

IF WORDS COULD TALK

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It's really for the friends
i write
i might
i could be told sometimes
i need to say
another line
that could be heard
from somewhere else
for those still reaching
still saying 'ouch'
convinced within their
servitude
that all is hateful
all is crude
perhaps would like
to hear a voice
that indicates
there is a choice

ATTITUDE

The question of attitude . . . attitude as a background, as a back-drop on the stage of life. Attitudes, different attitudes, changing attitudes, but always the attitude being the ultimate context in which a person acts, thinks, speaks, struggles . . . forms his world at a particular time. If our attitude is in fact the stage on which we picture and live our life, what are the main props, what are the main elements that form a current attitude?

Well, lets talk around the subject a bit before we get too specific. First of all, one thing that seems quite obvious is that most people are rather unhappy with other peoples' attitudes. Management is always disturbed with the attitude of the workers; the army high command is always concerned about the attitude of its soldiers; teachers are concerned about the attitudes of their students; parents are, most often, disturbed by the attitudes of their children; children, of course, are disturbed by the attitude of their parents. We could go on with that almost indefinitely. Everyone seems very disturbed with other peoples' attitudes.

I suppose we could say that attitude has not so much to do with what a person is doing but with the suspected reason behind what they are doing or, how they take any particular relation-ship, any particular activity, how they picture it. Of course, what they do, say, how they act or react, is obviously a result of how they take a situation, what their basic attitude is.

Most people attempt to judge, visualize and conceptualize the attitude behind other peoples' activities. They are concerned with the other person's attitude, as this affects their ability to function, to create, to be as they consider proper. Other peoples' attitudes affect the possibility of living out, of acting, on the basis of their own attitude. Attitudes seem to conflict one with the other. We would like people to see things similarly to how we see them, if they don't - we have conflicting attitudes.

Attitudes, in some way, are an internal summation, an internal composition of various factors of the past, coming together in a particular way and giving a particular picture forming this stage of life that we are on.

This stage that we act all our life on, this picture that we have, is formed from various inputs from the past, various pieces of information, various experiences from the past, which tell us that things are such and such, that the meaning of things is such and such, that things are happening in such and such a way - the way we see it, the way we're convinced the situation is - more often than not quite unconsciously, sometimes even a bit consciously.

So, for instance, we have a situation here in this country, where on the northern border, in Lebanon ('82) in particular, Palestinians had been arming for some period of time. Of course, this situation has a complex background, let us say, going back only forty years, since the major immigration of the Jews into this part of the world.

All kinds of things have been happening in connection with relationship between the indigenous Arab population called the Palestinians and the Jews. 'Good' things and 'bad' things have been happening.

At the present time, many years after the beginning of the confrontation of these two peoples, if you were to take ten Jews off the street and ask them how they saw the situation, each one would have a particular picture to give. Some pieces of the picture would come from 'historical data', some from personal data - individual relationships, contact with Arabs, different experiences in war etc. Had they had only arguments in personal relationships with Arabs, that would form a particular coloring to their attitude. If, on the other hand, they had a number of friends that were Arabs, that would give a different coloring to it. They would have a mixture of input, the totality of which would form their attitude.

Now regardless of individual attitudes, certain things in the outer world are 'forming up', and the most recent 'forming up' of things in the outer world has been an incredible increase of Soviet arms into the hands of the more radical, the more active elements in the Palestinian community. They gathered a rather significant arsenal, even using it occasionally by shooting over the border, or sending men in to sabotage . . . what is called terrorist acts. These are current facts everyone here can see, and which also form a part of peoples' attitudes. On the other side, the Arabs have their individual experiences and 'history' forming their individual attitudes.

Within this particular struggle between two peoples, you will get a variety of attitudes, obviously, with two major breaks, in that there would be common elements among the Jews, on one side, and common elements among the Arabs, on the other side. But even within these two groups you will find each individual with a different attitude, with a different picture. Can one say one attitude is closer to the truth than another? Well, that would be opening up a large area to discuss. I mean the Truth, what is the truth, what is going on . . . what is Going on . . .

