

**j. krishnamurti**  
Letters to the Schools  
Volume one

J.F. KENNEDY UNIVERSITY



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*Volume one*

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J. KRISHNAMURTI

LETTERS TO THE SCHOOLS

*Volume one*

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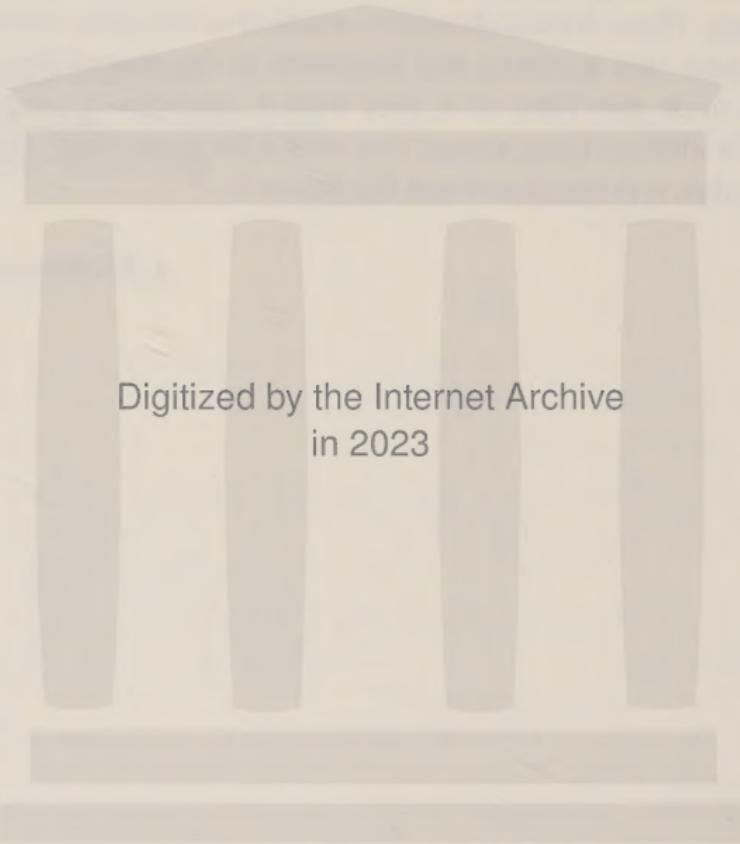
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## INTRODUCTION

These letters are not meant to be read casually when you have a little time from other things, nor are they to be treated as entertainment. These letters are written seriously and if you care to read them, read them with intent to study what is said as you would study a flower by looking at the flower very carefully – its petals, its stem, its colours, its fragrance and its beauty. These letters should be studied in the same manner, not read one morning and forgotten in the rest of the day. One must give time to it, play with it, question it, enquire into it without acceptance; live with it for some time; digest it so that it is yours and not the writer's

*J. Krishnamurti*



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*1st September, 1978*

As I would like to keep in touch with all the schools in India, Brockwood Park in England, the Oak Grove School at Ojai, California, I propose to write and send a letter every fortnight to them all for as long as is possible. It is naturally difficult to keep in touch with them all personally so, if I may, I would very much like to write these letters so as to convey what the schools should be, to convey to all the people who are responsible for them, that these schools are not only to be excellent academically but much more. They are to be concerned with the cultivation of the total human being. These centres of education must help the student and the educator to flower naturally. The flowering is really very important, otherwise the education becomes merely a mechanical process orientated to a career, to some kind of profession. Career and profession, as society now exists, are inevitable, but if we lay all our emphasis on that then the freedom to flower will gradually wither. We have laid far too much emphasis on examinations and getting good degrees. That is not the main purpose for which these schools were founded, which does not mean that academically the student will be inferior. On the contrary, with the flowering of the teacher as well as the student, career and profession will take their right place. Society, the culture in which we live, encourages and demands that the student must be orientated towards a job and physical security. This has been the constant pressure of all societies; career first and everything else secondary. That is, money first and the complex ways of our daily life second. We are trying to reverse this process because man cannot be happy with money only. When money becomes the dominant factor in life there is

imbalance in our daily activity. So, if I may, I would like all the educators to understand this very seriously and see its full significance. If the educator understands the importance of this, and in his own life has given it its proper place, then he can help the student who is compelled by his parents and society to make a career the most important thing. So I would like with this first letter to emphasise this point and to maintain at all times in these schools a way of life that cultivates the total human being.

As most of our education is the acquisition of knowledge, it is making us more and more mechanical; our minds are functioning along narrow grooves, whether it be scientific, philosophic, religious, business or technological knowledge that we are acquiring. Our ways of life, both at home and outside it, and our specialising in a particular career, are making our minds more and more narrow, limited and incomplete. All this leads to a mechanistic way of life, a mental standardisation, and so gradually the State, even a democratic State, dictates what we should become. Most thoughtful people are naturally aware of this but unfortunately they seem to accept it and live with it. So this has become a danger to freedom.

Freedom is a very complex issue and to understand the complexity of it the flowering of the mind is necessary. Each one will naturally give a different definition of the flowering of man depending on his culture, on his so-called education, experience, religious superstition – that is, on his conditioning. Here we are not dealing with opinion or prejudice, but rather with a non-verbal understanding of the implications and consequences of the flowering of the mind. This flowering is the total unfoldment and cultivation of our minds, our hearts and our physical well-being. That is, to live in complete harmony in which there is no opposition or contradiction between them. The flowering of the mind can

take place only when there is clear perception, objective, non-personal, unburdened by any kind of imposition upon it. It is not what to think but how to think clearly. We have been for centuries, through propaganda and so on, encouraged in what to think. Most modern education is that and not the investigation of the whole movement of thought. The flowering implies freedom; like any plant it requires freedom to grow.

We will deal with this in every letter in different ways during the coming year: with the awakening of the heart, which is not sentimental, romantic or imaginary, but of goodness which is born out of affection and love; and with the cultivation of the body, the right kind of food, proper exercise, which will bring about deep sensitivity. When these three are in complete harmony – that is, the mind, the heart and the body, then the flowering comes naturally, easily and in excellence. This is our job as educators, our responsibility, and teaching is the greatest profession in life.

*15th September, 1978*

Goodness can flower only in freedom. It cannot bloom in the soil of persuasion in any form, nor under compulsion, nor is it the outcome of reward. It does not reveal itself when there is any kind of imitation or conformity, and naturally it cannot exist when there is fear. Goodness shows itself in behaviour and this behaviour is based on sensitivity. This goodness is expressed in action. The whole movement of thought is not goodness. Thought, which is so very complex, must be understood, but the very understanding of it awakens thought to its own limitation.

Goodness has no opposite. Most of us consider goodness as the opposite of the bad or evil and so throughout history in any culture goodness has been considered the other face of that which is brutal. So man has always struggled against evil in order to be good; but goodness can never come into being if there is any form of violence or struggle.

Goodness shows itself in behaviour and action and in relationship. Generally our daily behaviour is based on either the following of certain patterns - mechanical and therefore superficial - or according to very carefully thought-out motive, based on reward or punishment. So our behaviour, consciously or unconsciously, is calculated. This is not good behaviour. When one realises this, not merely intellectually or by putting words together, then out of this total negation comes true behaviour.

Good behaviour is in essence the absence of the self, the me. It shows itself in politeness, in consideration for others, yielding without losing integrity. So behaviour becomes extraordinarily important. It is not a casual affair to be slurred over or a plaything of a sophisticated mind. It comes

out of the depth of your being and is part of your daily existence.

Goodness shows itself in action. We must differentiate between action and behaviour. Probably they are both the same thing but for clarity they must be separated and examined. To act correctly is one of the most difficult things to do. It is very complex and must be examined very closely without impatience or jumping to any conclusion.

In our daily lives action is a continuous movement from the past, broken up occasionally with a new set of conclusions; these conclusions then become the past and one acts accordingly. One acts according to preconceived ideas or ideals, so one is acting always from either accumulated knowledge, which is the past, or from an idealistic future, a utopia.

We accept such action as normal. Is it? We question it after it has taken place or before doing it but this questioning is based on previous conclusions or future reward or punishment. If I do this - I will get that, and so on. So we are now questioning the whole accepted idea of action.

Action takes place after having accumulated knowledge or experience; or we act and learn from that action, pleasant or unpleasant, and this learning again becomes the accumulation of knowledge. So both actions are based on knowledge; they are not different. Knowledge is always the past and so our actions are always mechanical.

Is there an action that is not mechanical, non-repetitive, non-routine and so without regret? This is really important for us to understand for where there is freedom and the flowering of goodness, action can never be mechanical. Writing is mechanical, learning a language, driving a car is mechanical; acquiring any kind of technical knowledge and acting according to that is mechanistic. Again in this mechanical activity there might be a break and in that break a

new conclusion is formed which again becomes mechanical. One must bear in mind constantly that freedom is essential for the beauty of goodness. There is a non-mechanistic action but you have to discover it. You cannot be told about it, you cannot be instructed in it, you cannot learn from examples, for then it becomes imitation and conformity. Then you have lost freedom completely and there is no goodness.

I think that is enough in this letter, but we will continue in our next letter with the flowering of goodness in relationship.

*1st October, 1978*

We must continue, if one may, with the flowering of goodness in all our relationship, whether it is the most intimate or superficial, or in ordinary daily matters. Relationship with another human being is one of the most important things in life. Most of us are not very serious in our relationships, for we are concerned with ourselves first and the other when it is convenient, satisfying or sensually gratifying. We treat relationship from a distance, as it were, and not as something in which we are totally involved.

We hardly ever show ourselves to another, for we are not aware of ourselves fully and what we show to another in relationship is either possessive, dominating or subservient. There is the other and me, two separate entities sustaining a lasting division until death comes. The other is concerned with himself or herself so this division is maintained throughout life. Of course one shows sympathy, affection, general encouragement, but this divisive process goes on. And from this arises unsuitability, the assertion of temperaments and desires, and so there is fear and placation. Sexually there may be coming together but this peculiar almost static relationship of the you and the me is sustained, with the quarrels, the hurts, the jealousies and all the travail. All this is generally considered good relationship.

Now can goodness flower in all this? And yet relationship is life and without some kind of relationship one cannot exist. The hermit, the monk, however they may withdraw from the world, are carrying the world with them. They may deny it; they may suppress; they may torture themselves, but they still remain in some kind of relation with the world, for they are the result of thousands of years of tradition,

superstition and all the knowledge that man has gathered through millenia. So there is no escape from it all.

There is the relationship between the educator and the student. Does the teacher maintain, whether knowingly or unknowingly, this sense of superiority and so always stands on a pedestal, making the student feel inferior, one who has to be taught? Obviously in this there is no relationship. From this arises fear on the part of the student, a sense of pressure and strain, and therefore the student learns, from his youth, this quality of superiority; he is made to feel belittled, and so throughout life he either becomes the aggressor or is continuously yielding and subservient.

A school is a place of leisure where the educator and the one to be educated are both learning. This is the central fact of the school: to learn. We do not mean by leisure having time to oneself, though that is also necessary; it does not mean taking a book and sitting under a tree, or in your bedroom, reading casually. It does not mean a placid state of mind; it certainly does not mean being idle or using time for day-dreaming. Leisure means a mind that is not constantly occupied with something, with a problem, with some enjoyment, with some sensory pleasure. Leisure implies a mind that has infinite time to observe: observe what is happening around one and what is happening within oneself; to have leisure to listen, to see clearly. Leisure implies freedom, which is generally translated as doing as one desires, which is what human beings are doing anyhow, causing a great deal of mischief, misery and confusion. Leisure implies a quiet mind, no motive and so no direction. This is leisure and it is only in this state that the mind can learn, not only science, history, mathematics but also about oneself; and one can learn about oneself in relationship.

Can all this be taught in our schools? Or is it something you read about and either memorise or forget? But when the

teacher and the taught are involved in really understanding the extraordinary importance of relationship then they are establishing in the school a right relationship among themselves. This is part of education, greater than merely teaching academic subjects.

Relationship requires a great deal of intelligence. It cannot be bought in a book or be taught. It is not the accumulated result of great experience. Knowledge is not intelligence. Intelligence can use knowledge. Knowledge can be clever, bright and utilitarian but that is not intelligence. Intelligence comes naturally and easily when the whole nature and structure of relationship is seen. That is why it is important to have leisure so that the man or the woman, the teacher or the student can quietly and seriously talk over their relationship in which their actual reactions, susceptibilities, and barriers are seen, not imagined, not twisted to please each other or suppressed in order to placate the other.

Surely this is the function of a school: to help the student to awaken his intelligence and to learn the great importance of right relationship.

It appears that most people spend a great deal of time in discussing mere verbal clarity and they do not seem to grasp the depth and content beyond the word. In trying to search out verbal clarity they make their minds mechanical, their life superficial and very often contradictory. In these letters we are not concerned with verbal understanding but with the daily facts of our lives. This is the central fact of all these letters; not the verbal explanation of the fact but the fact itself. When we are concerned with verbal clarity, and so a clarity of ideas, our daily life is conceptual and not factual. All the theories, the principles, the ideals are conceptual. Concepts can be dishonest, hypocritical and illusory. One can have any number of concepts or ideals but they have nothing whatsoever to do with the daily happenings of our life. People are nurtured on ideals; the more fanciful they are, the more they are considered noble; but again the understanding of daily events is far more important than ideals. If one's mind is cluttered with concepts, ideals and so on, the fact, the actual happening can never be faced. The concept becomes a block. When all this is very clearly understood - not an intellectual, conceptual understanding - the great importance of facing a fact, the actual, the now, becomes the central factor of our education.

Politics is some kind of universal disease based on concepts, and religion is romantic, imaginary emotionalism. When you observe what is actually going on, all this is an indication of conceptual thinking and an avoidance of the daily misery, confusion and sorrow of our life.

Goodness cannot flower in the field of fear. In this field there are many varieties of fear, the immediate fear and the

fears of many tomorrows. Fear is not a concept, but the explanation of fear is conceptual and these explanations vary from one pundit to another or from one intellectual to another. The explanation is not important but what is, is the facing of the fact of fear.

In all our schools the educator and those responsible for the students, whether in the class, the playing field or their rooms, have the responsibility to see that fear in any form does not arise. The educator must not arouse fear in the student. This is not conceptual because the educator himself understands, not only verbally, that fear in any form cripples the mind, destroys sensitivity, shrinks the senses. Fear is the heavy burden which man has always carried. From this fear arise various forms of superstition – religious, scientific and imaginary. One lives in a make-believe world, and the essence of the conceptual world is born of fear. We said previously that man cannot live without relationship, and this relationship is not only his own private life but, if he is an educator, he has a direct relationship with the student. If there is any kind of fear in this, then the teacher cannot possibly help the student to be free of it. The student comes from a background of fear, of authority, of all kinds of fanciful and actual impressions and pressures. The educator too has his own pressures, fears. He will not be able to bring about the understanding of the nature of fear if he himself has not uncovered the root of his own fears. It is not that he himself must first be free of his own fears in order to help the student to be free, but rather that in their daily relationship, in conversation, in the class, the teacher will point out that he himself is afraid, as is the student too, and so together they can explore the whole nature and structure of fear. It must be pointed out that this is not a confessional on the part of the teacher. He is just stating a fact without any emotional, personal emphasis. It is like having a conversation between

good friends. This requires a certain honesty and humility. Humility is not servility. Humility is not a sense of defeatism; humility knows neither arrogance nor pride. So the teacher has a tremendous responsibility, for it is the greatest of all professions. He is to bring about a new generation in the world, which again is a fact not a concept. You can make a concept of a fact, and so get lost in concepts, but the actual always remains. Facing the actual, the now, and the fear, is the highest function of the educator - not to bring about only academic excellence - but what is far more important, the psychological freedom of the student and himself. When the nature of freedom is understood, then you eliminate all competition; on the playing field, in the classroom. Is it possible to eliminate altogether the comparative evaluation, academically or ethically? Is it possible to help the student not to think competitively in the academic field and yet to have excellence in his studies, his actions and his daily life? Please bear in mind that we are concerned with the flowering of goodness which cannot possibly flower where there is any kind of competitiveness. Competition exists only when there is comparison, and comparison does not bring about excellence. These schools fundamentally exist to help both the student and the teacher to flower in goodness. This demands excellence in behaviour, in action and in relationship. This is our intent and why these schools have come into being; not to turn out mere careerists but to bring about the excellence of spirit.

In our next letter we will continue with the nature of fear; not the word fear but the actual happening of fear.

Knowledge will not lead to intelligence. We accumulate a great deal of knowledge about so many things but to act intelligently about what one has learned seems almost impossible. Schools, colleges and universities cultivate knowledge about our behaviour, about the universe, about science and every form of technological information. These centres of education rarely help a human being to live a daily life of excellence. Scholars maintain that human beings can evolve only through vast accumulations of information and knowledge. Man has lived through thousands and thousands of wars; he has accumulated a great deal of knowledge on how to kill, yet that very knowledge is preventing him from putting an end to all wars. We accept war as a way of life and all the brutalities, violence and killing as the normal course of our life. We know we should not kill another. This knowing is totally irrelevant to the fact of killing. Knowledge does not prevent killing animals and the earth. Knowledge cannot function through intelligence but intelligence can function with knowledge. To know is not to know and the understanding of this fact that knowledge can never solve our human problems is intelligence.

Education in our schools is not only the acquisition of knowledge but what is far more important – the awakening of intelligence which will then utilise knowledge. It is never the other way round. The awakening of intelligence is our concern in all these schools and the inevitable question then arises: how is this intelligence to be awakened? What is the system, what is the method, what is the practice? This very question implies that one is still functioning in the field of knowledge. The realisation that it is a wrong question is the

beginning of the awakening of intelligence. The practice, the method, the system in our daily life make for a matter of routine, a repetitive action and so a mechanical mind. The continuous movement of knowledge, however specialised, puts the mind into a groove, into a narrow way of life. To learn to observe and understand this whole structure of knowledge is to begin to awaken intelligence.

