

## Module 6 : Jiddu Krishnamurti

### Section 2 : Existence

Human life is totally filled with fright, greed and envy. Man is burdened with great sorrow. These were not the words of the Great Buddha. They are the words of Jiddu Krishnamurti the well known world teacher. He simply says:

Technologically, man has advanced incredibly, yet he remains as he has been for thousands of years, fighting, greedy, envious, burdened with great sorrow<sup>2</sup>.

His ideas of existence are well explicated in his book **Beyond Violence**. The whole problem of existence is discussed in the first chapter titled Existence. Our present day world is totally filled with utter chaos, disorder and violence. We have been experiencing extreme forms of brutality. War breaks out somewhere due to petty riots of conflicting groups. We cannot escape from confusion. Our life is full of contradictions and difficulties. And these difficulties are only in our society but also experience these difficulties in the outer world. They will cause enormous amounts of destruction. Anarchy becomes the order of the day. Values will go on changing. Respect for the law and respect towards the elders and elderly people will disappear. Any authority to control will not be available. All our faith will be lost if we wait for such an authority or the savior to come and protect us. Not only that we will experience that every establishment fails to prove itself worthy. All our knowledge which was acquired out of our philosophical thinking will also prove useless. This is the very state of chaos. Our only question becomes then what is going to be the right action? We may get the doubt whether any such action ever becomes possible. This will finally lead to the question of the right conduct. Millions of years have elapsed in this attempt of man to find the answer. Krishnamurti attempts to solve this problem from a different perspective. He simply starts to examine the facts as they were. It is going to be a very close observation. It is going to be a very objective examination. It is free from our sentient sentiments. He asks us to undertake such an examination without any emotion. This he calls the exploration. We shall conduct such explorative journeys without any prejudice and we shall have that freedom, the freedom which guarantees us freedom from any kind of cultural conditioning. We shall be clear of all the beliefs. It shall be a mere observation. It shall be the observation of what actually exists. But not what it ought to be. That becomes our only learning. And according to Krishnamurti learning is doing. He says that:

In the learning is the doing. Learning is not separate from action.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> J. Krishnamurti, **Beyond Violence**, Krishnamurti Foundation in India, Chennai, 2005. Page 1

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Page 2

In his discourses he simply starts to understand what is meant by communication first. To communicate we must use some words. Even it becomes necessary to transcend those words. Here starts the real investigation of the speaker and the hearer. This is going to be the investigative journey. Both the hearer and the speaker will be in constant touch with each other. In that process they will share, explore and observe everything together. Krishnamurti says that the meaning of the word communication is only that one. That is partaking and sharing. This kind of investigation dissolves all the duality that of the speaker and the listener, teacher and the disciple all like ones. He says that there will not be any scope for agreement or disagreement in such a kind of investigation. Generally we will be communicating in the form of words where from we try to take into consideration the points of view of both the speaker and the hearer. There will be the scope for distortion as well as the scope of your or my point of view. But here in this kind of communication no such thing can happen. Both of them the communicator as well as the receiver will be involved in that kind of investigative journey. In fact it is a joint investigation. There will not be any room for sentimentality or emotionality. It is a sharing as well as working together. Our observations shall be clear and without any distortion. A clear eye only can have such an opportunity. It will be equal to using the microscope in common. Then there cannot be any difference of the objects of observation. Both will be observing the same object. Such a kind of journey will enable us to examine, to test freely whatever we try to observe.

We will try to observe what is actually there in this world. There is every kind of violence. It is existent not only outwardly but is existent in our relationships with each other. It is existent in all the divisions we enrich in the form of division in the name of nationality and religiosity. This division is existent both politically as well as individually. This is a confusing situation. What we have to do becomes more problematic. Krishnamurti asks us to search within ourselves to overcome these problems. Having lost all our faith in such a situation in the existent outward authority he asks us to establish our own authority. This can be had through our individuality. Krishnamurti defines individuality as the indivisibility of our self, the wholeness of ourselves. Here he even describes this wholeness as the holy one and the healthy one. But in fact we are not that whole ones. We live in a state of fragmentation having been divided within ourselves. Then the question of authority becomes more problematic. We being in state of fragmented ones, how can we assume that such a fragment can ask or assume the authority? This becomes the authority of one fragment over the other fragments.

Krishnamurti personally observed that our present day education, science, organized religion, propaganda, and politics, all have failed miserably. Peace did not come out of these organizations or institutions. But our technological advancement amounted to be unbelievable. Nothing had ever changed with such a kind of advancement. He remained as he was throughout. Millions of years of history were proved again that human existence is fully filled with greed anger, frailty and violence. Krishnamurti says that the above conclusion was not at all any assumption.

