act in a world of dualism. For being so close to twentieth century philosophical deconstructionism, Krishnamurti however did not compete with the postmodernists. He tried to demonstrate that change and non-passivity are the best warrants to ensure synthesis and simplicity in social action. He always took the responsibility to speak straightforwardly during crucial historical times. But most importantly, he had the integrity to give a description of consciousness in terms which wipe out intellectual conventions. From his teachings, it also transpires that fear blocks the vision of where we are, and how we could share, not only material goods, but psychological health. For how important is it to find out if religious pluralism or secular humanism will operate? Or if psychological ignorance is a perennial state of the human condition? The question relates not only to thinking itself, but to attention and awareness to the observer and the observed. And it may appear like these topics are part of what neurobiology is interested in. But consciousness studies should not remain the domain of highly educated scientists. Every person should have access to dimensions not defined by the limits of scientific inquiry. More than discovering a Grand Unified Theory of the universe,

scientists might pursue questioning the possibility that an immaterial dimension of consciousness pervades it. One of the greatest strengths of Krishnamurti is the manner in which he reminds us, after the Buddha, that no ideology or spiritual position should be built upon the sense of power which our discoveries may seem to carry.

The work done with his long-time friend David Bohm is a remarkable example of the alliance between science and religious studies, as well as an interesting contribution to the field of psychology. The problem of conditioning, the prison of thought, is very much part of these dialogues:

What is it that is blocking? Do we approach through environmental conditioning, from the outer to the inner, and discover from man's outer activities, the outer? And then discover that the outer is the inner, the same movement, and then go beyond it to see what it is? Could we do that?<sup>7</sup>

Communities are built the way individuals are built. The human body is energy in action, as many scientists and bioenergetics therapists can tell. Modern science is showing how global consciousness is shifting, and the extraordinary significance of the mind when it is not limited to the conceptual domain. The mind which is fully aware and observant inside a body which is fully alive awakes to the total activity of learning, which is no longer based on images and concepts. Krishnamurti tried to build the groundwork in various parts of the world, pointing at all the categories of suffering which originate inside excessive

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<sup>7</sup> Krishnamurti. In The Ending of Time. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1995, p. 78.

analytical minds.

This is perhaps the most difficult fact to accept: that love as we want it may never happen, and that consequently the capacity to give is unconditional. Krishnamurti described a passion to live which is visible when energy transpires through action. Anything short of letting energy act freely soon becomes self-pity. This is why it is important to start on a small scale. Like many others, Krishnamurti demonstrates that the most difficult enterprise is to become human, not spiritual. Spirit is what we are made of. When it is said that we should remember the pure consciousness whence we originate, it is crucial to experience the degree of humanness which it takes to accomplish this. And what better way is there to show humanness other than opening to vulnerability and simplicity? In compassion resides the perception of the vulnerability to the environment, of the role of emotions and the operations of the mind. Psychologists often say that there must be the building of an ego in order to proceed to its unwinding. Krishnamurti says that this game-like attitude can cease instantaneously: "I say that the mind can be free immediately, and that there is no gradual process by which to free the mind through time." (Bombay 1955). Therefore, there is a level of sincerity, and a humble listening, which consist of living with the fact that we stumble onto the self continuously:

Krishnamurti did not explain fastidiously how we build resources other than in telling that meditation is the ground of all resources. Many look for support in groups or in one-on-one

opportunities. Krishnamurti also tells why and how aloneness is essential to the surge of our awareness, insight and intentionality. Like the ancient Egyptians said, it is in the four empty chambers of the heart that one observes the multitude which we share. To opt for simplicity in thought and action is already compassionate. Beauty in the plainness of objects as they are, in the scarcity of pretensions, in the lack of verbosity, and in the exposure to the free movement of intelligence is compassionate simplicity, the expression of essence devoid of thought. More importantly, this compassion has the quality of what is felt and savored, not learned and acquired:

What is compassion? Compassion is not yours or mine, any more than thought is yours or mine. When there is intelligence, there is no 'me' and 'you'. And intelligence does not abide in your heart or your mind. That intelligence which is supreme is everywhere. It is that intelligence that moves the earth and the heavens and the stars, because that is compassion.<sup>8</sup>

### III - Teaching from Within

For Krishnamurti, the question of holistic education is key to the flowering of intelligence. The failure to both teach and learn in humanistic ways is overwhelmingly evident. It shows in all forms of violence, from war to addiction, to confrontation and personal conflicts. Is it not time to admit that stuffing brains with information is a violent way of educating? Is it not

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<sup>8</sup> Krishnamurti. In On Mind and Thought, HarperSan Francisco, 1993, p. 140, Madras, 2 January 1983,

folly to over-conceptualize reality as matter upon which we can exercise power at will with the notion that productivity is the mark of virtuous citizenship? Krishnamurti has, through his interest and dedication in educational change, made a real proposal for a practical philosophy of education. In the past twenty years of my studying Krishnamurti, I have often heard it said that he bears characteristics of a social dropout and did nothing to bring about social change except by being cynical and pedantic. I accept such opinions, and find some of these critical judgments appropriate when they are based on the claims of traditional philosophers for whom no-thought contradicts epistemology. On such grounds, one can always argue that Krishnamurti never had the least intention to be a philosopher, much less to produce a new ideology or a method to follow. The point is about the legacy of Krishnamurti's works as an inspiration for change grounded in the passion to learn and question the value and dependency attached to ordinary thinking, interpretation, and analysis (particularly of philosophical and religious literature).

