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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

TO COMMUNICATE with one another, even if we know each other very well, is extremely difficult. I may use words that may have to you a significance different from mine. Understanding comes when we, you and I, meet on the same level at the same time. That happens only when there is real affection between people, between husband and wife, between intimate friends. That is real communion. Instantaneous understanding comes when we meet on the same level at the same time. It is very difficult to commune with one another easily, effectively and with definitive action. I am using words which are simple, which are not technical, because I do not think that any technical type of expression is going to help us solve our difficult problems; so I am not going to use any technical terms, either of psychology or of science. I have not read any books on psychology or any religious books, fortunately. I would like to convey, by the very simple words which we use in our daily life, a deeper significance; but that is very difficult if you do not know how to listen.

There is an art of listening. To be able really to listen, one should abandon or put aside all prejudices, pre-formulations and daily activities. When you are in a receptive state of mind, things can be easily understood; you are listening when your real attention is given to something. But unfortunately most of us listen through a screen of resistance. We are screened with prejudices, whether religious or spiritual, psychological or scientific; or with our daily worries, desires and fears. And with these for a screen, we listen. Therefore, we listen really to our own noise, to our own sound, not to what is being said. It is extremely difficult to put aside our training, our prejudices, our inclination, our resistance, and, reaching beyond the verbal expression, to listen so that we understand instantaneously. That is going to be one of our difficulties. If, during this discourse, anything is said which is opposed to your way of thinking and belief, just listen; do not resist. You may be right, and I may be wrong; but by listening and considering together we are going to find out what is the truth.

Truth cannot be given to you by somebody. You have to discover it; and to discover, there must be a state of mind in which there is direct perception. There is no direct perception when there is a resistance, a safeguard, a protection. Understanding comes through being aware of what is. To know exactly what is, the real, the actual, without interpreting it, without condemning or justifying it, is, surely, the beginning of wisdom. It is only when we begin to interpret, to translate according to our conditioning, according to our prejudice, that we miss the truth. After all, it is like research. To know what something is, what it is exactly, requires research—you cannot translate it according to your moods. Similarly, if we can look, observe, listen, be aware of what is, exactly, then the problem is solved. And that is what we are trying to do in all these discourses. I am going to point out to you what is, and

not translate it according to my fancy; nor should you translate it or interpret it according to your background or training. Is it not possible, then, to be aware of everything as it is? Starting from there, surely, there can be an understanding. To acknowledge, to be aware of, to get at that which is, puts an end to struggle. If I know that I am a liar, and it is a fact which I recognize, then the struggle is over.

To acknowledge, to be aware of what one is, is already the beginning of wisdom, the beginning of understanding, which releases you from time. To bring in the quality of time—time, not in the chronological sense, but as the medium, as the psychological process, the process of the mind—is destructive, and creates confusion. So, we can have understanding of what *is* when we recognize it without condemnation, without justification, without identification. To know that one is in a certain condition, in a certain state, is already a process of liberation; but a man who is not aware of his condition, of his struggle, tries to be something other than he is, which brings about habit. So, then, let us keep in mind that we want to examine what is, to observe and be aware of exactly what is the actual, without giving it any slant, without giving it an interpretation. It needs an extraordinarily astute mind, an extraordinarily pliable heart, to be aware of and to follow what is; because what is is constantly moving, constantly undergoing a transformation, and if the mind is tethered to belief, to knowledge, it ceases to pursue, it ceases to follow the swift movement of what is.

What *is* is not static, surely—it is constantly moving, as you will see if you observe it very closely. To follow it, you need a very swift mind and a pliable heart—which are denied when the mind is static, fixed in a belief, in a prejudice, in an identification; and a mind and heart that are dry cannot follow easily, swiftly, that which *is*. One is aware, I think, without too much discussion, too much verbal expression, that there is individual as well as collective chaos, confusion and misery. It is not only in India, but right throughout the world; in China, America, England, Germany, all over the world, there is confusion, mounting sorrow. It is not only national, it is not particularly here, it is all over the world. There is extraordinarily acute suffering, and it is not individual only but collective. So it is a world catastrophe, and to limit it merely to a geographical area, a coloured section of the map, is absurd; because then we shall not understand the full significance of this worldwide as well as individual suffering. Being aware of this confusion, what is our response to-day? How do we react? There is suffering, political, social, religious; our whole psychological being is confused, and all the leaders, political and religious, have failed us; all the books have lost their significance. You may go to the Bhagavad Gita or the Bible or the latest treatise on politics or psychology, and you will find that they have lost that ring, that quality of truth; they have become mere words. You yourself, who are the repeater of those words, are confused and uncertain, and mere repetition of words conveys nothing. Therefore the words and the books have lost their value; that is, if you quote the Bible, or Marx, or the Bhagavad Gita, as you who quote it are yourself uncertain, confused, your repetition becomes a lie; because what is written there becomes mere propaganda, and propaganda is not truth. So when you repeat, you have ceased to understand your own state of being. You are merely covering with words of authority your own confusion. But what we are trying to do is to understand this confusion and not cover it up with quotations; so what is your response to it?