Our minds live in tradition. The very meaning of that word - to hand down - denies intelligence. It is easy and comfortable to follow tradition, whether it is political, religious or self-invented tradition. Then one has not to think about it, one does not question it; it is part of tradition to accept and obey. The older the culture, the more the mind is bound to the past, lives in the past. The breaking down of one tradition will inevitably be followed by the imposition of another. A mind with many centuries of any particular tradition behind it refuses to let the old go and accepts only when there is another tradition equally gratifying and secure. Tradition in all its various forms, from the religious to the academic, must deny intelligence. Intelligence is infinite. Knowledge, however vast, is finite like tradition. In our schools the habit-forming mechanism of the mind must be observed and in this observation the quickening of intelligence is born.

It is part of human tradition to accept fear. We live with fear, both the older and the younger generation. Most are not aware that they live in fear. It is only in a mild form of crisis or in a shattering incident that one becomes aware of this abiding fear. It is there. Some are aware of it, others shy away from it. Tradition says control fear, run away from it, suppress it, analyse it, act upon it, or accept it. We have lived for millenia with fear and we somehow manage to get along with it. This is the nature of tradition - to act upon it or run away from it; or sentimentally accept it and look to some

outside agency to resolve it. Religions spring from this fear, and the politicians' compelling urge for power is born out of this fear. Any form of domination over another is the nature of fear. When a man or a woman possesses another there is fear in the background and this fear destroys every form of relationship.

It is the function of the educator to help the student to face this fear, whether the fear of the parent, of the teacher or of the older boy, or the fear of being alone and the fear of nature. This is the central issue in understanding the nature and structure of fear - to face it. To face it not through the screen of words but to observe the very happening of fear without any movement away from it. The movement away from the fact is to confound the fact. Our tradition, our education, encourages control, acceptance or denial or very clever rationalisation. As the teacher, can you help the student and so yourself to face every problem that arises in life? In learning, there is neither the teacher nor the taught; there is only learning. To learn about the whole movement of fear one must come to it with curiosity which has its own vitality. Like a child who is very curious, in that curiosity there is intensity. It is the path of tradition to conquer what we do not understand, to beat it down, to trample it; or worship it. Tradition is knowledge and the ending of knowledge is the birth of intelligence.

Now, realising there is neither the teacher nor the taught but only the act of learning on the part of the grown-up and the student, can one, through direct perception of what is happening, learn this fear and all about it? You can if you will allow fear to tell its ancient story. Listen to it attentively without interference, for it is telling you the history of your own fear. When you so listen you will discover that this fear is not separate from you. You are that very fear, that very reaction with a word attached to it. The word is not

important. The word is knowledge, the tradition; but the actual, the now that is happening, is something totally new. It is the discovery of the newness of your own fear. Facing the fact of fear, without any movement of thought, is the ending of fear. Not any particular fear but the very root of fear is disintegrated in this observation. There is no observer, only observation.

Fear is a very complex business, as ancient as the hills, ancient as humankind and it has a very extraordinary story to tell. But you must know the art of listening to it and there is great beauty in that listening. There is only listening and the story does not exist.

*15th November, 1978*

The word responsibility should be understood in all its significance. It comes from to respond, to respond not partially but wholly. The word also implies to refer back: respond to your background, which is to refer back to your conditioning. Responsibility is the action, as it is generally understood, of one's human conditioning. One's culture, the society in which one lives, naturally condition the mind, whether that culture is native or foreign. From this background one responds and this response limits our responsibility. If one is born in India, Europe, America or wherever, one's response will be according to religious superstition - all religions are superstitious structures - or nationalism, or scientific theories. These condition one's response and they are always limited, finite. And so there is always contradiction, conflict and the arising of confusion. This is inevitable and it brings about division between human beings. Division in any form must bring about not only conflict and violence but ultimately war.

If one understands the actual meaning of the word responsible and what goes on in the world today, one sees that responsibility has become irresponsible. In understanding what is irresponsible we will begin to comprehend what is responsibility. Responsibility is for the whole, as the word implies, not for oneself, not for one's family, not for some concepts or beliefs, but for the whole of mankind.

Our various cultures have emphasised separateness, called individualism, which has resulted in each one doing what he desires or being committed to his own particular little talent, however profitable or useful that talent may be to society. This does not mean what the totalitarians want one

to believe, that only the State and the authorities who represent the State are important, not human beings. The State is a concept, but a human being, though he lives in it, is not a concept. Fear is an actuality not a concept.

A human being psychologically is the whole of mankind. He not only represents it but he is the whole of the human species. He is essentially the whole psyche of mankind. On this actuality various cultures have imposed the illusion that each human being is different. In this illusion mankind has been caught for centuries and this illusion has become a reality. If one observes closely the whole psychological structure of oneself one will find that as one suffers, so all mankind suffers in various degrees. If you are lonely, the whole humankind knows this loneliness. Agony, jealousy, envy and fear are known to all. So psychologically, inwardly, one is like another human being. There may be differences physically, biologically. One is tall, or short and so on, but basically one is the representative of all mankind. So psychologically you are the world; you are responsible for the whole of mankind, not for yourself as a separate human being, which is psychological illusion. As the representative of the whole human race, your response is whole not partial. So responsibility has a totally different meaning. One has to learn the art of this responsibility. If one grasps the full significance that one is psychologically the world, then responsibility becomes overpowering love. Then one will care for the child, not just at the tender age, but see that he understands the significance of responsibility throughout his life. This art includes behaviour, the ways of one's thinking and the importance of correct action. In these schools of ours responsibility to the earth, to nature and to each other is part of our education – not merely the emphasis on academic subjects though they are necessary.

Then we can ask what is the teacher teaching and what is

the pupil receiving, and more widely – what is learning? What is the educator's function? Is it to teach merely algebra and physics or is it to awaken in the student – and so in himself – this enormous sense of responsibility? Can the two go together? That is, the academic subjects which will help in a career and this responsibility for the whole of mankind and life. Or must they be kept separate? If they are separate, then there will be contradiction in his life; he will become a hypocrite and unconsciously or deliberately keep his life in two definite compartments. Mankind lives in this division. At home he is one way and in the factory or the office he assumes a different face. We have asked if the two can move together. Is this possible? When a question of this kind is put one must investigate the implications of the question and not whether it is or is not possible. So it is of the greatest importance how you approach this question. If you approach it from your limited background – and all conditioning is limited – then it will be a partial grasp of the implications in all this. You must come to this question afresh. Then you will find the futility of the question itself because, as you approach it afresh, you will see that these two meet like two streams making a formidable river which is your life, your daily life of total responsibility.

Is this what you are teaching, realising that the teacher has the greatest of all professions? These are not mere words but an abiding actuality not to be slurred over. If you do not feel the truth of this then you really should have another profession. Then you will live in the illusions that mankind has created for itself.

So we can again ask: what are you teaching and what is the pupil learning? Are you creating that strange atmosphere in which actual learning takes place? If you have understood the enormity of responsibility and the beauty of it, then you are totally responsible for the student – what he wears, what

he eats, the manner of his talk and so on.

From this question arises another: what is learning? Probably most of us have not even asked that question, or if we have asked it, our response has been from tradition, which is accumulated knowledge, a knowledge which functions with skill or without skill to earn our daily living. This is what one has been taught, for which all the usual schools, colleges, universities, etc. exist. Knowledge predominates, which is one of our greatest conditionings, and so the brain is never free from the known. It is always adding to what is already known, and so the brain is put into a strait-jacket of the known and is never free to discover a way of life which may not be based on the known at all. The known makes for a wide or narrow rut and one remains in that rut thinking there is security in it. That security is destroyed by the very finite known. This has been the way of human life up to now.

So is there a way of learning which does not make life into a routine, a narrow groove? Then what is learning? One must be very clear about the ways of knowledge: first to acquire knowledge and then act from that knowledge – technological and psychological, or act, and from that action acquire knowledge? Both are acquisitions of knowledge. Knowledge is the past always. Is there a way of acting without the enormous weight of man's accumulated knowledge? There is. It is not learning as we have known it; it is pure observation – observation which is not continuous and which then becomes memory, but observation from moment to moment. The observer is the essence of knowledge and he imposes on what he observes that which he has acquired through experience and various forms of sensory reaction. The observer is always manipulating that which he observes, and what he observes is always reduced to knowledge. So he is always caught in the old tradition of habit-forming.

So learning is pure observation – not only of the things outside you but also of that which is happening inwardly; to observe without the observer.

*1st December, 1978*

The whole movement of life is learning. There is never a time in which there is no learning. Every action is a movement of learning and every relationship is learning. The accumulation of knowledge, which is called learning and to which we are so accustomed, is necessary to a limited extent, but that limitation prevents us from comprehending ourselves. Knowledge is measurable, more or less, but in learning there is no measure. This is really very important to understand, especially if you are to grasp the full meaning of a religious life. Knowledge is memory and if you have observed the actual, the now is not memory. In observation memory has no place. The actual is what is actually happening. The second later is measurable and this is the way of memory.

To observe the movement of an insect needs attention – that is if you are interested in observing the insect or whatever interests you. This attention again is not measurable. It is the responsibility of the educator to understand the whole nature and structure of memory, to observe this limitation and to help the student to see this. We learn from books or from a teacher who has a great deal of information about a subject and our brains are filled with this information. This information is about things, about nature, about everything outside of us. When we want to learn about ourselves we turn to books that tell about ourselves. So this process goes on endlessly and gradually we become second-hand human beings. This is an observable fact throughout the world and this is our modern education.

The act of learning, as we have pointed out, is the act of pure observation and this observation is not held within the limitation of memory. We learn to earn a living but we never

live. The capacity to earn a living takes most of our life; we have hardly any time for other things. We find time for gossip, to be entertained, to play, but all this is not living. There is a whole field which is the actual living, totally neglected.

To learn the art of living one must have leisure. The word leisure is greatly misunderstood, as we said in our third letter. Generally it means not to be occupied with the things we have to do such as earning a livelihood, going to the office, factory and so on, and only when that is over is there leisure. During that so-called leisure you want to be amused, you want to relax, you want to do the things which you really like or which demand your highest capacity. Your earning a livelihood - whatever you do - is in opposition to so-called leisure. So there is always the strain, the tension and the escape from that tension, and leisure is when you have no strain. During that leisure you pick up a newspaper, open a novel, chatter, play and so on. This is the actual fact. This is what is going on everywhere. Earning a livelihood is the denial of living.

So we come to the question - what is leisure? Leisure, as it is understood, is a respite from the pressure of livelihood. The pressure of earning a living or any pressure imposed on us we generally consider an absence of leisure, but there is a much greater pressure in us, conscious or unconscious, which is desire and we will go into that later.

School is a place of leisure. It is only when you have leisure that you can learn. That is: learning can only take place when there is no pressure of any kind. When a snake or a danger confronts you there is a kind of learning from the pressure of the fact of that danger. The learning under that pressure is the cultivation of memory which will help you to recognise future danger and so becomes a mechanical response.

Leisure implies a mind which is not occupied. It is only then that there is a state of learning. School is a place of learning and not merely a place for accumulating knowledge. This is really important to understand. As we said, knowledge is necessary and has its own limited place in life. Unfortunately this limitation has devoured all our lives and we have no space for learning. We are so occupied with our livelihood that it takes all the energy of the mechanism of thought, so that we are exhausted at the end of the day and need to be stimulated. We recover from this exhaustion through entertainment – religious or otherwise. This is the life of human beings. Human beings have created a society which demands all their time, all their energies, all their life. There is no leisure to learn and so their life becomes mechanical, almost meaningless. So we must be very clear in the understanding of the word leisure – a time, a period, when the mind is not occupied with anything whatsoever. It is the time of observation. It is only the unoccupied mind which can observe. A free observation is the movement of learning. This frees the mind from being mechanical.

So can the teacher, the educator, help the student to understand this whole business of earning a livelihood with all its pressure? – the learning that helps you to acquire a job with all its fears and anxieties and the looking on tomorrow with dread? Because he himself has understood the nature of leisure and pure observation, so that earning a livelihood does not become a torture, a great travail throughout life, can the teacher help the student to have a nonmechanistic mind? It is the absolute responsibility of the teacher to cultivate the flowering of goodness in leisure. For this reason the schools exist. It is the responsibility of the teacher to create a new generation to change the social structure from its total pre-occupation with earning a livelihood. Then teaching becomes a holy act.

*15th December, 1978*

In one of the past letters we said that total responsibility is love. This responsibility is not for a particular nation or a particular group, community, or for a particular deity, or some form of political programme or for your own guru, but for all mankind. This must be deeply understood and felt and this is the responsibility of the educator. Almost all of us feel responsible for our family, children and so on, but do not have the feeling of being wholly concerned and committed to the environment around us, to nature, or totally responsible for our actions. This absolute care is love. Without this love there can be no change in society. The idealists, though they may love their ideal or their concept, have not brought about a radically different society. The revolutionaries, the terrorists, have in no way fundamentally changed the pattern of our societies. The physically violent revolutionaries have talked about freedom for all men, forming a new society, but all the jargons and slogans have further tortured the spirit and existence. They have twisted words to suit their own limited outlook. No form of violence has changed society in its most fundamental sense. Great rulers through the authority of a few have brought about some kind of order in society. Even the totalitarians have superficially established through violence and torture a semblance of order. We are not talking about such an order in society.

We are saying very definitely and most emphatically that it is only the total responsibility for all mankind - which is love - that can basically transform the present state of society. Whatever the existing system may be in various parts of the world it is corrupt, degenerate and wholly immoral. You have only to look around you to see this fact. Millions upon

millions are spent on armaments throughout the world and all the politicians talk about peace while preparing for war. Religions have declared over and over again the sanctity of peace, but they have encouraged wars and subtle kinds of violence and torture. There are innumerable divisions and sects with their priests, rituals and all the nonsense that goes on in the name of god and religion. Where there is division there must be disorder, struggle, conflict – whether religious, political, economic. Our modern society is based on greed, envy and power. When you consider all this as it actually is – this overpowering commercialism – all this indicates degeneration and basic immorality. To radically change the pattern of our life, which is the basis of all society, is the educator's responsibility. We are destroying the earth and all the things on it are being destroyed for our gratification.

Education is not merely the teaching of various academic subjects, but the cultivation of total responsibility in the student. One does not realise as an educator that one is bringing into being a new generation. Most schools are only concerned with imparting knowledge. They are not at all concerned with the transformation of man and his daily life, and you – the educator in these schools – need to have this deep concern and the care of this total responsibility.

In what manner then can you help the student to feel this quality of love with all its excellence? If you do not feel this yourself profoundly, talking about responsibility is meaningless. Can you as an educator feel the truth of this?

Seeing the truth of it will bring about naturally this love and total responsibility. You have to ponder it, observe it daily in your life, in your relations with your wife, your friends, your students. And in your relationship with the students you will talk about this from your heart – not pursue mere verbal clarity. The feeling for this reality is the greatest

gift that man can have and once it is burning in you, you will find the right word, right action and correct behaviour. When you consider the student you will see that he comes to you totally unprepared for all this. He comes to you frightened, nervous, anxious to please or on the defensive, conditioned by his parents and the society in which he has lived his few years. You have to see his background, you have to be concerned with what he actually is and not impose on him your own opinions, conclusions and judgements. In considering what he is it will reveal what you are, and so you will find the student is you.

And now can you in the teaching of mathematics, physics, and so on - which he must know for that is the way of earning a livelihood - convey to the student that he is responsible for the whole of mankind? Though he may be working for his own career, his own way of life, it will not make his mind narrow. He will see the danger of specialisation with all its limitations and strange brutality. You have to help him to see all this. The flowering of goodness does not lie in knowing mathematics and biology or in passing examinations and having a successful career. It exists outside these and when there is this flowering, career and other necessary activities are touched by its beauty. Now we lay emphasis on one and disregard the flowering entirely. In these schools we are trying to bring these two together, not artificially, not as a principle or pattern you are following, but because you see the absolute truth that these two must flow together for the regeneration of man.

Can you do this? - not because you all agree to do it after discussing and coming to a conclusion, but rather see with an inward eye the extraordinary gravity of this: see for yourself. Then what you say will have significance. Then you become a centre of light not lit by another. As you are all of humanity - which is an actuality, not a verbal statement - you

are utterly responsible for the future of man. Please do not consider this as a burden. If you do, that burden is a bundle of words without any reality. It is an illusion. This responsibility has its own gaiety, its own humour, its own movement without the weight of thought.

*1st January, 1979*

It appears that as we are concerned with education, there are two factors we must bear in mind at all times. One is diligence and the other is negligence. Most religions have talked about the activity of the mind, to be controlled, shaped by the will of God, or by some exterior agency; and devotion to some deity, made by the hand or by the mind, needs a certain quality of attention in which emotion, sentiment and romantic imagination are involved. This is the activity of the mind which is thought. The word diligence implies care, watchfulness, observation and a deep sense of freedom. Devotion to an object, a person or a principle denies this freedom. Diligence is attention which brings about naturally infinite care, concern and the freshness of affection. All this demands great sensitivity. One is sensitive to one's own desires or psychological wounds, or one is sensitive to a particular person, watching his desires and responding quickly to his needs; but this kind of sensitivity is very limited and can hardly be called sensitive. The quality of sensitivity of which we are talking comes about naturally when there is total responsibility which is love. Diligence has this quality.

Negligence is indifference, sloth; indifference towards the physical organism, towards the psychological state and indifference to others. In indifference there is callousness. In this stage the mind becomes sluggish, the activity of thought slows down, quickness of perception is denied and sensitivity is a thing that is incomprehensible. Most of us are sometimes diligent but most often negligent. They are not really opposites. If it is, it is still part of negligence and therefore not truly diligent.