While I agree that self-knowledge should not fall into mere introspection, adherence to cultural or religious imposed belief systems should equally be questioned and put into perspective. Teaching from within implies that the wisdom granted by the integration of mental, emotional, and physical knowledge is the basis of an education given with heartfelt, open-minded motives, and clear intentions. I think that the definition of

intelligence by Krishnamurti presupposes such level of integration:

Compassion is the act of a total and integrated individual.<sup>9</sup>

Therefore, we might start to understand that the real task of an educator should be to show how to embrace the whole, not only distinguishing how the parts work together. Educating beyond the limits of conceptualization would mean pointing out to the relevance of seeing oneself as one is, not as the image one has chosen to be. It is then in the art of listening that lies the understanding of the message of the teacher and the teaching. This understanding becomes itself an act: it is the right action we find described in oriental traditions as the result of attention, intention, and action which eventually shape our being. In this respect, the question of how Krishnamurti cooperates to social change is less difficult to answer than it appears. To ask questions is to be willing to change. To ask the right questions means that change has started to occur. Nothing is more static and alien to truth than complacency with the conventions and comfort of everyday living, or the observance of social rites and habits which have little content and limited meaning. This superficiality and passivity is what I think Krishnamurti was concerned about, for it leads invariably to the shaping of a fearful, conditioned mind.

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<sup>9</sup> Collected Works, III, p. 231.

Krishnamurti's scholars have greatly emphasized the possible impact of the teachings on education. Krishnamurti himself demonstrated that the act of learning is a life-long enterprise. And it is important to note that he did not impose limits to the manner in which his work should be shared or pursued, other than keeping its purity and harmonious simplicity. The pursuit of specific methods is contradictory to the teachings. In my opinion, formatting the content of the talks and writings into an academic curriculum might not be the best attempt, even if I respect the efforts made in that direction by various schools worldwide. I have been able to observe the manner in which communities have proceeded to study Krishnamurti with the material available through the foundations, and this seems to be a meaningful way to proceed. Nevertheless, I see five major considerations for holistic education which are directly related to Krishnamurti's work:

1) To see what-is underneath the veil of images and metaphors brought about by cultural imagination, and an overly technological environment; seeing what is real as both immanent and transcendent, yet one and the same at each moment in time.

2) Freedom and integral intelligence reside in the possibility to be attentive to the conditioning brought about by the legacy of fear of past and future circumstances. No one is solely the result of cultural, political or social background. Intelligence is infinitely more than mere knowledge. Intelligence comes when body, mind and psyche are aligned.

Intelligence is full presence to the power to connect.

3) Living a life with minimal conflict. Can the breaking of anger be shared? Can the mirror of relationships become a concrete tool at home, at school, at work? Only when the space is provided for others not to emote and react can the root of all inner conflicts become a reality. The mind that is quiet enough to see, to listen, and to share is a mirror for another human being.

4) The skills of dialogue. Dialogue means to go beyond verbal communication into global interaction which resembles communion in psyche. The nature of dialogue is to move away from authoritative or competitive forms of discussion, leaving one's opinions aside. Dialogue means touching others with clear intentionality. Dialogue means shifting in consciousness to see unity behind seemingly scattered views, including world views.

5) Teaching the practice of solidarity; teaching that we are the world. Solidarity means being open to the quality of consciousness which is inherent and unique to every individual. Education can be a bridge toward "Social Holism". If education is going to cooperate to a shift in consciousness, it will have to generate an active bond between persons learning together for the co-creation of a compassionate and harmonious world. But there is a possibility to fail engaging into a partnership which entails freedom and respect for humankind, primarily through lack of inclusiveness and the limits of belief systems.

In previous chapters, I briefly mention the differences between Krishnamurti and two eminent contemporary teachers, namely Lama Anagarika Govinda and Father Bede Griffiths, both of European descent and both "married" to India. Without going into a detailed analysis of those differences--which would be irrelevant at this point--I can just sum up the reasons in one sentence: both of them had a path to suggest and Krishnamurti did not. It is very important to understand this notion of the no-path properly because it hints at the limit and the breaking point of Krishnamurti's teachings. There is no path to truth, but that reasoning can be a path in itself. Moreover, if a path is self-revealing to someone, so be it to the extent that simplicity and compassion always surface at the end of the journey. I think that the only way to realize oneself without a path or a teacher (but being one's own teacher) requires the constant capacity to live in the "moment-to-moment" state which the Buddhists describe so well. In other words, if one were to further study the message of Krishnamurti, the concept of time would seem to be as important as the study of energy (Prana) or of the state of intelligence beyond the intellect (Prajnaparamita).