Krishnamurti advises us to understand what love is in this context. He also asks us to understand what really is to die. He writes in his own words about the phenomenon of existence in the following lines. It is not a simple phenomenon. It is the whole phenomenon of existence. He writes:

So to find out what to do in world that is so confused, so brutal , so utterly unhappy, we have to examine not only what living is—actually as it is—but also we have to understand what love is; and what it means to die. Also we have to understand what man has been trying to find out for thousands of years; if there is reality which transcends all thought. Until you understand the complexity of this whole picture, to say, “What am I to do with regard to a particular fragment? Has no meaning whatsoever. You have to understand the whole existence, not just a part of it; however tiresome, however agonizing, however brutal that part is, you have to see the whole picture: the picture of what love is, what meditation is, if there is such a thing as god, what it means to live.<sup>4</sup>

Then, he says, arises the question of what to do and that is going to give us the facts of living and the right action.

We have to understand clearly what is living? In the same manner we have to understand what is not living? We have to understand the word “observe” also. Generally it means to see, to hear, and to learn. Then again we are bound to know what that word “to see” implies. Now we will come to each and every point one by one.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., Page 4-5

When we see, we will be seeing alone but not with anybody else. We will be telling that “I See” or “I am seeing”. But we cannot tell that “I am seeing together”. Even though we are not alone we are observing the same event un-joined individually that is not with common eyes. We are observing or looking at that event independently and individually. Thus the use of the word “together” and the togetherness will not arise. . Even it is required to have that particular artistic orientation. Think that you are a botanist. And think that you are watching a tree. And you will certainly observe that all your botanical knowledge will provide you the required scheme to understand that tree. All your observations are going to be in accordance with that botanical frame work. It cannot be the observation of the actual, the “is”. It is only the botanical image which you have erected within your mind that appears in your observation. He writes:

The image that you have built about him or her, or about yourself, is going to prevent you from looking<sup>5</sup>.

He says that there will therefore be the distortion or contradiction. This, he says, firmly

establishes the relationship between the observer and the thing observed. This becomes the main point of Krishnamurti's philosophy. This becomes the very chord of his type of Advaita stand. It may appear to be very nearer to that of the Buddhist theory of mind. All our observations are colored by our affections. But here in this context Krishnamurti tries to establish seeing or observing together. Looking together means to observe with care with affection so that, we can see the same thing together. It is not that much simple. We shall be free of the image. This, Krishnamurti calls as the freedom from the image. In our communication of seeing together the speaker becomes only the mirror with an image. When you think of yourself it will be your own image in yourself and you becoming that mirror.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., page 5

We have to take steps to prevent the distortions of our own being. To have a clear picture there shall not be any image present. Every form of image shall disappear. They shall go. All these forms and images will be our own prejudices. Beyond these distortions of the colours of our mind we will obtain now the clear picture. This becomes the clear picture or the pictures with clarity. With this clarity there will arise the action. The confusions and the chaos we are having within ourselves within our minds will ask what I have to do. Without any confusion when we obtain the clear picture we will have the capacity to act. There will not be any hesitation.

Krishnamurti gives out the dangers of nationalism and the dividing groupism. This will be the dangerous thing. This kind of divisions will cause insecurity, war, and uncertainty. But here we have to note one thing. Whenever our mind sees the danger or observes the danger of disorder clearly there will be totally a different kind of action. But this clarity will not be the intellectually, emotionally seen thing. It is an actuality which is seen together.

This, Krishnamurti says, is the learning process. It is to learn to see and to observe. It is not the outer phenomenon that we are observing here. It is the inward state of man. To obtain the clarity of seeing without any emotion and without any intellectual colorization of prejudice and propaganda there shall be the radical transformation of the psyche. It shall be at the root of one's being. This becomes the main point of Krishnamurti wherefrom he expects the radical transformation of the individual from within. But that will come not in accordance with any particular theory, philosophy or any other intellectual instrument. This he calls as seeing what actually we are. He writes:

That very perception of what he is, will bring about the radical change. And to see what he is, is of the highest importance, not what he thinks he is, not what he is told that he is<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., Page 7

Krishnamurti's main philosophy becomes the discrimination between what is told about us by others and what we are actually, felt or seen by ourselves. According to Krishnamurti they are two different states. Here he comes out with the example of being hungry and being informed of being hungry. In the first place it is the direct perception of our hunger and in the second place it will be the information regarding our hunger communicated to us by others. When you are hungry you will act directly and in accordance to your perception. But that is not the case when you are informed by others. He writes:

So similarly one has to observe and see for oneself actually what one is. And that is what we are going to do; know oneself. It has been stated that to know oneself is the highest wisdom, but very few of us have done it. We have not the patience, the intensity or the passion, to find out what we are<sup>7</sup>.