Most people are diligent in their own self-interest, whether that self-interest is identified with the family, with a particular group, sect, or nation. In this self-interest there is the seed of negligence although there is constant preoccupation with oneself. This preoccupation is limited and so it is negligence. This preoccupation is energy held within a narrow boundary. Diligence is the freedom from self-occupation and brings an abundance of energy. When one understands the nature of negligence the other comes into being without any struggle. When this is fully understood – not just the verbal definitions of negligence and diligence – then the highest excellence in our thought, action, behaviour will manifest itself. But unfortunately we never demand of ourselves the highest quality of thought, action and behaviour. We hardly ever challenge ourselves and if we ever do, we have various excuses for not responding fully. This indicates does it not, an indolence of mind, the feeble activity of thought? The body can be lazy but never the mind with its quickness of thought and subtlety. Laziness of the body can easily be understood. This laziness may be because one is over-worked or overindulged, or has played games too hard. So the body requires rest which may be considered laziness though it is not. The watchful mind, being alert, sensitive, knows when the organism needs rest and care.

In our schools it is important to understand that the quality of energy which is diligence requires the right kind of food, the right kind of exercise, and enough sleep. Habit, routine, is the enemy of diligence – the habit of thought, of action, of conduct. Thought itself creates its own pattern and lives within it. When that pattern is challenged either it is disregarded or thought creates another pattern of security. This is the movement of thought – from one pattern to another, from one conclusion, one belief, to another. This is the very negligence of thought. The mind that is diligent has

no habit; it has no pattern of response. It is endless movement, never coalescing into habit, never caught in conclusions. Movement has great depth and volume when it has no boundary brought about by the negligence of thought.

As we are now concerned with education, in what manner can the teacher convey this diligence with its sensitivity, with its abundant care in which laziness of the spirit has no place? Of course it is understood that the educator is concerned with this question and sees the importance of diligence throughout the days of his life. If he is, then how will he set about cultivating this flower of diligence? Is he deeply concerned with the student? Does he really take the total responsibility for these young people who are in his charge? Or is he merely there to earn a livelihood, caught in the misery of having little? As we pointed out in previous letters, teaching is the highest capacity of man. You are there and you have the students before you. Is it that you are indifferent? Is it that your own personal troubles at home are wasting your energy?

To carry psychological problems from day to day is an utter waste of time and energy, indicating negligence. A diligent mind meets the problem as it arises, observes the nature of it and resolves it immediately. The carrying over of a psychological problem does not resolve the problem. It is a wastage of energy and the spirit. When you solve the problems as they arise, then you will find there are no problems at all.

So we must come back to the question: as an educator in these or any other schools, can you cultivate this diligence? It is only in this that the flowering of goodness comes into being. It is your total, irrevocable responsibility, and in it is this love which will naturally find a way of helping the student.

15th January, 1979

It is important that the teacher should feel secure both economically and psychologically in these schools. Some teachers may be willing to teach without much concern for their economic position; they may have come for the teachings and for psychological reasons, but every teacher should feel secure in the sense of being at home, cared for, without financial worries. If the teacher himself does not feel secure and therefore not free to give attention to the student and his security, he will not be able to be totally responsible. If the teacher is not in himself happy, his attention will be divided and he will be incapable of exercising his entire capacity.

So it becomes important that we choose the right teachers, inviting each one to stay for some time at our schools to find out whether he or she can happily join in what is being done. This must be mutual. Then the teacher, being happy, secure, feeling that he is at home, can create in the student this quality of security, this feeling that the school is his home.

Feeling at home implies, does it not, that there is no sense of fear, that he is protected physically, cared for and free? Protection, though the student may object to the idea of being protected, guarded, does not mean that he is held in a prison, confined and critically watched. Freedom obviously does not mean to do what one likes and it is equally obvious that one can never totally do what one likes. The attempt to do what one likes - so called individual freedom, which is to choose a course of action according to one's desire - has brought about social and economic confusion in the world. The reaction to this confusion is totalitarianism.

Freedom is a very complex affair. One must approach it

with utmost attention, for freedom is not the opposite of bondage or an escape from the circumstances in which one is caught. It is not from something, or avoidance of constraint. Freedom has no opposite; it is of itself, per se. The very understanding of the nature of freedom is the awakening of intelligence. It is not an adjustment to what is, but the understanding of what is and so going beyond it. If the teacher does not understand the nature of freedom he will only impose his prejudices, his limitations, his conclusions on the student. Thus the student will naturally resist or accept through fear, becoming a conventional human being, whether timid or aggressive. It is only in the understanding of this freedom of living - not the idea of it or the verbal acceptance of it which becomes a slogan - that the mind is free to learn.

A school, after all, is a place where the student is basically happy, not bullied, not frightened by examinations, not compelled to act according to a pattern, a system. It is a place where the art of learning is being taught. If the student is not happy he is incapable of learning this art.

Memorising, recording information, is considered learning. This brings about a mind that is limited and therefore heavily conditioned. The art of learning is to give the right place to information, to act skilfully according to what is learned, but at the same time not to be psychologically bound by the limitations of knowledge and the images or symbols that thought creates. Art implies putting everything in its right place, not according to some ideal. The understanding of the mechanism of ideals and conclusions is to learn the art of observation. A concept put together by thought, either in the future or according to the past, is an ideal - an idea projected or a remembrance. It is a shadow-play, making an abstraction of the actual. This abstraction is an avoidance of what is happening now. This escape from the fact is unhappiness.

Now can we as teachers help the student to be happy in the real sense? Can we help him to be concerned with what is actually going on? This is attention. The student watching a leaf fluttering in the sun is being attentive. To force him back to the book at that moment is to discourage attention; whereas to help him to watch that leaf fully makes him aware of the depth of attention in which there is no distraction. In the same way, because he has just seen what attention implies, he will be able to turn to the book or whatever is being taught. In this attention there is no compulsion, no conformity. It is the freedom in which there is total observation. Can the teacher himself have this quality of attention? Then only can he help another.

For the most part we struggle against distractions. There are no distractions. Suppose you day-dream or your mind is wandering; that is what is actually taking place. Observe that. That observation is attention. So there is no distraction.

Can this be taught to the students, can this art be learned? You are totally responsible for the student; you must create this atmosphere of learning, a seriousness in which there is a sense of freedom and happiness.

*1st February, 1979*

As we have already pointed out several times in these letters, the schools exist primarily to bring about a profound transformation in human beings. The educator is wholly responsible for this. Unless the teacher realises this central factor he will be merely instructing the student to become a businessman, an engineer, a lawyer, or a politician. There are so many of these who seem to be incapable of transforming either themselves or their society. Perhaps in the present structure of society lawyers and businessmen may be necessary, but when these schools came into being the intention was, and remains, to transform man profoundly. The teachers in these schools should really understand this, not intellectually, not as an idea, but because they see the full implication of this with their whole being. We are concerned with the total development of a human being, not merely with accumulating knowledge.

Ideas and ideals are one thing, and fact, the actual happening, is another. The two can never come together. Ideals have been imposed upon facts and twist what is happening to conform to what should be, the ideal. The utopia is a conclusion drawn from what is happening and sacrifices the actual to conform to that which has been idealised. This has been the process for millenia and every student and all the intellectuals revel in ideations. The avoidance of what is, is the beginning of the corruption of the mind. This corruption pervades all religions, politics and education, all human relationships. The understanding of this process of avoidance and the going beyond it is our concern.

Ideals corrupt the mind: they are born of ideas, judge-

ments and hope. Ideas are abstractions of what is and any idea or conclusions about what is actually happening distorts what is happening, and so corruption takes place. It takes away attention from the fact, what is, and so directs attention to the fanciful. This movement away from the fact makes for symbols, images, which then take on all-consuming importance. This movement away from the fact is corruption of the mind. Human beings indulge in this movement in conversation, in their relationships, in almost everything they do. The fact is instantly translated into an idea or a conclusion which then dictates our reactions. When something is seen, thought immediately makes a counterpart and that becomes the real. You see a dog and instantly thought turns to whatever image you may have about dogs, and so you never see the dog.

Can this be taught to the students: to remain with the fact, the actual happening now, whether psychologically or externally? Knowledge is not the fact; it is about the fact and that has its proper place, but knowledge prevents perception of what actually is; then corruption takes place.

This is really very important to understand. Ideals are considered noble, exalted, of great purposeful significance, and what is actually happening is considered merely sensory, worldly and of lesser value. Schools the world over have some exalted purpose, ideal; so they are educating the students in corruption.

What corrupts the mind? We are using the word mind to imply the senses, the capacity to think, and the brain that stores all memories and experiences as knowledge. This total movement is the mind. The conscious as well as the unconscious, the so-called super-consciousness - the whole of this is the mind. We are asking what are the factors, the seeds of corruption in all this? We said ideals corrupt. Knowledge also corrupts the mind. Knowledge, particular or

extensive, is the movement of the past, and when the past overshadows the actual, corruption takes place. Knowledge, projected into the future and directing what is happening now, is corruption. We are using the word corruption to mean that which is being broken up, that which is not taken as a whole. The fact can never be broken up; the fact can never be limited by knowledge. The completeness of the fact opens the door to infinity. Completeness cannot be divided; it is not self-contradictory; it cannot divide itself. Completeness, wholeness, is infinite movement.

Imitation, conformity, is one of the great factors of corruption of the mind; the example, the hero, the saviour, the guru, is the most destructive factor of corruption. To follow, to obey, to conform, deny freedom. Freedom is from the beginning, not at the end. It is not to conform, to imitate, accept first and eventually find freedom. That is the spirit of totalitarianism, whether of the guru or the priest. This is the cruelty, the ruthlessness, of the dictator, of the authority, of the guru or of the high priest.

So authority is corruption. Authority is the breaking up of integrity, the whole, the complete – the authority of a teacher in a school, the authority of a purpose, of an ideal, of the one who says I know, the authority of an institution. The pressure of authority in any form is the distorting factor of corrupting. Authority basically denies freedom. It is the function of a true teacher to instruct, point out, inform, without the corrupting influence of authority. The authority of comparison destroys. When one student is compared to another, both are being hurt. To live without comparison is to have integrity.

Will you, the teacher, do this?

*15th February, 1979*

It seems that human beings have enormous amounts of energy. They have been to the moon, have climbed the highest peaks of the earth, they have had prodigious energy for wars, for the instruments of war, and great energy for technological development, to accumulate the vast knowledge that man has gathered, to work every day, energy to build the pyramids and to explore the atom. When one considers all this it is striking to realise the energy man has expended. This energy has gone into the investigation of external things, but man has given very little energy to enquiring into the whole psychological structure of himself. Energy is needed, both externally and inwardly, to act or to be totally silent.

Action and non-action require great energy. We have used energy positively in wars, in writing books, in surgical operations, and to work beneath the seas. Non-action requires far more action than the so-called positive. Positive action is to control, to support, to escape. Non-action is the total attention of observation. In this observation that which is being observed undergoes a transformation. This silent observation demands not only physical energy but also a deep psychological energy. We are used to the former and this conditioning limits our energy. In a complete, silent observation, which is non-action, there is no expenditure of energy and so energy is limitless.

Non-action is not the opposite of action. Going to work daily, year after year for so many years, which may be necessary as things are, does limit, but not working does not mean you will have boundless energy. The very slothfulness of the mind is a wastage of energy, as is the laziness of the

body. Our education in any field narrows down this energy. Our way of life, which is a constant struggle to become or not to become, is the dissipation of energy.

Energy is timeless and is not to be measured. But our actions are measurable and so we bring down this limitless energy to the narrow circle of the me. And having confined it, we then search for the immeasurable. This searching is part of positive action and therefore a wastage of psychological energy. So there is a never-ending movement within the archives of the me.

What we are concerned with in education is to free the mind of the me. As we have said on several occasions in these letters, it is our function to bring about a new generation free of this limited energy which is called the me. It must be repeated again that these schools exist to bring this about.

In our previous letter we talked about the corruption of the mind. The root of this corruption is the me. The me is the image, the picture, the world that is passed from generation to generation, and one has to contend with this weight of tradition of the me. It is the fact – not the consequence of this fact or how the fact has come into being – which is fairly easy to explain; but to observe the fact with all its reactions, without motive which distorts the fact, is negative action. This then transforms the fact. It is important to understand this very deeply; not to act upon the fact but to observe what is.

Every human being is wounded both psychologically and physically. It is comparatively easy to deal with the physical pain but the psychological pain remains hidden. The consequence of this psychological wound is to build a wall around oneself, to resist further pain and so become fearful or withdraw into isolation. The wound has been caused by the image of the me with its limited energy. Because it is limited it is hurt. That which is not measurable can never be

damaged, can never be corrupted. Anything that is limited can be hurt but that which is whole is beyond the reach of thought.

Can the educator help the student never to be psychologically wounded, not only while he is part of the school but throughout his life? If the educator sees the great damage that comes from this wound, then how will he educate the student? What will he actually do to see that the student is never hurt throughout his life? The student comes to the school already having been hurt. Probably he is unaware of this hurt. The teacher by observing his reactions, his fears and aggressiveness, will discover the damage that has been done. So he has two problems: to free the student from past damage and prevent future wounds. Is this your concern? Or do you merely read this letter, understand it intellectually, which is no understanding at all, and so are not concerned with the student? But if you are concerned, as you should be, what will you do with this fact - that he is wounded and you must prevent at all costs any further hurts? How do you approach this problem? What is the state of your mind when you face this problem? It is also your problem, not only the student's. You are hurt and so is the student. So you are both concerned: it is not a one-sided problem; you are as much involved as the student. This involvement is the central factor which you must face, observe. Merely to have a desire to be free of your past wound and hope never to be hurt again is a wastage of energy. Complete attention, the observation of this fact will not only tell the story of the wound itself, but this very attention dispels, wipes away the hurt.

So attention is this vast energy which can never be wounded or corrupted. Please do not accept what is said in these letters. Acceptance is the destruction of truth. Test it - not at some future date, but test it as you read this letter. When you test it, not casually but with all your heart and

being, then you will discover yourself the truth of the matter. And then only will you be able to help the student to wipe away the past and have a mind that is incapable of being hurt.

*1st March, 1979*

These letters are written in a friendly spirit. They are not intended to dominate your way of thinking or to persuade you to conform to the way the writer thinks or feels. They are not propaganda. It is really a dialogue between you and the writer, two friends talking over their problems, and in good friendship there is never any sense of competition or domination. You too must have observed the state of the world and our society, and that there must be a radical transformation in the way human beings live, their relation to each other, their relation with the world as a whole and in every way possible. We are talking to each other, both being deeply concerned, not only with our own particular selves, but also with the students for whom you are wholly responsible. The teacher is the most important person in a school, for on her or him depends the future welfare of mankind. This is not a mere verbal statement. This is an absolute and irrevocable fact. Only when the educator himself feels the dignity and the respect implicit in his work, will he be aware that teaching is the highest calling, greater than that of the politician, greater than the princes of the world. The writer means every word of this and so please do not brush it aside as exaggeration or an attempt to make you feel a false importance. You and the students must flower together in goodness.

We have been pointing out the corrupting or the degenerating factors of the mind. As the society is disintegrating, these schools must be centres for the regeneration of the mind. Not of thought. Thought can never be regenerated for thought is always limited, but the regeneration of the totality of the mind is possible. This

possibility is not conceptual but actual when one has examined deeply the ways of the degeneration. In the previous letters we have explored some of these ways.

We must now investigate also the destructive nature of tradition, of habit and the repetitive ways of thought. To follow, accepting tradition, seems to give a certain security to one's life, the outer as well as the inner. The search for security in every possible way has been the motive, the driving power of most of our actions. The demand for psychological security overshadows the physical security and so makes physical security uncertain. This psychological security is the basis of tradition passed on from one generation to another through words, through rituals, beliefs - whether religious, political or sociological. We seldom question the accepted norm but when we do question we invariably fall into a trap in a new pattern. This has been our way of life: reject one and accept another. The new is more enticing and the old is left to the passing generation. But both generations are caught in patterns, in systems, and this is the movement of tradition. The very word implies conformity, whether modern or ancient. There is no good or bad tradition: there is only tradition, the vain repetition of ritual in all the churches, temples and mosques. They are utterly meaningless, but emotion, sentiment, romanticism, imagination lend them colour and illusion. This is the nature of superstition and every priest in the world encourages it. This process of indulging in things that have no meaning or investing in things without significance is a wastage of energy which degenerates the mind. One has to be deeply aware of these facts and that very attention dissolves all illusions.

Then there is habit. There are no good habits or bad; only habit. Habit implies a repetitive action which arises from not being aware. One falls into habits deliberately or is

persuaded through propaganda; or, being afraid, one falls into self-protective reflexes. It is the same with pleasure. This following of a routine, however effective or necessary in daily life, can lead, and generally does, to a mechanistic way of living. One can do the same thing at the same hour every day without its becoming a habit when there is an awareness of what is being done. Attention dispels habit. It is only when there is no attention that habits are formed. You can get up at the same time every morning and you know why you are getting up. This awareness may appear to another as a habit, good or bad, but actually for the one who is aware, is attentive, there is no habit at all. We fall into psychological habits or routine because we think it is the most comfortable way of living, and when you observe closely even with the habits formed in relationship, personal or other, there is a certain quality of indolence, carelessness and disregard. All this gives a false sense of intimacy, security and facile cruelty. There is every danger in habit: the habit of smoking, the repetitive action, the employment of words, thought or behaviour. This makes the mind utterly insensitive and the degenerating process is to find some form of illusory security such as a nation, a belief or an ideal and cling to it. All these factors are very destructive to real security. We live in a make-believe world which has become a reality. To question this illusion is to become either a revolutionary or to embrace permissiveness. Both these are factors of degeneration.

