

Module 6 : Jiddu Krishnamurti

Section 6 : Knowledge

Krishnamurti's ideas of knowledge emphasize the very dependence of us on freedom. It is the freedom to think and to act. Krishnamurti considers thought as the very necessary fact of our knowledge. But he is not in favor of giving the final place to knowledge. He says that fossilized ideas of our thought will make knowledge as a dangerous one. Knowledge provides us with the knowledge of the past. It cannot provide any guarantee that it will be fit for today. So he says that we shall have freedom from the known. So comes out his book ***Freedom from the Known***. Such knowledge will not help us to understand the world we live in. It distorts our perception. It will not provide us with the fuller understanding of reality. Knowledge in his sense becomes very necessary to the mechanical function of the mind. Yet he is not prepared to accept all knowledge to be worthy. He answers the question how and where we can draw the line that divides the knowledge to be forgotten and the knowledge to be retained generally we come across in this context the place of decision. Decision is formed basing on the principle of pleasure. This brings in again the other element which comes out of our decision. It is the will. He answers:

In decision there is the element of will. Will is the accumulated, concentrated form of desire.

Right? Desire which says, "I must do that," but I call it won't go into it now. We are saying that will is a great element in decision, and on that tradition we are conditioned. We are questioning that action because will, which is essentially desire, is a divisive factor; the will to succeed, the will to do something and my wife is against it, the me and the not me, and so on.³⁸

³⁸ J. Krishnamurti, ***Meeting Life***, Krishnamurti Foundation India, Madras , 1991 Page 87

Krishnamurti asks us not to draw the line of separation. If we draw the line between that is to be recorded and that is not to be recorded it will create the conflict. In continuation another question that was put to him is it possible not to record? He says that if we can be attentive we can simply be not recording the painful and conflict creating experiences. He says:

Where there is attention there is no recording.³⁹

His final answer to this question will be the following:

So see the truth of this; that on the one level you need knowledge, and here on the other you don't need knowledge at all. See the truth of it-what freedom it brings you. That is real freedom. Right? If you have an insight into it, don't draw the line or make a decision. There is no recording⁴⁰.

³⁹ Ibid., Page 88

⁴⁰ Ibid., Page 88

He asks us not to draw any line to make some knowledge as memorable and the other not memorable. According to Krishnamurti knowledge belongs to the past. Only the present can be considered as the worth living. There is a scope in the present to decide to remake what we have learned in the past. There is scope for change. All knowledge of the past becomes a burden. According to Krishnamurti past is not worth of consideration. He in his book ***Freedom from the Known*** which brings in determinism narrates a Buddhist story of two monks. Right and wrong shall depend on the context. Our guilt cannot be decided by any revealed dogmas. It shall depend on the context. If we simply stick to the past future disappears and the unknown cannot be known. We can understand from the following narration:

There is a rather nice story of two monks walking from one village to another and they

come upon a young girl sitting on the bank of a river, crying. When enquired she answers that she was unable to cross the river which was on fate where as she came from the other side of her house without any problem. One monk lifts her up and carries to the other side and she felt happy. After that they walked for two hours and then the other monk brings into the one who carried the girl to the other side of the prohibition of touching any woman. The one who carried answers that it was two hours back I have done that and I have forgotten that long back. But you carried it as a burden for the last two hours. Krishnamurti writes in his fourteenth article in his book of **Freedom from the Known**

I left her behind two hours ago. You are still carrying her, aren't you?⁴¹

⁴¹ ***Freedom from the Known***, Ed by Mary Lutyens, Krishnamurti Foundation India, Madras, 1997
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