This kind of radical change within our psyches will bring the peace required in the world. It is described here in his words the joy of such a change and transformation in the following lines:

We shall live freely, not do what we like, but live happily, joyously<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., Page 7

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., Page 7

It is stated by Krishnamurti that if a man is having great joy with him and his heart will not have any hatred and will not have any violence. He will not try to destroy the other. It is verily interesting to note that according to Krishnamurti freedom doesn't involve any condemnation of whatever we experience within ourselves. He further states that we generally are trained to condemn, to explain away, or to justify. It is all with us that we were not at all trained to do without any condemnation or justification. He even asks us to observe without any condemnation. This becomes his request to do the first and the last thing. He writes:

This is going to be very difficult, because all our culture, our tradition, is to compare, justify or condemn what we are. We say, "This is right", "this is wrong", "this is true", "this is false", "this is beautiful" -- which prevents us from actually observing what we are<sup>9</sup>.

Krishnamurti in the same spirit says that we shall not condemn because what we are condemning is nothing but our own inner thing. We are in that sense living as a living thing. Our condemnation belongs to the past with which we are actually condemning. That is a past, past of our lives for which we are dead. Past belongs to the memory which is having the dead status with respect to the present. This in turn becomes the contradiction. It is the contradiction between the dead and the living. It is advised to do away all the past within us. Then only we can know what that present can be. Then only we can look freely without any prejudice. Going to the past is not at all feasible. Living in the present becomes possible. This may bring the new result. He writes:

What we are doing is to explore into ourselves like scientists, not depending on anybody. If you trust anybody you are lost, whether you trust your analyst, your priest, or your own memory, your own experience, because that is the past. And if you are looking with the eyes of the past at the present, then you will never understand what the living thing is<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., page 8

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., Page 8

In this kind of examination we are looking together this living thing, which are you, me, the life or whatever it may be. This is the looking at the phenomenon of violence. Krishnamurti says that we were brought up with violence within ourselves from our childhood onwards. He did not like to have any explanation from any quarter say the priest, the analyst or whoever it may be. All such explanations he says will make us to lose ourselves, the fact of this life, the inward violence we keep within ourselves and with which we try to project it through the outward violence. He says that simply by knowing what the causes for such an epidemic violence were, it will be the reduction of our present to the past. Even thinking cannot solve this problem. He writes:

All thinking – into which we shall go presently- is the response of the past, the response of memory, knowledge and experience. So thinking is never new, never free. With this process of thinking you look at life, and therefore when you ask "what shall I do about violence? You have already escaped from the fact"<sup>11</sup>.

His total philosophy develops around the point that we live in a state of fragmented condition. If we look at the peace and condemn the violence within us, we are simply allowing one fragment to take up the authority and condemn the other fragments. This is not a proper act. What he says is that if we can look at this existing fact of violence within us with the wholeness without the observer and the observed phenomenon, then we are advised to do that. But we live in state of fragmentation. This fragmentation will be the cause of all of our conflicts. This will be the base of all our contradictions and constant battles. He writes:

So until you understand the root of this contradiction yourself- not according to the speaker, not according to anybody-you can have no life of peace and happiness and joy<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., page 9-10

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., Page 11

The real and the only cause for all this state of disturbance in the form of conflicts and inner contradictions will be the division between the observer and the observed. Krishnamurti says that any kind of observation which brings out the following notions which are not true. They may be like the

following:

1. I must get rid of violence.
2. I am living a life of non-violence.

The observer comes out with such affirmations when he is actually a violent man. That appears to him as hypocrisy. He did not believe it because the conflict will exist as long as the division between the observer and the observed will exist. He asserts that:

And in you there is this division, as the "I" as the "self", as the "me" that is trying to be different from somebody else<sup>13</sup>.

That kind of division between the observer and the observed becomes the root of all this conflict. Krishnamurti feels that the more clarity we will have the more perfected picture. He writes:

This is not just a verbal clarity, hearing a set of words or ideas; it means that you yourself see very clearly, and therefore without choice, how this division between the observer and the observed creates mischief, confusion and sorrow. So when you are violent, can you look at that violence in yourself without the memory, the justification, the assertion that you must not be violent, but merely look? Which means that you must be free of the past?<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., Page 11

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., Page 11-12

Krishnamurti continues his argument stating:

That is why all ideologies are most destructive. In India they have talked about non-violence from time immemorial. They have said, "We are practicing non-violence," and they are just as violent as anybody else. The ideal gives them a certain sense of hypocritical escape from the fact. If you can put aside all ideologies, all principles and just face the fact, then you are dealing with something actual, not mythical, not theoretical<sup>15</sup>.

Now he concludes that we must be free of the division between the observer and the observed. That becomes the first thing. He writes:

to observe without the observer; to look at your children, without the image. The image may be a superficial image or deeply hidden in the unconscious; one has not only to observe the image that one has put together outwardly; the image of the race, of the culture, the historical perspective of the image that one has about oneself. So one must observe not only at the conscious level, but also at the hidden level, in the deep recesses of one's own mind<sup>16</sup>.

This establishes the grounds for his theory of unconditioned mind and later his ideas of freedom and the theory of education with his only instrument of consciousness with that of meditation he tries to establish his theory of the ineffable love which transcends all barriers and encompasses the human psyche with an insurmountable force of affectivity.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., Page 12

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., Page 13