After all, the brain with its extraordinary capacities has been conditioned from generation to generation into accepting this fallacious security, which has now become a deep-rooted habit. To break down this habit we go through various forms of torture, multiple escapes, or throw ourselves into some idealistic utopia and so on. It is the problem of the educator to investigate, and his creative

capacity lies in observing very closely his deep-rooted conditioning and that of the student. This is a mutual process: not that you investigate your conditioning first and then inform the other of your discoveries, but explore together and find the truth of the matter. This demands a certain quality of patience; not the patience of time but perseverance and the diligent care of total responsibility.

*15th March, 1979*

We have become far too clever. Our brains have been trained to become verbally, intellectually, very bright. They are crammed with a great deal of information and we use this for a profitable career. A clever, intellectual person is praised, shown honour. Such people seem to usurp all the important places in the world: they have power, position, prestige. But their cleverness betrays them at the end. In their hearts they never know what love is or deep charity and generosity, for they are enclosed in their vanity and arrogance. This has become the pattern of all the highly endowed schools. A boy or girl, accepted in the conventional school, gets trapped in modern civilisation and is lost to the whole beauty of life.

When you wander through the woods with heavy shadows and dappled light and suddenly come upon an open space, a green meadow surrounded by stately trees, or a sparkling stream, you wonder why man has lost his relationship to nature and the beauty of the earth, the fallen leaf and the broken branch. If you have lost touch with nature, then you will inevitably lose relationship with another. Nature is not just the flowers, the lovely green lawn or the flowing waters in your little garden, but the whole earth with all the things on it. We consider that nature exists for our use, for our convenience, and so lose communion with the earth. This sensitivity to the fallen leaf and to the tall tree on a hill is far more important than all the passing of examinations and having a bright career. Those are not the whole of life. Life is like a vast river with a great volume of water without a beginning or an ending. We take out of that fast-running current a bucket of water and that confined water becomes our life. This is our conditioning and our everlasting sorrow.

The movement of thought is not beauty. Thought can create what appears to be beautiful - the painting, the marble figure or a lovely poem - but this is not beauty. Beauty is supreme sensitivity, not to the sense of one's own pains and anxieties, but in encompassing the whole existence of man. There is beauty only when the current of the me has completely dried up. When the me is not, beauty is. With the abandonment of the self the passion of beauty comes into being.

We have been talking over together in these letters the degeneration of the mind. We have pointed out for your examination and investigation some of the ways of this deterioration. One of its basic activities is thought. Thought is a breaking up of the wholeness of the mind. The whole contains the part, but the part can never be that which is complete. Thought is the most active part of our life. Feeling goes with thought. Essentially they are one though we tend to separate them. Having separated them we give great importance to feeling, to sentiment, to romanticism and devotion, but thought, like a string in a necklace, weaves itself through them all, hidden, alive, controlling and shaping. It is always there, though we like to think our deep emotions are essentially different. In this lies great illusion, a deception that is highly regarded and leads to dishonesty.

As we said, thought is the actuality of our daily life. All so-called sacred books are the product of thought. They may be revered as revelation but they are essentially thought. Thought has put together the turbine and the great temples of the earth, the rocket, and the enmity in men. Thought has been responsible for wars, for the language one uses and the image made by hand or by the mind. Thought dominates relationship. Thought has described what love is, the heavens and the pain of misery. Man worships thought, admires its subtleties, its cunning, its violence, its cruelties

for a cause. Thought has brought great advances in technology and with it a capacity for destruction. This has been the story of thought, repeated throughout the centuries.

Why has humanity given such extraordinary importance to thought? Is it because it is the only thing we have, even though it is activated through senses? Is it because thought has been able to dominate nature, dominate its surroundings, has brought about some physical security? Is it because it is the greatest instrument through which man operates, lives and benefits? Is it because thought has made the gods, the saviours, the super-consciousness, forgetting the anxiety, the fear, the sorrow, the envy, the guilt? Is it because it holds people together as a nation, as a group, as a sect? Is it because it offers hope to a dark life? Is it because it gives an opening to escape from the daily boring ways of our life? Is it because not knowing what the future is, it offers the security of the past, its arrogance, its insistence on experience? Is it because in knowledge there is stability, the avoidance of fear in the certainty of the known? Is it because thought in itself has assumed an invulnerable position, taken a stand against the unknown? Is it because love is unaccountable, not measurable, while thought is measured and resists the changeless movement of love?

We have never questioned the very nature of thought. We have accepted thought as inevitable, as our eyes and legs. We have never probed to the very depth of thought: and because we have never questioned it, it has assumed pre-eminence. It is the tyrant of our life and tyrants are rarely challenged.

So as educators we are going to expose it to the bright light of observation. The light of observation not only instantly dispels illusion but the clarity of its light reveals the tiniest detail of that which is being observed. As we said, observation is not from a fixed point, from a belief, prejudice or conclusion. Opinion is a rather shoddy affair and so also is

experience. The man of experience is a dangerous person because he is caught in the prison of his own knowledge.

So can you observe with extraordinary clarity the whole movement of thought? This light is freedom: it does not mean that you have captured it and employed it for your convenience and benefit. The very observation of thought is the observation of your whole being and this very being is put together by thought. As thought is finite, limited, so are you.

*1st April, 1979*

We are still concerned with the wholeness of the mind. The mind includes the senses, the erratic emotions, the capacity of the brain and ever-restless thought. All this is the mind, including various attributes of consciousness. When the whole mind is in operation it is boundless, it has great energy and action without the shadow of regret and promise of reward. This quality of mind, this wholeness, is intelligence. Can this intelligence be conveyed to the student and help her or him to quickly grasp its significance? Surely it is the responsibility of the educator to bring this about.

The capacity of thought is shaped and controlled by desire and so the capacity is narrowed down. This capacity is limited by the movement of desire: desire is the essence of sensation. Ambition limits the capacity of the brain, which is thought. This capacity is restricted by social and economic demands or by one's own experience and motive. It is narrowed down by an ideal, by the sanctions of various religious beliefs, by unending fear. Fear is not separate from pleasure.

Desire - the essence of sensation - is shaped by environment, by tradition, by our own inclinations and temperament. And thus capacity or action that demands total energy is conditioned according to our comfort and pleasure. Desire is a compelling factor in our life, not to be suppressed or evaded, not to be cajoled and reasoned with, but rather to be understood. This understanding can only come into being through the investigation of desire and the observation of its movement. Knowing the impelling fire of desire, most religious and sectarian prohibitions have made it into something that must be suppressed, controlled or

surrendered – handed over, as it were, to a deity or a principle. The innumerable vows that people have taken totally to deny desire have in no way burned it out. It is there.

So we must approach it differently, bearing in mind that intelligence is not awakened by desire. A desire to go to the moon brings about enormous technical knowledge, but that knowledge is limited intelligence. Knowledge is always specialised and therefore incomplete, whereas we are talking of intelligence which is the movement of the wholeness of the mind. It is with this intelligence that we are concerned and with the awakening of it in both the educator and the student.

As we said earlier, capacity is limited by desire. Desire is sensation, the sensation of new experience, of new forms of excitement, the sensation of climbing the highest peaks on earth, the sensation of power, of status. All this limits the energy of the brain. Desire gives the illusion of security, and the brain, which needs security, encourages and sustains every form of desire. So if we do not understand the place of desire, it brings about degeneration of the mind. This is really important to understand.

Thought is the movement of this desire. Curiosity to discover is urged by desire for greater sensations and the illusory certainty of security. Curiosity has brought about the enormous amount of knowledge which has its importance in our daily life. Curiosity has significance in observation.

Thought may be the central factor of degeneration of the mind, whereas insight opens the door to the wholeness of action. We will go into the full meaning of insight in the next letter but for now we must consider whether thought is a destructive factor to the wholeness of the mind. We have made the statement that it is. Do not accept it until you have thoroughly, freely examined it.

What we mean by wholeness of the mind is infinite

capacity and its total emptiness in which there is immeasurable energy. Thought by its very nature being limited, imposes its narrowness on the whole, and so thought is always in the forefront. Thought is limited because it is the outcome of memory and knowledge accumulated through experience. Knowledge is the past and that which has been is always limited. Remembrance may project a future. That future is tied to the past, so thought is always limited. Thought is measurable – the more and the less, the larger, the smaller. This measurement is the movement of time: I have been, I shall be. So thought when it predominates, however subtle, cunning and vital, perverts the wholeness and we have given to thought the greatest importance.

If one may ask, after having read this letter, have you grasped the significance of the nature of thought and the wholeness of the mind? And if you have, can you convey this to the student who is your total responsibility? This is a difficult matter. If you have no light you cannot help another to have it. You may explain very clearly or define it in chosen words, but it will not have the passion of truth.

*15th April, 1979*

Any form of conflict, struggle, corrupts the mind – the mind being the wholeness of all our existence. This quality is destroyed when there is any kind of friction, any kind of contradiction. As most of us live in a perpetual state of contradiction and conflict, this lack of completeness makes for degeneration. We are concerned here to discover for ourselves whether it is at all possible to bring an end to these degenerating factors. Perhaps most of us have never thought about this; we have accepted it as a normal way of life. We have convinced ourselves that conflict brings growth – as competition – and we have various explanations for this: the tree struggles in the forest for light, the baby just born struggles for breath, the mother labours to deliver. We are conditioned to accept this and to live in this manner. This has been the way of our life for generations and any suggestion that perhaps there might be a way of life without conflict seems quite incredible. You may listen to this as some idealistic nonsense or reject it out of hand, but you never consider whether there is any significance in the statement that it is possible to live a life without a shadow of conflict. When we are concerned with the integrity and responsibility of bringing about a new generation, which as educators is the only function we have, can you investigate this fact? And in the very process of educating can you convey to the student what you are discovering for yourself?

Conflict in any form is an indication of resistance. In a fast-flowing river there is no resistance; it flows around big boulders, through villages and towns. Man controls it for his own purpose. Freedom after all implies, does it not, the absence of the resistance that thought has built around itself?

Honesty is a very complex affair. What are you honest about and for what reason? Can you be honest with yourself and so be fair to another? When one says to oneself that one must be honest, is that possible? Is honesty a matter of ideals? Can an idealist ever be honest? He is living in a future carved out of the past; he is caught between that which has been and that which ought to be and so he can never be honest. Can you be honest with yourself? Is that possible? You are the centre of various activities, sometimes contradictory; of various thoughts, feelings and desires which are always in opposition to each other. Which is the honest desire or thought and which is not? These are not mere rhetorical questions or clever arguments. It is very important to find out what it means to be totally honest because we are going to deal with insight and the immediacy of action. It is utterly important, if we would grasp the depth of insight, to have this quality of complete integrity, that integrity which is the honesty of the whole.

One may be honest about an ideal, a principle or an ingrained belief. Surely this is not honesty. Honesty can only be when there is no conflict of duality, when the opposite does not exist. There is darkness and light, night and day; there is man, woman, the tall, the short and so on, but it is thought that makes them opposites, puts them in contradiction. We are expressing the psychological contradiction that mankind has cultivated. Love is not the opposite of hate or jealousy. If it were, it would not be love. Humility is not the opposite of vanity or pride and arrogance. If it were, it would still be part of arrogance and pride and so not humility. Humility is totally divorced from all this. A mind that is humble is unaware of its humility. So honesty is not the opposite of dishonesty.

One can be sincere in one's belief or in one's concept but that sincerity breeds conflict and where there is conflict

there can be no honesty. So we are asking can you be honest to yourself? Yourself is a mixture of many movements crossing each other, dominating each other and rarely flowing together. When all these movements flow together then there is honesty. Again there is the separation between the conscious and unconscious, god and the devil; thought has brought about this division and the conflict that exists between these divisions. Goodness has no opposite.

With this new understanding of what honesty is, can we proceed with the investigation of what is insight? This is utterly important because this may be the factor that may revolutionise our action and may bring about a transformation in the brain itself. We have said that our way of life has become mechanistic: the past with all the accumulated experience and knowledge, which is the source of thought, is directing, shaping all action. The past and the future are interrelated and inseparable and the very process of thinking is based upon this. Thought is ever limited, finite; though it may pretend to reach heaven, that very heaven is within the frame of thought. Memory is measurable, as time is. This movement of thought can never be fresh, new, original. So action based on thought must ever be broken up, incomplete, contradictory. This whole movement of thought must be deeply understood with its relative place in the necessities of life, things that must be remembered. Then what is action which is not the continuance of remembrance? It is insight.

Insight is not the careful deduction of thought, the analytical process of thought or the time-binding nature of memory. It is perception without the perceiver; it is instantaneous. From this insight action takes place. From this insight the explanation of any problem is accurate, final and true. There are no regrets, no reactions. It is absolute. There can be no insight without the quality of love. Insight is

not an intellectual affair to be argued and patented. This love is the highest form of sensitivity – when all the senses are flowering together. Without this sensitivity – not to be caught in one's desires, problems and all the pettiness of one's own life – insight is obviously quite impossible.

Insight is holistic. Holistic implies the whole, the whole of the mind. The mind is all the experience of humanity, the vast accumulated knowledge with its technical skills, with its sorrows, anxiety, pain, grief and loneliness. But insight is beyond all this. Freedom from sorrow, from grief, from loneliness, is essential for insight to be. Insight is not a continuous movement. It cannot be captured by thought. Insight is supreme intelligence and this intelligence employs thought as a tool. Insight is intelligence with its beauty and love. They are really inseparable: they are actually one. This is the whole which is the most sacred.

*1st May, 1979*

After all, the school is a place where one learns not only the knowledge required for daily life but also the art of living with all its complexities and subtleties. We seem to forget this and become totally caught up in the superficiality of knowledge. Knowledge is always superficial and learning the art of living is not thought necessary. Living is not considered an art. When one leaves school one stops learning and continues to live on that which one has accumulated as knowledge. We never consider that life is a whole process of learning. As one observes life, daily living is a constant change and movement and one's mind is not quick and sensitive enough to follow its subtleties. One comes to it with ready-made reactions and fixations. Can this be prevented in these schools? It does not mean that one must have an open mind. Generally the open mind is like a sieve retaining little or nothing. But a mind that is capable of quick perception and action is necessary. That is why we went into the question of insight with its immediacy of action. Insight does not leave the scar of memory. Generally experience, as it is understood, leaves its residue as memory and from this residue one acts. Thus action strengthens the residue and so action becomes mechanical. Insight is not a mechanistic activity. So can it be taught in the school that daily life is a constant process of learning and action in relationship without strengthening the residue which is memory? With most of us the scar becomes all-important and we lose the swift current of life.

Both the student and the educator live in a state of confusion and disorder, both outwardly and inwardly. One may not be aware of this fact and if one is, one quickly puts

order into outward things but one is rarely aware of inner confusion and disorder.

God is disorder. Consider the innumerable gods man has invented, or the one god, the one saviour, and observe the confusion this has created in the world, the wars it has brought about, the innumerable divisions, the separating beliefs, symbols and images. Isn't this confusion and disorder? We have become accustomed to this, we accept it readily, for our life is so wearisome with boredom and pain that we seek comfort in the gods that thought has conjured up. This has been our way of life for thousands of years. Every civilisation has invented gods and they have been the source of great tyranny, wars and destruction. Their buildings may be extraordinarily beautiful but inside there is darkness and the source of confusion.

Can one put aside these gods? One must if one is to consider why the human mind accepts and lives in disorder politically, religiously and economically. What is the source of this disorder, the actuality of it, not the theological reason? Can one put aside the concepts of disorder and be free to enquire into the actual daily source of our disorder, not into what order is but disorder? We can only find out what is absolute order when we have thoroughly investigated disorder and its source. We are so eager to find out what order is, so impatient with disorder that we are apt to suppress it, thinking thereby to bring about order. Here we are not only asking if there can be absolute order in our daily life but also whether this confusion can end.

So our first concern is with disorder and what is its source. Is it thought? Is it contradictory desires? Is it fear and the search for security? Is it the constant demand for pleasure? Is thought one of the sources or the main reason for the disorder? It is not merely the writer but you who are asking these questions, so please bear this in mind all the time. You

must discover the source, not be told the source and then verbally repeat.

Thought, as we have pointed out, is finite, limited, and whatever is limited, however wide its activities may be, inevitably brings confusion. That which is limited is divisive and therefore destructive and confusing. We have gone sufficiently into the nature and structure of thought, and to have an insight into the nature of thought is to give it its right place and so it loses its overpowering domination.

Is desire and the changing objects of desire one of the causes of our disorder? To suppress desire is to suppress all sensation - which is to paralyse the mind. We think this is the easy and quickest way to end desire but one cannot suppress it; it is much too strong, much too subtle. You cannot grasp it in your hand and twist it according to your wish - which is another desire. We have talked about desire in a previous letter. Desire can never be suppressed or transmuted or corrupted by the right and wrong desire. It remains always sensation and desire, whatever you do about it. Desire for enlightenment and desire for money are the same, though the objects vary. Can one live without desire? Or to put it differently, can the senses be supremely active without desire coming into it. There are sensory activities both psychological and physical. The body seeks warmth, food, sex; there is physical pain and so on. These sensations are natural but when they enter into the psychological field, the trouble begins. And therein lies our confusion. This is important to understand, especially when we are young. To observe the physical sensations without suppression or exaggeration and to be alert, watchful that they do not seep into the psychological inner realm where they don't belong - therein lies our difficulty. The whole process happens so quickly because we do not see this, have not understood it, have never really examined what actually takes place.

There is immediate sensory response to challenge. This response is natural and is not under the domination of thought, of desire. Our difficulty begins when these sensory responses enter into the psychological realm. The challenge may be a woman or man or something pleasant, appetising; or a lovely garden. The response to this is sensation and when this sensation enters the psychological fields desire begins and thought with its images seeks the fulfilment of desire.

Our question is how to prevent the natural physical responses from entering into the psychological? Is this possible? It is possible only when you observe the nature of the challenge with great attention and watch carefully the responses. This total attention will prevent the physical responses entering into the inward psyche.

We are concerned with desire and the understanding of it, not the brutalising factor of suppressing, avoiding or sublimating. You cannot live without desire. When you are hungry you need food. But to understand, which is to investigate the whole activity of desire, is to give it its right place. Thus it will not be a source of disorder in our daily life.