We now talk about attitudes; what we picture is going on; what we imagine is going on; what is the stage of life (the staging, as in a theater) that we're on. We must act all the time, it seems. We act all the time according to our attitudes, in relationship to our boyfriends, girlfriends, wives and husbands. We act according to our attitudes towards the person who knocks on our door, who visits us. Individually in small ways or larger ways we act according to our attitudes. We are happy, also, according to our attitudes and we are pained according to our attitudes.

Pained or happy according to How We See Things.

Obvious, all this very obvious. Hardly anyone could hear this without saying "yes, yes, that's a fact, of course we have attitudes, of course our attitudes are not the same." But it's not quite as simple as that because we often forget that what we experience as violence in the world - the difficulty we have in our relationships as an individual, or as a family, or as a national community, what we think is good, what we think is bad, what we think is beneficial or what we think is detrimental - must take place on a particular stage with a particular back-ground. This background is our current attitude. Obvious that conflict is rampant all over the world, and at many levels. Not only on the northern border with Lebanon where the violence and the conflict are obvious because there are big booms, with guns and bombs going off; there are also big booms going on in almost every home in families who supposedly have similar attitudes.

People are most disturbed with the violence. Always seeing it coming from the outside towards them - basically violence towards their attitude.

Very difficult for people to see how subjective their attitudes are, how subjective their

picture of the world is, their general picture of the world or their picture of the world at any particular moment. Attitudes are changing; new input is 'digested'. Attitudes change according to 'new facts', and according to the mood a person is in - if, for instance, he's just had a good meal or a good sleep, his attitude is affected.

* * *

I arrived in New York some few weeks ago and visited A.. A. and B., that was the current staging on the east side of New York, 86th street, A.'s apartment - a friend, a friend living with a boyfriend, and I arrived. Not into a vacuum at all. I arrived actually just before A. returned from Australia after the death of her father (one factor); A. in a particular relation-ship with B., not really so very clear (another factor); A. in the midst of working in the film business for the first time (another factor); at a point in history where economics is a big cloud - a lot of concern about the future, and whether one's financial posture in the past would be relevant in the future, that is, if one had a particular income would the same income continue, and even if it continued could it support a similar life style (another factor). And on this particular stage I arrive, Alan arrives, friend of A.'s, at the apartment in New York. How to take me? I'm in the house, there I am - called friend - fffoo!!

Okay, effort was made. I, on the surface, was not contributing anything in particular. I didn't help her with her film business, didn't help her in any obvious way in her relationship with B., didn't help her with her financial considerations and didn't help her with hot, humid New York summer, carried no air conditioner with me. She, then, was 'forced' to make her attitude towards me a little bit more conscious - I was there!

As on a stage one new person walks in, no matter who, and this, in one way or another, affects what is going on in the house. What would be the first consideration, just using this as an example, in A. looking and forming up some current attitude towards me. What would be the factors?

I suggest that the most obvious factor in her attitude towards me under the circumstances would be, to put it in the most simple terms: was my presence there good or bad for her? Was this going to help her or hinder her in whatever she was doing? That would be an obvious first consideration in her attitude towards me. Of course that wasn't

particularly clear. Maybe we could talk, maybe we could share/exchange some-thing. Definitely that was within the realm of her possible considerations. There is certain valuation in the relationship. There may be a possibility of some help. Then on the other hand would *B.* like me, would he be disturbed with me, would he feel competition with me, would that, in some way, help or hinder her relationship with him? Well, without carrying this too far I would say that a thing called self-interest might be, if not the exclusive then at least a major element in the FORMATION OF AN ATTITUDE.

Self-interest! If, for instance, we could see that self-interest was the major peg, the central factor in the formation of an attitude, it would not, then, be so hard to understand why attitudes were clashing, why there was always friction between people, from individual personal relationships to national conflict, as each group or individual would have their attitude based, first of all, in self-interest, as they saw it. This seems quite obvious - what could be more central to a person's attitude than self-interest?

'Im ain ani li mi li?' - if I am not for myself who is for me? First of all. Wonderful. In one stroke we take away the confusion as to why there's conflict. If my attitude is based on what is good for me, and my friend's attitude is based on what is good for him; when we come together in a particular situation there might conceivably be conflict. Because maybe, what is good for me, as I see it, is not seen by him as good for him - very simple.