How do you respond to this extraordinary chaos, this confusion, this uncertainty of existence? Be aware of it, as I discuss it: follow, not my words, but the thought which is active in you. Most of us are accustomed to be spectators and not to partake in the game. We read books but we never write books. It has become our tradition, our national and universal habit, to be the spectators, to look on at a football game, to watch the public politicians and orators. We are merely the outsiders, looking on, and

we have lost the creative capacity. Therefore we want to absorb and partake. But if you are merely observing, if you are merely spectators, you will lose entirely the significance of this discourse, because this is not a lecture which you are to listen to from force of habit. I am not going to give you information which you can pick up in an encyclopædia. What we are trying to do is to follow each other's thoughts, to pursue as far as we can, as profoundly as we can, the intimations, the responses of our own feelings. So please find out what your response is to this cause, to this suffering; not what somebody else's words are, but how you yourself respond. Your response is one of indifference if you benefit by the suffering, by the chaos, if you derive profit from it, either economic, social, political or psychological. Therefore you do not mind if this chaos continues. Surely, the more trouble there is in the world, the more chaos, the more one seeks security. Haven't you noticed it? When there is confusion in the world, psychologically and in every way, you enclose yourself in some kind of security, either that of a bank account or that of an ideology; or else you turn to prayer, you go to the temple—which is really escaping from what is happening in the world. More and more sects are being formed, more and more 'isms' are springing up all over the world. Because the more confusion there is, the more you want a leader, somebody who will guide you out of this mess, so you turn to the religious books, or to one of the latest teachers; or else you act and respond according to a system which appears to solve the problem, a system either of the left or of the right. That is exactly what is happening.

The moment you are aware of confusion, of exactly what is, you try to escape from it. Those sects which offer you a system for the solution of suffering, economic, social or religious, are the worst; because then system becomes important and not man—whether it be a religious system, or a system of the left or of the right. System becomes important, the philosophy, the idea, becomes important, and not man; and for the sake of the idea, of the ideology, you are willing to sacrifice all mankind, which is exactly what is happening in the world. This is not merely my interpretation; if you observe, you will find that is exactly what is happening. The system has become important. Therefore, as the system has become important, men, you and I, lose significance; and the controllers of the system, whether religious or social, whether of the left or of the right, assume authority, assume power, and therefore sacrifice you, the individual. That is exactly what is happening. Now what is the cause of this confusion, this misery? How did this misery come about, this suffering, not only inwardly but outwardly, this fear and expectation of war, the third world war that is breaking out? What is the cause of it? Surely it indicates the collapse of all moral, spiritual values, and the glorification of all sensual values, of the value of things made by the hand or by the mind. What happens when we have no other values except the value of the things of the senses, the value of the products of the mind, of the hand or of the machine? The more significance we give to the sensual value of things, the greater the confusion, is it not? Again, this is not my theory. You do not have to quote books to find out that your values, your riches, your economic and social existence are based on things made by the hand or by the mind. So we live and function and have our being steeped in sensual values, which means that things, the things of the mind, the things of the hand and of the machine, have become important; and when things become important, belief becomes predominantly significant—which is exactly what is happening in the world, is it not? Thus, giving more and more significance to the values of the senses brings about confusion; and, being in confusion, we try to escape from it through various forms, whether religious, economic or social, or through ambition, through power, through the search for reality. But the real is near, you do not have to seek it; and a man who seeks truth will never find it. Truth is in what is—and that is the beauty of it. But the moment you conceive it, the moment you seek it, you begin to struggle; and a man who struggles cannot understand. That is why we have to be still, observant, passively aware. We see that our living, our action, is always