*15th May, 1979*

What man has done to man has no limit. He has tortured him, he has burned him, he has killed him, he has exploited him in every possible way – religious, political, economic. This has been the story of man to man; the clever exploit the stupid, the ignorant. All philosophies are intellectual and therefore not whole. These philosophies have enslaved man. They have invented what society should be and sacrificed man to their concepts; the ideals of the so-called thinkers have dehumanised man. Exploitation of another – man or woman – seems to be the way of our daily life. We use each other and each accepts this usage. Out of this peculiar relationship dependence arises with all its misery, confusion and the agony that is inherent in dependence. Man has been both inwardly and outwardly so treacherous to himself and to others, and how can there be love in these circumstances?

So it becomes very important for the educator to feel total responsibility in his personal relationship not only to the student but to the whole of mankind. He is mankind. If he does not feel responsible for himself totally, then he will be incapable of feeling this passion of total responsibility which is love. Do you as an educator feel this responsibility? If not – why not? You may feel responsible for your own wife, husband or children and may disregard or feel no responsibility for another. But if you feel responsible in yourself completely you cannot but be responsible for the whole of man.

This question – why you do not feel responsible for another is very important. Responsibility is not an emotional reaction, not something you impose upon yourself - to feel responsible. Then it becomes duty and duty has lost the

perfume or the beauty of this inward quality of total responsibility. It is not something you invite as a principle or an idea to hold on to, like possessing a chair or a watch. A mother may feel responsible for her child, feel the child is part of her blood and flesh and so give all her care and attention to that baby for some years. Is this maternal instinct responsibility? It may be that we have inherited this peculiar attachment to the child from the first animal. It exists in all nature from the tiniest little bird to the majestic elephant. We are asking – is this instinct responsibility? If it were, the parents would feel responsible for a right kind of education, for a totally different kind of society. They would see that there were no wars and that they themselves flowered in goodness.

So it appears that a human being is not concerned for another but is committed only to himself. This commitment is total irresponsibility. His own emotions, his own personal desires, his own attachments, his success, his advancement – these will inevitably breed ruthlessness both open and subtle. Is this the way of true responsibility?

In these schools he that gives and he that receives are both responsible and so they can never indulge in this peculiar quality of separateness. The egotistic separateness is perhaps the very root of the degeneration of the wholeness of the mind with which we are deeply concerned. This does not mean that there is no personal relationship, with its affection, with its tenderness, with its encouragement and support. But when the personal relationship becomes all important and responsible only to the few, then the mischief has begun; the reality of this is known to every human being. This fragmentation of relationship is the degenerating factor in our life. We have broken up relationship so that it is to the person, to a group, to a nation, to certain concepts and so on. That which is fragmented can never comprehend the

wholeness of responsibility. From the little we are always trying to capture the greater. The better is not the good and all our thought is based on the better, the more – better at exams, better jobs, better status, better gods, nobler ideas.

The better is the outcome of comparison. The better picture, the better technique, the greater musician, the more talented, the more beautiful and the more intelligent depend on this comparison. We rarely look at a painting for itself, or at a man or woman for themselves. There is always this inbred quality of comparison. Is love comparison? Can you ever say you love this one more than that one? When there is this comparison, is that love? When there is this feeling of the more, which is measurement, then thought is in operation. Love is not the movement of thought. This measurement is comparison. We are encouraged throughout our life to compare. When in your school you compare B with A you are destroying both of them.

So is it possible to educate without any sense of comparison? And why do we compare? We compare for the simple reason that measuring is the way of thought and the way of our life. We are educated in this corruption. The better is always nobler than what is, than what is actually going on. The observation of what is, without comparison, without the measure, is to go beyond what is.

When there is no comparison there is integrity. It is not that you are true to yourself, which is a form of measurement, but when there is no measurement at all there is this quality of wholeness. The essence of the ego, the me, is measurement. When there is measurement there is fragmentation. This must be profoundly understood not as an idea but as an actuality. When you read this statement you may make an abstraction of it as an idea, a concept, and the abstraction is another form of measurement. That which is has no measurement. Please give your heart to the understanding of

this. When you have grasped the full significance of this, your relationship with the student and with your own family will become something quite different. If you ask if that difference will be better, then you are caught in the wheel of measurement. Then you are lost. You will find the difference when you are using the word non-comparatively. Almost every word we use has this feeling of measurement so the words affect our reactions and reactions deepen the sense of comparison. The word and the reaction are interrelated and the art lies in not being conditioned by the word, which means that language does not shape us. Use the word without the psychological reactions to it.

As we said, we are concerned with communicating with each other about the nature of the degeneration of our minds and so the ways of our life. Enthusiasm is not passion. You can be enthusiastic about something one day and lose it the next. You can be enthusiastic about playing football and lose interest when it no longer entertains you. But passion is something entirely different. It has no time lag in it.

*1st June, 1979*

As a rule parents have very little time for their children except when they are babies. They send them to the local or boarding schools or they allow others to look after them. They may not have time or the necessary patience to educate them at home. They are occupied with their own problems. So our schools become the children's home and the educators become the parents with all the responsibility. We have written about this earlier and it is not out of place to repeat it: home is a place where there is a certain freedom, a sense of being secure, provided for and sheltered. Do the children in these schools feel this? – that they are being carefully watched over, given a great deal of thought and affection, and concern for their behaviour, their food, their clothes and their manner? If so the school becomes a place where the student feels that he is really at home, with all its implications, that there are people around him who are looking after his tastes, the way he talks, that he is being looked after physically as well as psychologically, being helped to be free from hurts and fear. This is the responsibility of every teacher in these schools – not of one or two. The whole school exists for this, for an atmosphere in which both the educators and the students are flowering in goodness.

The educator needs leisure to be quiet by himself, to gather the energy that has been expended, to be aware of his own personal problems and resolve them, so that when he meets the students again he does not carry the rumour, the noise of his personal turmoil. As we have pointed out earlier, any problem that arises in our lives should be resolved instantly or as quickly as possible, for problems, when they

are carried from day to day, degenerate the sensitivity of the whole mind. This sensitivity is essential. We lose this sensitivity when we are merely instructing the student in a subject. When the subject becomes the only importance, sensitivity fades away and then you really lose contact with the student. The student then is merely a receptacle for information. Thus your mind and the student's become mechanical. Generally we are sensitive to our own problems, to our own desires and thoughts and rarely to others. When we are constantly in contact with the students there is a tendency to impose our own images on them, or, if the student has his own strong image, there is conflict between these images. So it becomes very important that the educator should leave his images at home and become concerned with the images that parents or society have imposed on the student, or the image that he himself has created. It is only in function that there can be relationship and generally the relationship between two images is illusory.

Physical and psychological problems waste our energy. Can the educator be physically secure in these schools yet be free of psychological problems? This is really important to understand. When there is not this sense of physical security, uncertainty brings about psychological turmoil. This encourages dullness of the mind and so the passion that is so necessary in our daily life withers away and enthusiasm takes its place.

Enthusiasm is a dangerous thing for it is never constant. It rises in a wave and is gone. This is mistaken for seriousness. You may be enthusiastic for some time about what you are doing, eager, active, but inherent in it is dissipation. Again it is essential that we understand this for most relationship is prone to this wastage.

Passion is wholly different from lust, interest or enthusiasm. Interest in something can be very deep and you can

use that interest for profit or for power, but that interest is not passion. Interest may be stimulated by an object or by an idea. Interest is self-indulgence. Passion is free of the self. Enthusiasm is always about something. Passion is a flame of itself. Enthusiasm can be aroused by another, something outside of you. Passion is the summation of energy which is not the outcome of any kind of stimulation. Passion is beyond the self.

Have the teachers this sense of passion? – for out of this comes creation. In teaching subjects one has to find new ways of transmitting information without this information making the mind mechanical. Can you teach history – which is the story of mankind – not as the Indian, the English, American and so on, but as the story of man which is global? Then the educator's mind is always fresh, eager, discovering a wholly different approach to teaching. In this the educator is intensely alive and with this aliveness goes passion.

Can this be done in all our schools? – for we are concerned with bringing about a different society, with the flowering of goodness, with a nonmechanistic mind. True education is this, and will you, the educators, undertake this responsibility? In this responsibility lies the flowering of goodness in yourself and in the student. We are responsible for the whole of mankind – which is you and the student. You have to start there and cover the whole earth. You can go very far if you start very near. The nearest is you and your student. We generally start with the farthest – the supreme principle, the greatest ideal, and get lost in some hazy dream of imaginative thought. But when you start very near, with the nearest, which is you, then the whole world is open, for you are the world and the world beyond you is only nature. Nature is not imaginary: it is actual and what is happening to you now is actual. From the actual you must begin – with what is happening now – and the now is timeless.

*15th June, 1979*

Most human beings are selfish. They are not conscious of their own selfishness; it is the way of their life. And if one is aware that one is selfish, one hides it very carefully and conforms to the pattern of society which is essentially selfish. The selfish mind is very cunning. Either it is brutally and openly selfish or it takes many forms. If you are a politician the selfishness seeks power, status and popularity; it identifies itself with an idea, a mission and all for the public good. If you are a tyrant it expresses itself in brutal domination. If you are inclined to be religious it takes the form of adoration, devotion, adherence to some belief, some dogma. It also expresses itself in the family; the father pursues his own selfishness in all the ways of his life and so does the mother. Fame, prosperity, good looks form a basis for this hidden creeping movement of the self. It is in the hierarchical structure of the priesthood, however much they may proclaim their love of God, their adherence to the self-created image of their particular deity. The captains of industry and the poor clerk have this expanding and numbing sensuality of the self. The monk who has renounced the ways of the world may wander the face of the world or may be locked away in some monastery but has not left this unending movement of the self. They may change their names, put on robes or take vows of celibacy or silence, but they burn with some ideal, with some image, some symbol.

It is the same with the scientists, with the philosophers and the professors in the university. The doer of good works, the saints and gurus, the man or the woman who works endlessly for the poor - they all attempt to lose themselves in

their work but the work is part of it. They have transferred the egotism to their labours. It begins in childhood and continues to old age. The conceit of knowledge, the practised humility of the leader, the submitting wife and dominating man, all have this disease. The self identifies with the State, with endless groups, with endless ideas and causes but it remains what it was at the beginning.

Human beings have tried various practices, methods, meditations to be free of this centre which causes so much misery and confusion, but like a shadow it is never captured. It is always there and it slips through your fingers, through your mind. Sometimes it is strengthened or becomes weak according to circumstances. You corner it here, it turns up there.

One wonders if the educator, who is so responsible for a new generation, understands non-verbally what a mischievous thing the self is – how corrupting, distorting, how dangerous it is in our lives. He may not know how to be free of it, he may not even be aware it is there but once he sees the nature of the movement of the self can he or she convey its subtleties to the student? And is it not his responsibility to do this? The insight into the working of the self is greater than academic learning. Knowledge can be used by the self for its own expansion, its aggressiveness, its innate cruelty.

Selfishness is the essential problem of our life. Conforming and imitation are part of the self, as is competition and the ruthlessness of talent. If the educator in these schools takes this question to his heart seriously, which I hope he does, then how will he help the student to be selfless? You might say it is a gift of the strange gods or brush it aside as being impossible. But if you are serious, as one must be, and are totally responsible for the student, how will you set about freeing the mind from this ageless binding energy? – the self which has caused so much sorrow? Would

you not, with great care – which implies affection – explain in simple words what the consequences are when he speaks in anger, or when he hits somebody, or when he is thinking of his own importance? Is it not possible to explain to him that when he insists 'this is mine' or boasts 'I did it' or avoids through fear a certain action, he is building a wall, brick by brick, around himself? Is it not possible when his desires, his sensations overpower his rational thinking, to point out that the shadow of self is growing? Is it not possible to say to him that where the self is, in any guise, there is no love?

But the student might ask the educator, 'Have you realised all this or are you just playing with words?'. That very question might awaken your own intelligence and that very intelligence will give you the right feeling and the right words as answer.

As an educator you have no status; you are a human being with all the problems of life like a student. The moment you speak from status you are actually destroying the human relation. Status implies power and when you are seeking this, consciously or unconsciously, you enter a world of cruelty. You have a great responsibility, my friend, and if you take this total responsibility which is love, then the roots of the self are gone. This is not said as an encouragement or to make you feel that you must do this, but as we are all human beings, representing the whole of mankind, we are totally and wholly responsible whether we choose to be or not. You may try to evade it but that very movement is the action of the self. Clarity of perception is freedom from the self.

*1st July, 1979*

The flowering of goodness is the release of our total energy. It is not the control or suppression of energy but rather the total freedom of this vast energy. It is limited, narrowed down by thought, by the fragmentation of our senses. Thought itself is this energy manipulating itself into a narrow groove, a centre of the self. Flowering of goodness can only blossom when energy is free, but thought, by its very nature, has limited this energy and so the fragmentation of the senses takes place. Hence there are the senses, sensations, desires and the images that thought creates out of desire. All this is a fragmentation of energy. Can this limited movement be aware of itself? That is, can the senses be aware of themselves? Can desire see itself arising out of the senses, out of the sensation of the image thought has created, and can thought be aware of itself, of its movement? All this implies – can the whole physical body be aware of itself?

We live by our senses. One of them is usually dominant; the listening, the seeing, the tasting seem to be separate from each other, but is this a fact? Or is it that we have given to one or other a greater importance – or rather that thought has given the greater importance? One may hear great music and delight in it, and yet be insensitive to other things. One may have a sensitive taste and be wholly insensitive to delicate colour. This is fragmentation. When each fragment is aware only of itself then fragmentation is maintained. In this way energy is broken up. If this is so, as it appears to be, is there a nonfragmentary awareness by all the senses? And thought is part of the senses. This implies – can the body be aware of itself? Not you being aware of your own body, but the body itself being aware. This is very important to find

out. It cannot be taught by another; then it is secondhand information which thought is imposing upon itself. You must discover for yourself whether the whole organism, the physical entity, can be aware of itself. You may be aware of the movement of an arm, a leg or the head, and through that movement sense that you are becoming aware of the whole, but what we are asking is: can the body be aware of itself without any movement? This is essential to find out because thought has imposed its pattern on the body, what it thinks is the right exercise, right food and so on. So there is the domination of thought over the organism; there is consciously or unconsciously a struggle between thought and the organism. In this way thought is destroying the natural intelligence of the body itself. Does the body, the physical organism, have its own intelligence? It has when all the senses are acting together in harmony so that there is no straining, no emotional or sensory demands of desire. When one is hungry one eats but usually taste, formed by habit, dictates what one eats. So fragmentation takes place. A healthy body can be brought about only through the harmony of all the senses which is the intelligence of the body itself. What we are asking is: does not disharmony bring about the wastage of energy? Can the organism's own intelligence, which has been suppressed or destroyed by thought, be awakened?

Remembrance plays havoc with the body. The remembrance of yesterday's pleasure makes thought master of the body. The body then becomes a slave to the master, and intelligence is denied. So there is conflict. This struggle may express itself as laziness, fatigue, indifference or in neurotic responses. When the body has its own intelligence freed from thought, though thought is part of it, this intelligence will guard its own well-being.

Pleasure dominates our life in its crudest or most educated

forms. And pleasure essentially is a remembrance – that which has been or that which is anticipated. Pleasure is never at the moment. When pleasure is denied, suppressed or blocked, out of this frustration neurotic acts, such as violence and hatred, take place. Then pleasure seeks other forms and outlets; satisfaction and dissatisfaction arise. To be aware of all these activities, both physical and psychological, requires an observation of the whole movement of one's life.

When the body is aware of itself, then we can ask a further and perhaps more difficult question: can thought, which has put together this whole consciousness, be aware of itself? Most of the time thought dominates the body and so the body loses its vitality, intelligence, its own intrinsic energy, and hence has neurotic reactions. Is the intelligence of the body different from total intelligence which can come about only when thought, realising its own limitation, finds its right place?

As we said at the beginning of this letter, the flowering of goodness can take place only when there is the release of total energy. In this release there is no friction. It is only in this supreme undivided intelligence that there is this flowering. This intelligence is not the child of reason. The totality of this intelligence is compassion.

Mankind has tried to release this immense energy through various forms of control, through exhausting discipline, through fasting, through sacrificial denials offered to some supreme principle or god, or through manipulating this energy through various states. All this implies the manipulation of thought towards a desired end. But what we are saying is quite contrary to all this.

Can all this be conveyed to the student? It is your responsibility to do so.

*15th July, 1979*

It is the concern of these schools to bring about a new generation of human beings who are free from self-centred action. No other educational centres are concerned with this and it is our responsibility, as educators, to bring about a mind that has no conflict within itself and so end the struggle and conflict in the world about us. Can the mind, which is a complex structure and movement, free itself from the network it has woven? Every intelligent human being asks whether it is possible to end the conflict between man and man. Some have gone into it very deeply, intellectually; others, seeing the hopelessness of it, become bitter, cynical, or look to some outside agency to deliver them from their own chaos and misery. When we ask whether the mind can free itself from the prison it has created, it is not an intellectual or rhetorical question. It is asked in all seriousness; it is a challenge to which you have to respond not at your convenience or comfort, but according to the depth of that challenge. It cannot be postponed.

A challenge is not asking whether it is possible or not, whether the mind is capable of freeing itself; the challenge, if it is worth anything at all, is immediate and intense. To respond to it you must have that quality of intensity and immediacy - the feeling of it. When there is this intense approach, then the question has great implications. The challenge is demanding the highest excellence from you, not just intellectually but with every faculty of your being. This challenge is not outside you. Please do not externalize it - which is to make a concept of it. You are demanding of yourself the totality of all your energy.

That very demand wipes away all control, all contradiction

and any opposition within yourself. It implies a total integrity, complete harmony. This is the essence of not being selfish.