So we can all stop screaming about the violence in the world . . . ohh it's horrible . . . it's terrible . . . how can it be . . .

Well, at the moment nothing in that seems particularly surprising.

This story of my arrival in New York at *A.*'s had an interesting twist to it. She did become aware, after a period of a week or so, that she was having difficulty with my presence in the house. One day, as she came down the stairs, she told me that she, in fact, had been having some difficulty with working out exactly 'why I was there and what was going on'. She had been reading, she said, from my book of poems and came across one that helped her with this particular question. She said: "I read this poem and it helped me with the confusion connected with your presence." And I'll tell you what that poem was. It was called HOMECOMING and it went:

You'd better learn to live at home
and share your space with those that roam
as you do when you wish to see
if you can find a place to be
with friends, not looking for a ride
but just a quiet place to hide
from those that take them foolishly
that sap their strength incessantly
and leave them little space to breathe
they come to you for some relief
you'd better learn to live at home
and share your space with those that roam
for those that come for reasons true
never any harm will do
but share a space and help it grow
and not impose their own floorshow.

That was the poem A. chose to relate to. I felt quite all right with that. It's one piece taken from a more comprehensive collection and it did give her a little breathing space. How did it give her a little breathing space? Well, I suggest that it brought in another element to her attitude, not in place of self-interest but in addition to it. Another element that involved some kind of evaluation of another person's position. Something in addition to self-interest but, as said, not necessarily opposed to it. Another person's position.

The line, for instance - as you do when you wish to see if you can find a place to be. As you do. So she could possibly, somehow, go back to her own personal experience. In this particular case, A. could remember that just a short year ago she was in Israel and had occasion to be in other people's homes, at C.'s in Shaar Hagay, at Dina's in Jerusalem, just a very short time ago when she was in a situation somewhat subjected to other peoples' attitudes.

It appears that the attitude of the person who is the nominal homeowner has considerable force. They are sometimes in a position to enforce their attitude and are

under no particular 'legal' obligation to consider the situation any further; they can act, react, exactly according to their most basic sense of comfort or discomfort. A. chose to relate to this poem, it gave her some temporary relief. It also gave me a little space. I hope, not to her ultimate detriment.

It appears that an attitude based exclusively on self-interest will, inevitably lead to some kind of conflict or violence as it is met with by another attitude from another person, similarly based on self-interest.

What else might it be possible to bring into this individual picture that we have, this thing called attitude, other than self-interest, other than what appears to be self-interest, other than what feels like legitimate self-interest. What else can we bring into this question of attitude, into our picture?

We don't have to ask this question with too much intensity before an answer arises, and that is what we call CONSIDERATION.

This is what we are always demanding of other people - that they should, somehow, see our situation, consider us in their picture of the world, consider us in their attitude. And as everyone is demanding this of us - our children demand it, our husbands and wives demand it, our parents demand it and even our neighbors demand it - we are, somehow, constantly agonizing over this issue, and making some kind of an attempt, yes to consider the other person.

Also a lot of guilt around that in our attitudes, because we realize that we have difficulty enough in picturing our own legitimate self-interest to start with - that is, what is good for us, we can barely estimate, and here already we have another demand made on us and that is to consider the other party.

Leaving the difficulties aside for a moment, we will recognize that this is a legitimate consideration, that is unless we decide to live our life in continual violence. A legitimate consideration - the consideration of another person or people, when they appear on our stage in life.

Now of course to consider another person, not just as a gesture but really to consider another person as they wish us to consider them, would be to consider them in regard to what would be essentially good and useful to them. This is what they want us to do.

The Palestinians would like the Israelis to realize and consider them as human beings, as a people with a problem: no land - regardless of how that happened - the immediacy of the circumstances. They would like consideration and, hopefully from that consideration, certain acts on the part of the Israelis - not merely a lack of fighting, but to do something, make room for them, help them!

Now, there would even be embarrassment in proposing such consideration because that would require the reverse as well, and it's a very difficult thing for two peoples to consider one another.

Why is that so difficult, why?

Well, first of all, if we are to consider another person in a serious manner, if we are to include them in our picture, in our attitude, in a helpful way towards them, in a useful way towards them - it assumes that we know what is helpful and what is useful. Of course, this assumption is highly exaggerated.