I believe these questions are answered in the "Awakening of Intelligence." Krishnamurti shows that the human psyche comprises all religious views; it does not suppress them, nor does it elect one to encompass all others, but organizations continue to do so to the point where the human network might condemn itself to

stagnation followed by inertia, and total loss of function on this planet. If we could reach the point where we understand that ignorance is none else than the accumulation of internal conflicts which are not only not resolved, not integrated in body and psyche, but not even seen, we would become aware, not in imagination but in reality, of this impasse. The no-path is an awareness which should prevail when, failing to cut through intellectual speculation when it keeps revolving onto itself from one belief system to the other, we would become not only ignorant, but static. To go further than the intellect is to live in the infinite which stretches on all sides. Meaning is broader than ourselves, which is why Krishnamurti could say:

"Religion is something much wider than the projections of the self."<sup>10</sup>

Operating from a higher level of being, and being rooted (which means knowing our impulses) we become pro-active instead of reactive. This is why change happens in a group, a community of like-minded people, but who welcomes and includes differences and is grateful for them, because they provide for ever more life-changing and life-producing events, like we constantly observe in nature, the mirror of ourselves. Regardless of the choices we make, self-knowledge acquired through a path or a no-path should be adventurous and lighthearted, not a word very much in use any more. It seems to me that Stephen Levine (another student of Krishnamurti) perhaps unconsciously brings the teachings further

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<sup>10</sup> Id. p. 59.

in his research on healing and dying. I want to quote him here to summarize the power of the mind and the manifestation of intelligence which I have felt Krishnamurti included in his own message:

Do not ask "To be or not to be," but only "What is being?" Investigate the pain in the heart and let it be met by a commitment to serve others, for the cessation of the suffering of all.

Suicide is the killing of the body. Awareness is the rebirth of the mind. Love is the actualization of the unnameable.<sup>11</sup>

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I have tried to enter into a dialogue on the above topics sequentially in each chapter. And now in closing, I would like to talk about light. Light is the substantial representation of the energy of consciousness. We say of people that they become enlightened, and of things we do not fully understand that we need to bring light on them. The nature of evil is described in religious symbolism and in mythology as the absence of light. And philosophically speaking, irrational, nihilistic ideologies are the ones which exclude visionary experiences. Intelligent minds radiate with light, joy, and confidence. Such minds freely absorb happiness and sorrow with unwavering equanimity, and thereby activate a movement from the heart for the benefit of the whole.

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<sup>11</sup> Stephen Levine. Who Dies? New York: Anchor Books, 1982, p. 219.

I think that Krishnamurti was saying that the future should take us into an exploration of the connection between consciousness and the human heart which conquers the absence of light. Living a narrow, broken, fragmented life in the mind means literally wasting some infinitesimal amount of the energy contained in the universe. Krishnamurti says that the difference between satisfaction and happiness consists in bringing an ending, instantly, not constrained by time, to the waste of energy which goes on persistently. Where there is life with passion (com-passion) there is unlimited energy for heartfelt creativity, individually or in partnership. Connecting through the integration of body and mind, we become explorers of consciousness. We are not limited to a certain vision for humankind. But to let energy waste itself into an imaginary future invented by thought is a form of spiritual arrogance: like we could somehow determine the use and the future of the only planet which can sustain human life at this point in evolution, and fail to respect its own existence.

For the universe itself is not only alive but compassionate. I am sure that Krishnamurti thought that way too. The universe is a process of co-creation with humankind. If we do not ground ourselves in the humus of the earth, we will continue to apprehend reality from a vulnerable place in imagination. Becoming fully attentive allows to build resources to start a healing process for the planet and consequently ourselves. Krishnamurti was more than a powerful catalyst for the people who

listened to him conversing with them. Some individuals had an immediate opening to truth as a result of their listening, and found ways to pour themselves into genuine acts of service. Personally, I think that Krishnamurti was able to polarize people with the innate nature of truth in them.

At this point, I would like to share an anonymous quote which I think Krishnamurti would have liked. I feel that it follows much of what he said in his own vocabulary, and that it suits perfectly well the reality of compassion:

Our first task in approaching  
another people,  
another culture,  
another religion,  
is to take off our shoes  
for the place we are approaching  
is holy.  
Else we find ourselves  
trading on another's dreams.  
More serious still,  
we may forget that God  
was there before our arrival.<sup>12</sup>

From the standpoint of the universe, we rarely create anything new because we belong in a multi-dimensional way to the source of all that exists. On this planet which is inspiring and empowering in its neutral, generous reality, all we need is to be, to trust, and to share through the radiance of compassion. It is the universe itself which brings opportunities to a psychologically healthy mind. It was no novelty to the hermetic traditions, it was just the greatest mystery for investigation.

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<sup>12</sup> Anonymous. Quote from a church bulletin.

Surely it must be a compassionate universe which continues to provide such a gift: a place where human beings can come to live together with open hearts and quiet minds:

True compassion is always full of power, and those that are powerful in the true way are full of tenderness.<sup>13</sup>

To K.

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<sup>13</sup> Krishnamurti. In "The Herald of the Star", October 25, 1913.

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