The mind with its emotional responses, with all the things that thought has put together, is our consciousness. This consciousness, with its content, is the consciousness of every human being, modified, not entirely similar, different in its nuances and subtleties, but basically the roots of its existence are common to all of us. Scientists and psychologists are examining this consciousness and the gurus are playing with it for their own ends. The serious ones are examining consciousness as a concept, as a laboratory process - the responses of the brain, alpha waves and so on - as something outside themselves. But we are not concerned with the theories, concepts, ideas about consciousness; we are concerned with its activity in our daily life. In the understanding of these activities, the daily responses, the conflicts, we will have an insight into the nature and structure of our own consciousness. As we pointed out, the basic reality of this consciousness is common to us all. It is not your particular consciousness or mine. We have inherited it and we are modifying it, changing it here and there, but its basic movement is common to all mankind.

This consciousness is our mind with all its intricacies of thought - the emotions, the sensory responses, the accumulated knowledge, the suffering, the pain, the anxiety, the violence. All that is our consciousness. The brain is ancient and it is conditioned by centuries of evolution, by every kind of experience, by recent accumulations of increased knowledge. All this is consciousness in action in every moment of our life - the relationship between humans with all the pleasures, pains, confusion of contradictory senses and the gratification of desire with its pain. This is the movement of our life. We are asking, and this must be met as

a challenge, whether this ancient movement can ever come to an end? - for this has become a mechanical activity, a traditional way of life. In the ending there is a beginning and then only is there neither ending nor beginning.

Consciousness appears to be a very complex affair but actually it is very simple. Thought has put together all the content of our consciousness - its security, its uncertainty, its hopes and fears, the depression and elation, the ideal, the illusion. Once this is grasped - that thought is responsible for the whole content of our consciousness - then the inevitable question arises - whether thought can be stopped? Many attempts have been made, religious and mechanical, to end thought. The very demand for the ending of thought is part of the movement of thought. The very search for superconsciousness is still the measure of thought. The gods, the rituals, all the emotional illusion of churches, temples and mosques with their marvellous architecture, is still the movement of thought. God is put in heaven by thought.

Thought has not made nature. It is real. The chair is also real, and it is made by thought; all the things technology has brought about are real. Illusions are that which avoid the actual (that which is taking place now) but illusions become real because we live by them.

The dog is not made by thought, but what we wish the dog to be is the movement of thought. Thought is measure. Thought is time. The whole of this is our consciousness. The mind, the brain, the senses are part of it. We are asking can this movement come to an end? Thought is the root of all our sorrow, all our ugliness. What we are asking for is the ending of these - the things that thought has put together - not the ending of thought itself but the ending of our anxiety, grief, pain, power, violence. With the ending of these, thought finds its rightful, limited place - the everyday knowledge

and memory one must have. When the contents of consciousness which have been put together by thought are no longer active, then there is vast space and so the release of immense energy which was limited by consciousness. Love is beyond this consciousness.

*1st August, 1979*

*Questioner:*

If I may ask you, what do you consider to be one of the most important things in life? I have thought about this matter considerably and there are so many things in life that all seem important. I would like to ask you this question in all seriousness.

*Krishnamurti:*

Perhaps it is the art of living. We are using the word art in its widest sense. As life is so very complex, it is always rather difficult and confusing to pick one aspect and say it is the most important. The very choice, the differentiating quality, if I may point out, leads to further confusion. If you say this is the most important, then you relegate the other facts of life to a secondary position. Either we take the whole movement of life as one, which becomes extremely difficult for most people, or we take one fundamental aspect in which all the others may be included. If you agree to this, then we can proceed with our dialogue.

*Questioner:*

Do you mean to say that one aspect may cover the whole field of life? Is that possible?

*Krishnamurti:*

It is possible. Let us go into it very slowly and hesitantly. First of all the two of us must investigate and not immediately come to some conclusion, which is generally rather superficial. We are exploring together one facet of life and in the very understanding of it we may cover the whole

field of life. To investigate we must be free of our prejudices, personal experiences, and predetermined conclusions. Like a good scientist we must have a mind unclouded by knowledge that we have already accumulated. We must come to it afresh and this is one of the necessities in exploration, the exploration not of an idea or series of philosophic concepts but of our own minds without any reaction to what is being observed. This is absolutely necessary; otherwise your own investigation is coloured by your own fears, hopes and pleasures.

*Questioner:*

Aren't you asking too much? Is it possible to have such a mind?

*Krishnamurti:*

The very urge to investigate and the intensity of it frees the mind from its colouring. As we said, one of the most important things is the art of living. Is there a way of living our daily life that is entirely different from what it normally is? We all know the usual. Is there a way of living without any control, without any conflict, without a disciplinary conformity? How do I find out? I can only find out when my whole mind is facing exactly what is happening now. This means I can only find out what it means to live without conflict, when what is happening now can be observed. This observation is not an intellectual or emotional affair but the acute, clear, sharp perception in which there is no duality. There is only the actual and nothing else.

*Questioner:*

What do you mean by duality in this instance?

*Krishnamurti:*

That there is no opposition or contradiction in what is going on. Duality arises only when there is an escape from what is. This escape creates the opposite and so conflict arises. There is only the actual and nothing else.

*Questioner:*

Are you saying that when something which is happening now is perceived, the mind must not come in with associations and reactions?

*Krishnamurti:*

Yes, that is what we mean. The associations and reactions to what is happening are the conditioning of the mind. This conditioning prevents the observation of what is taking place now. What is taking place now is free of time. Time is the evolution of our conditioning. It is man's inheritance, the burden that has no beginning. When there is this passionate observation of what is going on, that which is being observed dissolves into nothingness. The observation of the anger that is taking place now reveals the whole nature and structure of violence. The insight is the ending of all violence. It is not replaced by anything else and therein lies our difficulty. Our whole desire and urge is to find a definite end. In that end there is a sense of illusory security.

*Questioner:*

There is a difficulty for many of us in the observation of anger because emotions and reactions seem inextricably part of that anger. One doesn't feel anger without associations, content.

*Krishnamurti:*

Anger has many stories behind it. It isn't just a solitary

event. It has, as you pointed out, a great many associations. These very associations, with their emotions, prevent the actual observation. With anger the content is the anger. The anger is the content; they are not two separate things. The content is the conditioning. In the passionate observation of what is actually going on – that is, the activities of the conditioning – the nature and structure of the conditioning are dissolved.

*Questioner:*

Are you saying that when an event is taking place there is the immediate, racing current of associations in the mind? And if one instantly sees this starting to happen, that observation instantly stops it and it is gone? Is this what you mean?

*Krishnamurti:*

Yes. It is really very simple, so simple that you miss its very simplicity and so its subtlety. What we are saying is that whatever is happening – when you are walking, talking, 'meditating' – the event that is taking place is to be observed. When the mind wanders, the very observation of it ends its chatter. So there is no distraction whatsoever at any time.

*Questioner:*

It seems as if you are saying that the content of thought essentially has no meaning in the art of living.

*Krishnamurti:*

Yes. Remembrance has no place in the art of living. Relationship is the art of living. If there is remembrance in relationship, it is not relationship. Relationship is between human beings, not their memories. It is these memories that divide and so there is contention, the opposition of the you

and the me. So thought, which is remembrance, has no place whatsoever in relationship. This is the art of living.

Relationship is to all things – to nature, the birds, the rocks, to everything around us and above us – to the clouds, the stars and to the blue sky. All existence is relationship. Without it you cannot live. Because we have corrupted relationship we live in a society that is degenerating.

The art of living can come into being only when thought does not contaminate love.

In the schools can the teacher be wholly committed to this art?

*15th August, 1979*

The greatest art is the art of living, greater than all things that human beings have created, by mind or hand, greater than all the scriptures and their gods. It is only through this art of living that a new culture can come into being. It is the responsibility of every teacher, especially in these schools, to bring this about. This art of living can come only out of total freedom.

This freedom is not an ideal, a thing to take place eventually. The first step in freedom is the last step in it. It is the first step that counts, not the last step. What you do now is far more essential than what you do at some future date. Life is what is happening this instant, not an imagined instant, not what thought has conceived. So it is the first step you take now that is important. If that step is in the right direction, then the whole of life is open to you. The right direction is not towards an ideal, a predetermined end. It is inseparable from that which is taking place now. This is not a philosophy, a series of theories. It is exactly what the word philosophy means – the love of truth, the love of life. It is not something that you go to the university to learn. We are learning about the art of living in our daily life.

We live by words and words become our prison. The words are necessary to communicate but the word is never the thing. The actual is not the word but the word becomes all-important when it has taken the place of that which is. You may observe this phenomenon when the description has become the reality instead of the thing itself – the symbol we worship, the shadow we follow, the illusion we cling to. And so words, the language, shape our reactions. Language becomes the compelling force and our minds are shaped

and controlled by the word. The words nation, state, God, family and so on envelop us with all their associations and so our minds become slaves to the pressure of words.

*Questioner:*

How is this to be avoided?

*Krishnamurti:*

The word is never the thing. The word wife is never the person; the door is never the thing. The word prevents the actual perception of the thing or person because the word has many associations. These associations, which are actually remembrances, distort not only visual observation but psychological. Words then become a barrier to the free flow of observation. Take the words Prime Minister and clerk. They describe functions, but the words Prime Minister have tremendous significance of power, status and importance whereas the word clerk has associations of unimportance, little status and no power. So the word prevents you from looking at both of them as human beings. There is ingrained snobbery in most of us, and to see what words have done to our thinking and to be choicelessly aware of it, is to learn the art of observation - to observe without association.

*Questioner:*

I understand what you say but again the speed of association is so instantaneous that the reaction takes place before one realises it. Is it possible to prevent this?

*Krishnamurti:*

Is this not a wrong question? Who is to prevent it? Is it another symbol, another word, another idea? If it is, then one has not seen the whole significance of the enslavement of

the mind by words, language. You see, we use words emotionally; it is a form of emotional thinking, apart from the use of technological words such as metres, numbers, which are precise. In human relationship and activity, emotions play a great part. Desire is very strong, sustained by thought creating the image. The image is the word, is the picture, and this follows our pleasure, our desire. So the whole way of our life is shaped by the word and its associations. To see this entire process as a whole is to see the truth of how thought prevents perception.

*Questioner:*

Are you saying that there is no thinking without words?

*Krishnamurti:*

Yes, more or less. Please bear in mind that we are talking about the art of living, learning about it, not memorising the words. We are learning; not we teaching and you becoming a silly disciple. You are asking if there is thinking without words. This is a very important question. Our whole thinking is based on memory, and memory is based on words, images, symbols, pictures. All these are words.

*Questioner:*

But what one remembers is not a word; it is an experience, an emotional event, a picture of a person or a place. The word is a secondary association.

*Krishnamurti:*

We are using the word to describe all this. After all, the word is a symbol to indicate that which has happened or is happening, to communicate or to evoke something. Is there a thinking without this whole process? Yes, there is, but it should not be called thinking. Thinking implies a con-

tinuation of memory but perception is not the activity of thought. It is really insight into the whole nature and movement of the word, the symbol, the image and their emotional involvements. To see this as a whole is to give the word its right place.

*Questioner:*

But what does it mean to see the whole? You say this often. What do you mean by it?

*Krishnamurti:*

Thought is divisive because in itself it is limited. To observe wholly implies the non-interference of thought – to observe without the past as knowledge blocking the observation. Then the observer is not, for the observer is the past, the very nature of thought.

*Questioner:*

Are you asking us to stop thought?

*Krishnamurti:*

Again, if we may point out, that is a wrong question. If thought tells itself to stop thinking, it creates duality and conflict. This is the very divisive process of thought. If you really grasp the truth of this, then naturally thought is in abeyance. Thought then has its own limited place. Thought then will not take over the whole expanse of life, which it is doing now.

*Questioner:*

Sir, I see what extraordinary attention is needed. Can I really have that attention, am I serious enough to give my whole energy to this?

*Krishnamurti:*

Can energy be divided at all? The energy expended in earning a livelihood, in having a family, and in being serious enough to grasp what is being said is all energy. But thought divides it and so we expend much energy on living and very little on the other. This is the art in which there is no division. This is the whole of life.

*1st September, 1979*

Why are we being educated? Perhaps you never ask this question, but if you do, what is your response to it? Many reasons are put forward for the necessity of being educated, arguments that are reasonable, quite necessary and mundane. The usual reply is to get a job, have a successful career, or to become skilful with your hands or with your mind. Great emphasis is laid upon the capacity of the mind to find itself a good, profitable career. If you are not intellectually bright then the skill of your hands becomes important. Education is necessary, it is said, to sustain society as it is, to conform to a pattern set by the so-called establishment, traditional or ultra-modern. The educated mind has great capacity to gather information on almost any subject - art, science and so on. This informed mind is scholastic, professional, philosophical. Such erudition is greatly praised and honoured. This education, if you are studious, clever, swift in your learning, will assure you a bright future, the brightness of it depending on your social and environmental situation. If you are not so bright in this framework of education, you become a labourer, a factory worker or have to find a place at the bottom of this very complex society. This is generally the way of our education.

What is education? It is essentially the art of learning, not only from books, but from the whole movement of life. The printed word has become consumingly all-important. You are learning what other people think, their experiences. The library is more important than the man who has the library. He himself is the library and he assumes that he is learning by constant reading. This accumulation of information, as in a computer, is considered an educated, sophisticated mind.

Then there are those who do not read at all, who are rather contemptuous of the other and are absorbed in their own self-centred experiences and assertive opinions.

Recognising all this, what is the function of a holistic mind? We mean by the mind all the responses of the senses, the emotions - which are entirely different from love - and the intellectual capacity. We now give a fantastic importance to the intellect. We mean by the intellect the capacity to reason logically, sanely or without sanity, objectively or personally. It is the intellect with its movement of thought that brings about fragmentation of our human condition. It is the intellect that has divided the world linguistically, nationally, religiously - divided man from man. The intellect is the central factor of the degeneration of man throughout the world, for the intellect is only a part of the human condition and capacity. When the part is extolled, praised and given honours, when it assumes all-importance, then one's life which is relationship, action, conduct, becomes contradictory, hypocritical; then anxiety and guilt come into being. Intellect has its place, as in science, but man has used scientific knowledge not only for his benefit but to bring about instruments of war and pollution of the earth. The intellect can perceive its own activities which bring about degeneration but it is utterly incapable of putting an end to its own decline because essentially it is only a part.

As we said, education is the essence of learning. Learning about the nature of the intellect, its dominance, its activities, its vast capacities and its destructive power is education. To learn the nature of thought, which is the very movement of the intellect, not from a book but from the observation of the world about you - to learn what exactly is happening without theories, prejudices and values, is education. Books are important but what is far more important is to learn the book, the story of yourself, because you are all mankind. To read

that book is the art of learning. It is all there; the institutions, their pressures, the religious impositions and doctrines, their cruelty, their faiths. The social structure of all societies is the relationship between human beings with their greed, ambitions, their violence, their pleasures, their anxieties. It is there if you know how to look. The look is not inward. The book is not out there or hidden in yourself. It is all around you; you are part of that book. The book tells you the story of the human being and it is to be read in your relationships, in your reactions, in your concepts and values. The book is the very centre of your being and the learning is to read that book with exquisite care. The book tells you the story of the past, how the past shapes your mind, your heart and your senses. The past shapes the present, modifying itself according to the challenge of the moment. And in this endless movement of time human beings are caught. This is the conditioning of man. This conditioning has been the endless burden of man, of you and your brother.

The philosophers, the theologians, the saints, have accepted this conditioning, have allowed the acceptance of it, making the best of it; or they have offered escapes into fantasies of mystical experiences, of gods and heavens. Education is the art of learning about this conditioning and the way out of it, the freedom from this burden. There is a way out which is not an escape, which does not accept things as they are. It is not the avoidance of the conditioning, it is not the suppression of it. It is the dissolution of the conditioning.

When you read this or when you hear it, be aware of whether you are listening or reading with the verbal capacity of the intellect or with the care of attention? When there is this total attention there is no past but only the pure observation of what is actually going on.

*15th September, 1979*

One is apt to forget or disregard the responsibility of the educator to bring about a new generation of human beings who are psychologically, inwardly free of miseries, anxieties and travail. It is a sacred responsibility, not to be easily set aside for one's own ambitions, status or power. If the educator feels such a responsibility – the greatness of it and the depth and beauty of that responsibility – he will find the capacity to instruct and to sustain his own energy. This demands great diligence, not a periodic, haphazard endeavour, and the very profound responsibility will kindle the fire that will maintain him as a total human being and a great teacher. As the world is rapidly degenerating, there must be in all these schools a group of teachers and students who are dedicated to bringing about a radical transformation of human beings through right education. The word right is not a matter of opinion, evaluation or some concept invented by the intellect. The word right denotes total action in which all self-interested motive ceases. The very dominant responsibility, the concern not only of the educator but also of the student, banishes self-perpetuating problems. However immature the mind, once you accept this responsibility that very acceptance brings about the flowering of the mind. This flowering is in the relationship between the student and the educator. It is not a one-sided affair. When you read this, please give your total attention and feel the urgency and intensity of this responsibility. Please do not make it into an abstraction, an idea, but rather observe the actual fact, the actual happening in the reading of this.

Almost all human beings in their lives desire power and wealth. When there is wealth there is a sense of freedom, and

pleasure is pursued. The desire for power seems to be an instinct which expresses itself in many ways. It is in the priest, the guru, the husband or the wife, or in one boy over another. This desire to dominate or to submit is one of the conditions of man, probably inherited from the animal. This aggressiveness and the yielding to it pervert all relationship throughout life. This has been the pattern from the beginning of time. Man has accepted this as a natural way of life, with all the conflicts and miseries it brings.