within the field of destruction, within the field of sorrow; like a wave, confusion and chaos always overtake us. There is no interval in the confusion of existence. Whatever we do at present seems to lead to chaos, seems to lead to sorrow and unhappiness. Look at your own life and you will see that our living is always on the border of sorrow. Our work, our social activity, our politics, the various gatherings of nations to stop war, all produce further war. Destruction follows in the wake of living; whatever we do leads to death. That is what is actually taking place. Can we stop this misery at once, and not go on always being caught by the wave of confusion and sorrow? That is, great teachers, whether the Buddha or the Christ, have come; they have accepted faith, making themselves, perhaps, free from confusion and sorrow. But they have never prevented sorrow, they have never stopped confusion. Confusion goes on, sorrow goes on. If you, seeing this social and economic confusion, this chaos, this misery, withdraw into what is called the religious life and abandon the world, you may feel that you are joining these great teachers; but the world goes on with its chaos, its misery and destruction, the everlasting suffering of its rich and poor. So, our problem, yours and mine, is whether we can step out of this misery instantaneously. If, living in the world, you refuse to be a part of it, you will help others out of this chaos—not in the future, not to-morrow, but now. Surely that is our problem. War is probably coming, more destructive, more appalling in its form. Surely we cannot prevent it, because the issues are much too strong and too close. But you and I can perceive the confusion and misery immediately, can we not? We must perceive them, and then we shall be in a position to awaken the same understanding of truth in another. In other words, can you be instantaneously free?—because that is the only way out of this misery. Perception can take place only in the present; but if you say, “I will do it to-morrow”, the wave of confusion overtakes you, and you are then always involved in confusion. Now is it possible to come to that state when you yourself perceive the truth instantaneously and therefore put an end to confusion? I say that it is, and that it is the only possible way. I say it can be done and must be done, not based on supposition or belief. To bring about this extraordinary revolution—which is not the revolution to get rid of the capitalists and install another group—to bring about this wonderful transformation, which is the only true revolution, is the problem. What is generally called revolution is merely the modification or the continuance of the right according to the ideas of the left. The left, after all, is the continuation of the right in a modified form. If the right is based on sensual values, the left is but a continuance of the same sensual values, different only in degree or expression. Therefore true revolution can take place only when you, the individual, become aware in your relationship to another. Surely what you are in your relationship to another, to your wife, your child, your boss, your neighbour, is society. Society by itself is non-existent. Society is what you and I, in our relationship, have created; it is the outward projection of all our own inward psychological states. So if you and I do not understand ourselves, merely transforming the outer, which is the projection of the inner, has no significance whatsoever; that is there can be no significant alteration or modification in society so long as I do not understand myself in relationship to you. Being confused in my relationship, I create a society which is the replica, the outward expression of what I am. This is an obvious fact, which we can discuss.

We can discuss whether society, the outward expression, has produced me, or whether I have produced society. Is it not, therefore, an obvious fact that what I am in my relationship to another creates society and that, without radically transforming myself, there can be no transformation of the essential function of society? When we look to a system for the transformation of society, we are merely evading the question, because a system cannot transform man; man always transforms the system, which history shows. Until I, in my relationship to you, understand myself, I am the cause of chaos, misery, destruction, fear, brutality. Understanding myself is not a matter of time; I can understand myself at this

very moment. If I say, "I shall understand myself to-morrow", I am bringing in chaos and misery, my action is destructive. The moment I say that I "shall" understand, I bring in the time element and so am already caught up in the wave of confusion and destruction. **Understanding is now, not to-morrow.** To-morrow is for the lazy mind, the sluggish mind, the mind that is not interested. When you are interested in something, you do it instantaneously, there is immediate understanding, immediate transformation. If you do not change now, you will never change, **because the change that takes place to-morrow is merely a modification, it is not transformation. Transformation can only take place immediately; the revolution is now, not to-morrow.** When that happens, you are completely without a problem, for then the self is not worried about itself; then you are beyond the wave of destruction.

38. ON TRANSFORMATION

Question: What do you mean by transformation?

Krishnamurti: Obviously, there must be a radical revolution. The world crisis demands it. Our lives demand it. Our everyday incidents, pursuits, anxieties, demand it. Our problems demand it. There must be a fundamental, radical revolution, because everything about us has collapsed. Though seemingly there is order, in fact there is slow decay, destruction: the wave of destruction is constantly overtaking the wave of life. So there must be a revolution—but not a revolution based on an idea. Such a revolution is merely the continuation of the idea, not a radical transformation. A revolution based on an idea brings bloodshed, disruption, chaos. Out of chaos you cannot create order; you cannot deliberately bring about chaos and hope to create order out of that chaos.

Transformation is not a result. Result implies residue, a cause and an effect. Where there is causation, there is bound to be effect. The effect is merely the result of your desire to be transformed. When you desire to be transformed, you are still thinking in terms of becoming; that which is becoming can never know that which is being. **Truth is being from moment to moment and happiness that continues is not happiness. Happiness is that state of being which is timeless. That timeless state can come only when there is a tremendous discontent—not the discontent that has found a channel through which it escapes but the discontent that has no outlet, that has no escape, that is no longer seeking fulfilment. Only then, in that state of supreme discontent, can reality come into being. That reality is not to be bought, to be sold, to be repeated; it cannot be caught in books. It has to be found from moment to moment, in the smile, in the tear, under the dead leaf, in the vagrant thoughts, in the fullness of love.** Love is not different from truth. Love is that state in which the thought process, as time, has completely ceased. Where love is, there is transformation. Without love, revolution has no meaning, for then revolution is merely destruction, decay, a greater and greater ever-mounting misery. Where there is love, there is revolution, because love is transformation from moment to moment.

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