Basically measurement is involved in it – the more and the less, the greater and the smaller – which is essentially comparison. One is always comparing oneself with another, comparing one painting with another; there is comparison between the greater power and the lesser, between the timid and the aggressive. It begins almost at birth and continues throughout life – this constant measurement of power, position, wealth. This is encouraged in schools, colleges and universities. Their whole system of gradation is this comparative value of knowledge. When A is compared to B, who is clever, bright, assertive, that very comparison destroys A. This destruction takes the form of competition, of imitation and conformity to the patterns set by B. This breeds, consciously or unconsciously, antagonism, jealousy, anxiety and even fear; and this becomes the condition in which A lives for the rest of his life, always measuring, always comparing psychologically and physically.

This comparison is one of the many aspects of violence. The word 'more' is always comparative, as is the word 'better'. The question is, can the educator put aside all comparison, all measurement, in his teaching? Can he take the student as he is, not as what he should be, not make judgements based on comparative evaluations? It is only when there is comparison between the one called clever and the one called dull that there is such a quality as dullness.

The idiot - is he an idiot because of comparison or because he is incapable of certain activities? We set certain standards which are based on measurement and those who do not come up to them are considered deficient. When the educator puts aside comparison and measurement, then he is concerned with the student as he is and his relationship with the student is direct and totally different. This is really very important to understand. Love is not comparative. It has no measurement. Comparison and measurement are ways of the intellect. This is divisive. When this is basically understood - not the verbal meaning but the actual truth of it - the relationship of teacher and student undergoes a radical change. The ultimate tests of measurement are the examinations with their fear and anxieties which deeply affect the future life of the student. The whole atmosphere of a school undergoes a change when there is no sense of competition, comparison.

It is one of the peculiarities of human beings to cultivate values. From childhood we are encouraged to set for ourselves certain deep-rooted values. Each person has his own long-lasting purposes and intents. Naturally the values of one differ from those of another. These are cultivated either by desire or by the intellect. They are either illusory, comfortable, consoling or factual. These values obviously encourage the division between man and man. Values are ignoble or noble according to one's prejudices and intentions. Without listing various types of values, why is it that human beings have values and what are their consequences? The root meaning of the word value is strength. It comes from the word valour. Strength is not value. It becomes a value when it is the opposite of weakness. Strength - not of character which is the result of the pressure of society - is the essence of clarity. Clear thinking is without prejudices, without bias; it is observation without distortion. Strength or valour is not a thing to be cultivated as you would cultivate a plant or a new breed. It is not a result. A result has a cause and when there is a cause it indicates a weakness; the consequences of weakness are resistance or yielding. Clarity has no cause. Clarity is not an effect or result; it is the pure observation of thought and its total activity. This clarity is strength.

If this is clearly understood, why have human beings projected values? Is it to give them guidance in their daily life? Is it to give them a purpose, for otherwise life becomes uncertain, vague, without direction? But the direction is set by the intellect or desire and so the very direction becomes a distortion. These distortions vary from man to man, and man

clings to them in the restless ocean of confusion. One can observe the consequences of having values: they separate man from man and set one human being against another. Extended, this leads to misery, to violence and ultimately to war.

Ideals are values. Ideals of any kind are a series of values, national, religious, collective, personal, and one can observe the consequences of these ideals as they are taking place in the world. When one sees the truth of this, the mind is freed of all values and for such a mind there is only clarity. A mind that clings to or desires an experience is pursuing the fallacy of value, and so becomes private, secretive and divisive.

As an educator, can you explain this to a student: to have no values whatsoever but to live with clarity which is not a value? This can be brought about when the educator himself has felt deeply the truth of this. If he has not, then it becomes merely a verbal explanation without any deep significance. This has to be conveyed not only to the older students but also to the very young. The older students are already heavily conditioned through the pressure of society and of parents with their values; or they themselves have projected their own goals which become their prison. With the very young what is most important is to help them to free themselves from psychological pressures and problems. Now the very young are being taught complicated intellectual problems; their studies are becoming more and more technical; they are given more and more abstract information; various forms of knowledge are being imposed on their brains, thus conditioning them right from childhood. Whereas what we are concerned with is to help the very young to have no psychological problems, to be free of fear, anxiety, cruelty, to have care, generosity and affection. This is far more important than the imposition of knowledge on their young minds. This does not mean that the child should not learn to

read, write and so on, but the emphasis is on psychological freedom instead of the acquisition of knowledge, though that is necessary. This freedom does not mean the child doing what he wants to do but helping him to understand the nature of his reactions, his desires.

This requires a great deal of insight on the part of the teacher. After all, you want the student to be a complete human being without any psychological problems; otherwise he will misuse any knowledge he is given. Our education is to live in the known and so be a slave to the past with all its traditions, memories, experiences. Our life is from the known to the known, so there is never freedom from the known. If one lives constantly in the known there is nothing new, nothing original, nothing uncontaminated by thought. Thought is the known. If our education is the constant accumulation of the known then our minds and hearts become mechanical without that immense vitality of the unknown. That which has continuity is knowledge, is everlasting limited. And that which is limited must everlasting create problems. The ending of the continuity – which is time – is the flowering of the timeless.

*15th October, 1979*

Teachers or educators are human beings. Their function is to help the student to learn - not this or that subject only - but to understand the whole activity of learning; not only to gather information about various subjects but primarily to be complete human beings. These schools are not merely centres of learning but they must be centres of goodness and bring about a religious mind.

All over the world human beings are degenerating to a greater or lesser extent. When pleasure, personal or collective, becomes the dominant interest in life - the pleasure of sex, the pleasure of asserting one's own will, the pleasure of excitement, the pleasure of self-interest, the pleasure of power and status, the insistent demand to have one's own pleasure fulfilled - there is degeneration. When human relationships become casual, based on pleasure, there is degeneration. When responsibility has lost its total meaning, when there is no care for another, or for the earth and the things of the sea, this disregard of heaven and earth is another form of degeneration. When there is hypocrisy in high places, when there is dishonesty in commerce, when lies are part of everyday speech, when there is the tyranny of the few, when only things predominate - there is the betrayal of all life. Then killing becomes the only language of life. When love is taken as pleasure, then man has cut himself off from beauty and the sacredness of life.

Pleasure is always personal, an isolating process. Though one thinks pleasure is something shared with another, actually, through gratification, it is an enclosing, isolating action of the ego, of the me. The greater the pleasure, the greater the strengthening of the me. When there is the

pursuit of pleasure, human beings are exploiting each other. When pleasure becomes dominant in our life, relationship is exploited for this purpose and so there is no actual relationship with another. Then relationship becomes merchandise. The urge for fulfilment is based on pleasure and when that pleasure is denied or has not found means of expression, then there is anger, cynicism, hatred or bitterness. This incessant pursuit of pleasure is actually insanity.

All this indicates, does it not, that man, in spite of his vast knowledge, extraordinary capacities, his driving energy, his aggressive action, is on the decline? This is evident throughout the world – this calculated self-centredness with its fears, pleasures and anxieties.

What then is the total responsibility of these schools? Surely they must be centres for learning a way of life which is not based on pleasure, on self-centred activities, but on the understanding of correct action, the depth and beauty of relationship, and the sacredness of a religious life. When the world around us is so utterly destructive and without meaning, these schools, these centres, must become places of light and wisdom. It is the responsibility of those who are in charge of these places to bring this about.

As this is urgent, excuses have no meaning. Either the centres are like a rock round which the waters of destruction flow, or they go with the current of decay. These places exist for the enlightenment of man.

*1st November, 1979*

In a world where mankind feels threatened by social upheavals, overpopulation, wars, terrifying violence, callousness, each human being is more than ever concerned with his own survival.

Survival has implied living sanely, happily, without great pressure or strain. Each one of us translates survival according to his own particular concept. The idealist projects a way of life which is not the actual; the theoreticians, whether Marxist, religious, or of any other particular persuasion, have laid down patterns for survival; the nationalists consider survival possible only in a particular group or community. These ideological differences, ideals and faiths are the roots of a division that is preventing human survival.

Men want to survive in a particular way, according to their narrow responses, according to their immediate pleasures, according to some faith, according to some religious saviour, prophet or saint. All these can in no way bring security for in themselves they are divisive, exclusive, limited. To live in the hope of survival according to tradition, however ancient or modern, has no meaning. Partial solutions of any kind - scientific, religious, political, economic - can no longer assure mankind its survival. Man has been concerned with his own individual survival, with his family, with his group, his tribal nation, and because all this is divisive it threatens his actual survival. The modern divisions of nationalities, of colour, of culture, of religion are the causes of man's uncertainty of survival. In the turmoil of today's world uncertainty has made man turn to authority - to the political, religious or economic expert. The

specialist is inevitably a danger because his response must always be partial, limited. Man is no longer individual, separate. What affects the few affects all mankind. There is no escape or avoidance of the problem. You can no longer withdraw from the totality of the human predicament.

We have stated the problem, the cause and now we must find the solution. This solution must not depend on any kind of pressure – sociological, religious, economic, political or of any organisation. We cannot possibly survive if we are concerned only with our own survival. All human beings the world over are interrelated today. What happens in one country affects the others. Man has considered himself an individual separate from others but psychologically a human being is inseparable from the whole of mankind.

There is no such thing as psychological survival. When there is this desire to survive or to fulfil you are psychologically creating a situation which not only separates but which is totally unreal. Psychologically you cannot be separate from another. And this desire to be separate psychologically is the very source of danger and destruction. Each person asserting himself threatens his own existence.

When the truth of this is seen and understood, man's responsibility undergoes a radical change not only towards his immediate environment but towards all living things. This total responsibility is compassion. This compassion acts through intelligence. This intelligence is not partial, individual, separate. Compassion is never partial. Compassion is the sacredness of all living things.

We ought to consider very seriously, not only in these schools but also as human beings, the capacity to work together; to work together with nature, the living things of the earth, and also with other human beings. As social beings we exist for ourselves. Our laws, our government, our religions all emphasise the separateness of man which during the centuries has developed into man against man. It is becoming more and more important, if we are to survive, that there be a spirit of co-operation with the universe, with all the things of the sea and earth.

One can see in all social structures the destructive effect of fragmentation taking place - nation against nation, one group against another group, one family against another family, one individual against another. It is the same religiously, socially and economically. Each one is striving for himself, for his class or his particular interest in the community. This division of beliefs, ideals, conclusions and prejudices is preventing the spirit of co-operation from flowering. We are human beings, not tribal identities, exclusive, separate. We are human beings caught in conclusions, theories, faiths. We are living creatures, not labels. It is our human circumstance that makes us search for food, clothes and shelter at the expense of others. Our very thinking is separative and all action springing from this limited thought must prevent co-operation. The economic and social structure, as it is now, including organised religions, intensifies exclusiveness, separateness. This lack of co-operation ultimately brings about wars and the destruction of man. It is only during crises or disasters, that we seem to come together, and when they are over we are

back to our old condition. We seem to be incapable of living and working together harmoniously.

Is it because our brain, which is the centre of our thought, our feeling, has from ancient days become through necessity so conditioned to seek its own personal survival that this isolating, aggressive process has come about? Is it because this isolating process identifies itself with the family, with the tribe, and becomes glorified nationalism? Is not all isolation linked to a need for identification and fulfilment? Has not the importance of the self been cultivated through evolution by the opposition of the me and you, the we and they? Have not all religions emphasised personal salvation, personal enlightenment, personal achievement, both religiously and in the world? Has co-operation become impossible because we have given such importance to talent, to specialisation, to achievement, to success - all emphasising separateness? Is it because human co-operation has centred on some kind of authority of government or religion, around some ideology or conclusion, which then inevitably brings about its own destructive opposite?

What does it mean to co-operate - not the word but the spirit of it? You cannot possibly co-operate with another, with the earth and its waters, unless you in yourself are harmonious, not broken up, non-contradictory; you cannot co-operate if you yourself are under strain, pressure, conflict. How can you co-operate with the universe if you are concerned with yourself, your problems, your ambitions? There can be no co-operation if all your activities are self-centred and you are occupied with your own selfishness, with your own secret desires and pleasures. As long as the intellect with its thoughts dominates all your actions, obviously there can be no co-operation, for thought is partial, narrow and everlastingly divisive. Co-operation demands great honesty. Honesty has no motive. Honesty is

not some ideal, some faith. Honesty is clarity – the clear perception of things as they are. Perception is attention. That very attention throws light, with all its energy, on that which is being observed. This light of perception brings about a transformation of the thing observed. There is no system through which you learn to co-operate. It is not to be structured and classified. Its very nature demands that there be love and that love is not measureable, for when you compare – which is the essence of measurement – thought has entered. Where thought is, love is not.

Now can this be conveyed to the student and can co-operation exist among educators in these schools? These schools are centres of a new generation with a new outlook, with a new sense of being citizens of the world, concerned with all the living things of this world. It is your grave responsibility to bring about this spirit of co-operation.

Intelligence and the capacity of the intellect are two entirely different things. Perhaps these two words derive from the same root but in order to clarify the full significance of compassion we must be able to distinguish the difference in meaning between the two. Intellect is the capacity to discern, to reason, imagine, to create illusions, to think clearly and also to think nonobjectively, personally. Intellect is generally considered different from emotion, but we use the word intellect to convey the whole human capacity for thought. Thought is the response of memory accumulated through various experiences, real or imagined, which are stored as knowledge in the brain. So the capacity of the intellect is to think. Thinking is limited under all circumstances and when the intellect dominates our activities in both the outer and inner world, naturally our actions must be partial, incomplete. This brings about regret, anxiety and pain.

All theories and ideologies are in themselves partial and when scientists, technicians and so-called philosophers dominate our society, our morals – and so our daily lives – then we are never faced with the realities of what is actually going on. These influences colour our perceptions, our direct understanding. It is the intellect that finds explanations, for wrong-doing as well as right-doing. It rationalises misbehaviour, killing and wars. It defines good as an opposite of bad. The good has no opposite. If the good were related to the bad, then goodness would have in it the seeds of the bad. Then it would not be goodness. But the intellect is incapable, because of its own divisive capacity, to understand the fullness of the good. The intellect – thought - is always comparing, evaluating, competing, imitating; so

we become conforming, second-hand human beings. The intellect has given enormous benefits to mankind but it has also brought about great destruction. It has cultivated the arts of war but is incapable of wiping away the barriers between human beings. Anxiety is part of the nature of the intellect, as is hurt, for the intellect, which is thought, creates the image which is then capable of being hurt.

When one understands the whole nature and movement of the intellect and thought, we can begin to investigate what is intelligence. Intelligence is the capacity to perceive the whole. Intelligence is incapable of dividing the senses, the emotions, the intellect from each other. It regards them as one unitary movement. Because its perception is always whole, it is incapable of dividing man from man, of setting man against nature. Because in its very nature intelligence is whole, it is incapable of killing.

Practically all religions have said do not kill but they have never prevented killing. Some religions have said that the things of the earth, including the living creatures, are put there for man's use – therefore kill and destroy. Killing for pleasure, killing for commerce, killing for nationalism, killing for ideologies, killing for one's faith, are all accepted as a way of life. As we are killing the living things of the earth and of the sea we are becoming more and more isolated and in this isolation we become more and more greedy, seeking pleasure, in every form. Intellect may perceive this but is incapable of complete action. Intelligence, which is inseparable from love, will never kill.

Not to kill, if it is a concept, an ideal, is not intelligence. When intelligence is active in our daily life it will tell us when to co-operate and when not to. The very nature of intelligence is sensitivity and this sensitivity is love.

Without this intelligence there can be no compassion. Compassion is not the doing of charitable acts or social

reform; it is free from sentiment, romanticism and emotional enthusiasm. It is as strong as death. It is like a great rock, immovable in the midst of confusion, misery and anxiety. Without this compassion no new culture or society can come into being. Compassion and intelligence walk together; they are not separate. Compassion acts through intelligence. It can never act through the intellect. Compassion is the essence of the wholeness of life.

Human beings throughout the world have made the intellect one of the most important factors in our daily life. As one observes, the ancient Hindus, the Egyptians and the Greeks have all considered intellect the most important function in life. Even the Buddhists have given importance to it. In every university, college and school throughout the world, whether under a totalitarian regime or in so-called democracies, it has played a dominant role. We mean by the intellect, the capacity to understand, to discern, to choose, to weigh, all the technology of modern science. The essence of the intellect is – is it not? – the whole movement of thought. Thought dominates the world in both the outer life and the inner life. Thought has also created the world, all the rituals, the dogmas, the beliefs. Thought has also created the cathedrals, the temples, the mosques with their marvellous architecture, and the local shrines. Thought has been responsible for the never-ending and expansive technology, the wars and their material, the division of people into nations, into classes and into races. Thought has been and probably still is the instigator of torture in the name of god, of peace, of order. It has also been responsible for revolution, for the terrorists, for the ultimate principle and pragmatic ideals. By thought we live. Our actions are based on thought, our relationships are also founded on thought, so intellect has been worshipped throughout the ages.

But thought has not created nature – the heavens with their expanding stars, the earth with all its beauty, with its vast seas and green lands. Thought has not created the tree but thought has used the tree to build the house, to make the chair. Thought uses and destroys.

Thought cannot create love, affection and the quality of beauty. It has woven a network of illusions and actualities. When we live by thought alone, with all its complexities and subtleties, with its purposes and directions, we lose the great depth of life, for thought is superficial. Though it pretends to delve deeply, the very instrument is incapable of penetrating beyond its own limitations. It can project the future but that future is born of the roots of the past. The things which thought has created are actual, real – like a table, like the image you worship – but the image, the symbol you worship is put together by thought, including its many illusions – romantic, idealistic, humanitarian. Human beings accept and live with the things of thought – money, position, status and the luxury of a freedom that money brings. This is the whole movement of thought and the intellect and through this narrow window of our life we look at the world.

Is there any other movement which is not of the intellect and thought? This has been the enquiry of many religious, philosophical and scientific endeavours. When we use the word religion we do not mean the nonsense of belief, rituals, dogma and hierarchical structure. We mean by a religious man or religious woman those who have freed themselves from centuries of propaganda, from the dead weight of tradition, ancient or modern. The philosophers who indulge in theories, in concepts, in ideational pursuits cannot possibly explore beyond the narrow window of thought, nor will the scientist with his extraordinary capacities, with his perhaps original thinking, with his immense knowledge. Knowledge is the storehouse of memory and there must be freedom from the known to explore that which is beyond it. There must be freedom to enquire without any bondage, without any attachment to one's experience, to one's conclusions, to all the things man has imposed upon himself. The intellect must be still in absolute quietness

without a tremor of thought.

Our education now is based on the cultivation of the intellect, of thought and knowledge, which are necessary in the field of our daily action, but they have no place in our psychological relationship with each other for the very nature of thought is divisive and destructive. When thought dominates all our activities and all our relationships, it brings about a world of violence, terror, conflict, and misery.

In these schools this must be the concern of all of us – the young and the old.

We ought to understand right from the beginning of this new year that we are primarily concerned with the psychological aspect of our life though we are not going to neglect the physical, biological side. What one is inwardly will eventually bring about a good society or the gradual deterioration of human relationship. We are concerned with both aspects of life, not giving one or the other predominance, though psychologically - that is, what we are inwardly - will dictate our behaviour, our relationship with others. We seem to give far greater importance to physical aspects of life, to everyday activities, however relevant or irrelevant, and wholly neglect the deeper and wider realities. So please bear in mind that in these letters we are approaching our existence from the inner to the outer, not the other way round. Though most people are concerned with the outer, our education must be concerned with bringing about a harmony between the outer and inner and this cannot possibly come about if our eyes are fixed only on the outer. We mean by the inner all the movement of thought, our feelings - reasonable and unreasonable, our imaginings, our beliefs and attachments - happy and unhappy - our secret desires with their contradictions, our experiences, suspicions, violence and so on. The hidden ambitions, the illusions, the mind clings to, the superstitions of religion and the seemingly everlasting conflict within ourselves are also part of our psychological structure. If we are blind to these or accept them as an inevitable part of our human nature, we will allow a society in which we ourselves become prisoners. So this is really important to understand. One is sure that every student throughout the world sees the effect of chaos around us and

hopes to escape into some kind of outward order, though, in himself he may be in utter turmoil. He wants to change the outer without changing himself, but he is the source and continuation of the disorder. This is a fact, not a personal conclusion.

So we are concerned in our education with changing the source and continuation. It is human beings who create society, not some gods in some heaven. So we begin with the student. The very word implies studying, learning and acting. To learn not only from books and teachers, but to study and learn about yourself – this is basic education. If you don't know about yourself and are filling your mind with many of the facts of the universe, you are merely accepting and continuing the disorder. Probably as a student you are not interested in this. You want to enjoy yourself, pursue your own interests, are forced to study only under pressure, accept the inevitable comparisons and results with an eye fixed on some kind of career. This is your basic interest which seems natural, for your parents, and grandparents have followed the same path – job, marriage, children, responsibility. As long as *you* are safe you care little for what is happening around you. This is your actual relationship to the world, the world human beings have created. The immediate is far more real, important and demanding than the whole. Your concern and the educator's concern is and must be to understand the whole of human existence; not a part but the whole. The part is only the knowledge of human physical discoveries.

So here in these letters we begin with you, the student, primarily and the educator who is helping you to know yourself. This is the function of all education. We need to bring about a good society in which all human beings can live happily in peace, without violence, with security. You as a student are responsible for this. A good society doesn't

come into existence through some ideal, a hero or a leader, or some carefully planned system. You have to be good because you are the future. You will make the world, either as it is, modified, or as a world in which you and others can live without wars, without brutalities, with generosity and affection.

So what will you do? You have understood the problem, which is not difficult; so what will you do? Most of you are instinctively kind, good and wanting to help, unless of course you have been too trodden down and twisted, which one hopes you are not. So what will you do? If the educator is worth his salt he will want to help you and then the question is, what will you do together to help you to study yourself, to learn about yourself and act? We will stop here with this letter and go on in our next.

*15th January, 1980*

To continue with what we were saying in our last letter, pointing out the responsibility to study, learn and to act. Since one is young and perhaps innocent, given to excitement and games, the word responsibility will seem rather frightening and a wearisome burden. But we are using the word to imply care and concern for our world. When we use this word the students must not feel any sense of guilt if they have not shown this care and attention. After all, your parents who feel responsible for you, that you should study and equip yourselves for your future life, do not feel guilty, though they may feel disappointed or unhappy if you do not come up to their expectations. We must clearly understand that when we use the word responsibility there must not be a feeling of guilt. We are taking a particular care in using this word, freed from the unhappy weight of a word like duty. When this is clearly understood, then we can use the word responsibility without its burden of tradition. So you are at school with this responsibility to study, to learn, to act. This is the main purpose of education.

In our last letter we put the question 'What will you do about yourself and your relationship with the world? As we said, the educator, the teacher, is also responsible for helping you to understand yourself and so the world. We ask this question for you to find out for yourself what is your response. It is a challenge you must answer. You have to begin with yourself, to understand yourself, and in relation to that, what is the first step? Is it not affection? Probably when you are young you have this quality but very quickly we seem to lose it. Why? Is it not because of the pressure of studies, the pressure of competition, the pressure of trying to

reach a certain standing in your studies, comparing yourselves with others and perhaps being bullied by other students? Do not all these many pressures force you to be concerned with yourself? And when you are so concerned with yourself, you inevitably lose that quality of affection. It is very important to understand how gradually circumstances, environment, the pressure of your parents or your own urge to conform, narrow the vast beauty of life to a small circle of yourself. And if you lose this affection while you are young there is a hardening of the heart and mind. It is a rare thing to keep this affection throughout life, without corruption. So this is the first thing you must have. Affection implies care, a diligent care in whatever you are doing; care in your speech, in your dress, in the manner of your eating, how you look after your body; care in your behaviour without the distinctions of superior or inferior; how you consider people.

Politeness is consideration for others and this consideration is care, whether it is for your younger brother or oldest sister. When you care, violence in every form disappears from you - your anger, your antagonism and your pride. This care implies attention. Attention is to watch, observe, listen, learn. There are many things you can learn from books but there is a learning which is infinitely clear, quick and without any ignorance. Attention implies sensitivity and this gives depth to perception which no knowledge, with its ignorance, can give. This you have to study, not in a book, but, with the help of the educator, learn to observe things around you - what is happening in the world, what is happening with a fellow student, what is happening in that poor village or slum and to the man who is struggling along that dirty street.

Observation is not a habit. It isn't a thing you train yourself to do mechanically. It is the fresh eye of interest, of care, of

sensitivity. You cannot train yourself to be sensitive. Again, when you are young you are sensitive, quick in your perceptions, but again this fades as you grow older. So you have to study yourself and perhaps your teacher will help you. If he doesn't it doesn't matter for it is your responsibility to study yourself and so learn what you are. And when there is this affection your actions will be born out of its purity. All this may sound very hard but it is not. We have neglected all this side of life. We are so concerned with our careers, with our own pleasures, with our own importance, that we neglect the great beauty of affection.

There are two words that one must always bear in mind - diligence and negligence. We diligently apply our mind to acquiring knowledge from books, from teachers, spend twenty or more years of our life in that and neglect to study the deeper meaning of our own life. We have both the outer and the inner. The inner demands greater diligence than the outer. It is an urgent demand and this diligence is the affectionate study of what one is.

*1st February, 1980*

Cruelty is an infectious disease and one must strictly guard oneself against it. Some students seem to have this peculiar infection and they somehow gradually dominate the others. Probably they feel it is very manly, for their elders are often cruel in their words, in their attitudes, in their gestures, in their pride. This cruelty exists in the world. The responsibility of the student - and please remember with what significance we are using that word - is to avoid any form of cruelty. Once many years ago I was invited to talk at a school in California and as I entered the school a boy of ten or so was passing me with a large bird, caught in a trap, whose legs were broken. I stopped and looked at the boy without saying a word. His face expressed fear and when I finished the talk and came out the boy - a stranger - came up to me with tears in his eyes and said, 'Sir, it will never happen again.' He was afraid that I would tell the headmaster and there would be a scene about it and as I didn't say a word to either the boy or the headmaster about the cruel incident, his awareness of the terrible thing he had done made him realise the enormity of the act. It is important to be aware of one's own activities and if there is affection then cruelty has no place in our life at any time. In western countries you see birds carefully nurtured and later in the season shot for sport and then eaten. The cruelty of hunting, killing small animals, has become part of our civilisation, like war, like torture, and the acts of terrorists and kidnappers. In our intimate personal relationships there is also a great deal of cruelty, anger, hurting each other. The world has become a dangerous place in which to live and in our schools any form of coercion, threat, anger must be totally and completely avoided for all

these harden the heart and mind, and affection cannot co-exist with cruelty.

You understand, as a student, how important it is to realise that any form of cruelty not only hardens your heart but perverts your thinking, distorts your actions. The mind, like the heart, is a delicate instrument, sensitive and very capable, and when cruelty and oppression touch it then there is a hardening of the self. Affection, love, has no centre as the self.

Now having read this and having understood so far what is said, what will you do about it? You have studied what has been said, you are learning the content of these words; what then is your action? Your response is not merely to study and learn but also to act. Most of us know and are aware of all the implications of cruelty and of what it actually does both outwardly and inwardly, and leave it at that without doing anything about it – thinking one thing and doing just the opposite. This not only breeds a great deal of conflict but also hypocrisy. Most students do not like to be hypocrites; they like to look at facts but they do not always act. So the responsibility of the student is to see the facts about cruelty and without any persuasion or cajoling understand what is implied and do something about it. The doing is perhaps a greater responsibility. People generally live with ideas and beliefs totally unrelated to their daily life and so this naturally becomes hypocrisy. So don't be a hypocrite - which doesn't mean you must be rude, aggressive or overly critical. When there is affection there is inevitably courtesy without hypocrisy.

What is the responsibility of the teacher who has studied, learned, and acts toward the student? Cruelty has many forms. A look, a gesture, a sharp remark, and above all comparison. Our whole educational system is based on comparison. A is better than B and so B must conform to or

imitate A. This in essence is cruelty, and ultimately its expression is examinations; so what is the responsibility of the educator who sees the truth of this? How will he teach any subject without reward and punishment, knowing that there must be some kind of report indicating the capacity of the student? Can the teacher do this? Is it compatible with affection? If the central reality of affection is there, has comparison any place at all? Can the teacher eliminate in himself the pain of comparison? Our whole civilisation is based on hierarchical comparison both outwardly and inwardly which denies the sense of deep affection. Can we eliminate from our minds the better, the more, the stupid, the clever, this whole comparative thinking? If the teacher has understood the pain of comparison what is his responsibility in his teaching and in his action? A person who has really grasped the significance of the pain of comparison is acting from intelligence.

*15th February, 1980*

In all these letters we have been constantly pointing out that co-operation between the educator and the student is the responsibility of both. The word co-operation implies working together, but we cannot work together if we are not looking in the same direction with the same eyes and the same mind. The word same, as we are using it, under no circumstances implies uniformity, conformity or accepting, obeying, imitating. In co-operation with each other, working together, the student and the teacher must have a relationship which is essentially based on affection. Most people co-operate if they are building, if they are playing games, or are involved in scientific research, or if they are working together for an ideal, a belief or for some concept which is carried out for some personal or collective benefit; or they co-operate around an authority, religious or political.

To study, learn, and act, co-operation is necessary between the teacher and the student. Both are involved in these. The educator may know many subjects and facts. In conveying them to the student, if there is not the quality of affection, it becomes a struggle between the two. But we are not only concerned with worldly knowledge but also with the study of oneself in which there is learning and action. Both the educator and the student are involved in this and here authority ceases. To learn about oneself the educator is not only concerned with himself but with the student. In this interaction with its reactions one begins to see the nature of oneself – the thoughts, the desires, the attachments, the identifications and so on. Each is acting as a mirror to the other; each is observing in the mirror exactly what he is because, as we pointed out earlier, the psychological

understanding of oneself is far more important than the gathering of facts and storing them up as knowledge for skill in action. The inner always overcomes the outer. This must be clearly understood both by the educator and by the student. The outer has not changed man; the outer activities, physical revolution, physical control of the environment have not deeply changed the human being, his prejudices and superstitions; deeply human beings remain as they have been for millions of years.

Right education is to transform this basic condition. When this is really grasped by the educator, though he may have subjects to teach, his main concern must be with the radical revolution in the psyche, in the you and the me. And here comes the importance of co-operation between the two who are studying, learning and acting together. It is not the spirit of a team, or the spirit of a family, or the identification with a group or nation. It is free enquiry into ourselves without the barrier of the one who knows and the one who doesn't. This is the most destructive barrier, especially in matters of self-knowing. There is no leader and no led in this matter. When this is fully grasped – and with affection – then communication between the student and the teacher becomes easy, clear and not merely at a verbal level. Affection carries no pressure, it is never devious. It is direct and simple.

Having said all this, and if both of you have studied what has been said, what is the quality of your mind and heart? Is there a change which is not induced by influence or by mere stimulation which may give an illusory change? Stimulation is like a drug; it wears off and you are back where you were. Any form of pressure or influence also acts in the same way. If you act under these circumstances you are not actually studying and learning about yourself. Action based on reward and punishment, influence or pressure, inevitably brings about conflict. This is so. But few people see the truth

of this and so they give up or say it is impossible in a practical world or that it is idealistic – some utopian concept. But it is not. It is eminently practical and workable. So do not be put off by the traditionalists, the conservatives, or those who cling to the illusion that change can only come from without.

When you study and learn about yourself, there comes an extraordinary strength, based on clarity, which can withstand all the nonsense of the establishment. This strength is not a form of resistance or self-centred obstinacy or will, but is a diligent observation of the outer and the inner. It is the strength of affection and intelligence.

*1st March, 1980*

You come to these schools with your own background - be it traditional or free - with discipline or without discipline, obeying or reluctant and disobeying, in revolt or conforming. Your parents are either negligent or very diligent about you; some may feel very responsible, others may not. You come with all this trouble, with broken families, uncertain or assertive, wanting your way or shyly acquiescing but inwardly rebelling.

In these schools you are free, and all the disturbances of your young lives come into play. You want your way and no one in the world can have his way. You have to understand this very seriously - you cannot have your own way. Either you learn to adjust with understanding, with reason, or you are broken by the new environment you have entered. It is very important to understand this. In these schools the educators carefully explain and you can discuss with them, have a dialogue, and see why certain things have to be done. When one lives in a small community of teachers and students it is necessary that they have a good relationship with each other, friendly, affectionate, and with a certain quality of attentive comprehension. No-one, especially nowadays, living in a free society likes rules, and rules become totally unnecessary when you and the grown-up educator understand, not only verbally and intellectually but with your heart, that certain disciplines are necessary. The word discipline has been ruined by the authoritarians. Each craft has its own discipline, its own skill. The word discipline comes from the word disciple - to learn; not conform, not rebel, but to learn about your own reactions, your own background, their limitation, and to go beyond

them. The essence of learning is constant movement without a fixed point. If its point becomes your prejudice, your opinions and conclusions and you start from this handicap, then you cease to learn. Learning is infinite. The mind that is constantly learning is beyond all knowledge. So you are here to learn as well as to communicate. Communication is not only the exchange of words, however articulate and clear those words may be; it is much deeper than that. Communication is learning from each other, understanding each other, and this comes to an end when you have taken a definite stand about some trivial or not fully thought-out act.

When one is young there is an urge to conform, not to feel out of it; to learn the nature and implication of conformity brings its own peculiar discipline. Please always bear in mind when we use that word that both the student and the educator are in a relationship of learning, not assertion and acceptance. When this is clearly understood rules become unnecessary. When this is not clear, then rules have to be made. You may revolt against rules, against being told what to do or not to do, but when you quickly understand the nature of learning, rules will disappear altogether. It is only the obstinate, the self-assertive, who bring about rules: thou shalt and thou shalt not.

Learning is not born out of curiosity. You may be curious about sex; that curiosity is based on pleasure, on some kind of excitement, on the attitudes of others. The same applies to drink, drugs, smoking. Learning is far deeper and more extensive. You learn about the universe not out of pleasure or curiosity but out of your relationship to the world. We have divided learning into separate categories depending on the demands of society or your own personal inclination.

We are not talking of learning *about* something, but the

quality of the mind that is willing to learn. You can learn how to become a good carpenter or a gardener or an engineer, and when you have acquired the skill in these you have narrowed down your mind into a tool that can function perhaps skilfully in a certain pattern. This is what is called learning. This gives a certain security financially and perhaps that is all one wants, and so we create a society which provides what we have asked of it. But when there is this extra quality of learning not *about* something, then you have a mind and, of course, a heart that are timelessly alive.

Discipline is not control or subjugation. Learning implies attention, that is to be diligent. It is only the negligent mind that is never learning. It is forcing itself to accept when it is shallow, careless, indifferent. A diligent mind is actively watching, observing, never sinking into second-hand values and beliefs. A mind that is learning is a free mind and freedom demands the responsibility of learning. The mind that is caught in self-opinion, entrenched in some knowledge, may demand freedom, but what it means by freedom is the expression of its own personal attitudes and conclusions, and when this is thwarted it cries for self-fulfilment. Freedom has no sense of fulfilment: it is free.

So when you come to these schools, or to any school in fact, there must be this gentle quality of learning and with it goes a great sense of affection. When you are really deeply affectionate you are learning.











These letters are not meant to be read casually when you have a little time from other things, nor are they to be treated as entertainment. These letters are written seriously and if you care to read them, read them with intent to study what is said as you would study a flower by looking at the flower very carefully – its petals, its stem, its colours, its fragrance and its beauty. These letters should be studied in the same manner, not read one morning and forgotten in the rest of the day. One must give time to it, play with it, question it, enquire into it without acceptance; live with it for some time; digest it so that it is yours and not the writer's.

*J. Krishnamurti*