If we go back to the normal functioning of attitudes based on self-interest, we will find that this is highly unproductive and unsatisfactory. Even those who have justified their attitude based exclusively on self-interest find it difficult to understand what is good and useful for themselves. What can they do for themselves that is in fact more than just a temporary relief from anxiety, more than creating a temporary little space for themselves?

If a person doesn't know what is useful for himself, how can he possibly consider what is useful for somebody else.

We see all that so very clearly and yet, we are continually disturbed by the violence in the world. Why should we be so disturbed with that? How obvious it seems to be. Almost inevitable, almost like a plague, a horror.

"Im ein ani li mi li? Ukesheani le'atsmi ma ani?"

Well, that is impressive. It was written many hundreds of years ago, whatever it might mean, however it might be used, but this type of thinking is not new. The psychology of the human being, the difficulty of facing life and facing other people and facing the conflict is not new - "If I am not for myself who is for me? and if I am only for myself, what am I?" If I am only for myself what will the result be other than violence?

I have no doubt we understand each other.

What is there to do about it? Anyone interested in doing some-thing about it? Anyone with a hope in their heart that this is not an irresolvable problem? Anyone with hope in their heart that there is a possibility of doing essentially useful things for oneself, and possibly, after understanding the dynamics of that, applying it to others with whom they interact, and possibly, even the hope in their heart that at least in their personal lives some of the violence can be at the least minimized and at the best eliminated?

This possibility in the masses, in the mass psychology of 1982, sounds almost ridiculous. On the other hand, the extraordinary degree to which our blindness and violence have led us - individually in personal confusion, and nationally in our gross violence and potential for, in fact, extermination of mankind - pin-points the horror of the situation so thoroughly.

"Im ain ani li mi li? Ukesheani le'atsmi ma ani? Ve im lo achshav eimatai?" If I am not for myself who is for me? and if I am just for myself what am I? and if not now when?

Well, we went and dramatized the situation a bit.

* * *

Who can blame us in this day and age? Nobody can blame us but most can forget what is going on; most can forget the mass suicide rate; most can forget the violence in family life; most can forget the high divorce rate; most can forget what they call nicely, the generation gap - the inability of parent to communicate with child and vice versa; most can forget the lies that we've been fed through the media about the growing economy

and what has happened to it; most can forget the tens of millions who have died world-wide in the past fifty years in wars; most can forget what has happened yesterday.

Within the past twelve to twenty-four months ('82) most can forget the invasion and slaughter of the Afghanis; most can forget the suppression of the Poles; most can forget the riots in the streets of London and other British cities; most can forget the anarchy in Ireland; most can forget the breakdown of order in Italy; most can forget El-Salvador; most can forget the British invasion and bombing and killing in the Falkland Islands; most can forget the revolution in Iran; most can forget the war between Iran and Iraq; most can forget the bloody civil war going on in Lebanon for seven years; most can forget the millions who have not only become unemployed but have become redundant in our society; most can forget the mass poverty in the United States; most can forget the horror of the situation - and certainly most can believe that nothing can be done about it on a large scale or on a small scale;

MOST CAN FORGET THEIR OWN VIOLENCE
&
MOST CANNOT FORGET TO BLAME OTHERS

This last bit sounds like moralizing but what we're talking about is a psychological phenomenon called attitude, or how we take things, what our pictures are and - is there any way that we can get a handle on all of this!

* * *

Afterthought

If we go back a bit and consider the question of attitude, we see we have isolated TWO elements in it:

1. The obvious central core, this question of self-interest and the inevitable violence this leads to if it should include nothing more.
2. The possibility of including something that's commonly recognized as consideration.

But most of us do see ourselves, within our attitudes, as yes considering other people. We consider our mothers and fathers, our brothers and our uncles, and sometimes the people in the country we live in. What does it mean, we don't consider? We do consider.

Now the 'catch' in this particular instance is that what we think to be considering of others is, most often, exactly self-interest, because the expanded thing that we consider, for instance in family or in country is exactly in our own self-interest. Which brings up a larger question -

What is the SELF?

1 9 8 4

More Reflections
 on the question of ATTITUDE
 down to the very
 ESSENCE
 of the Matter

Attitude is
 the very 'water we swim in',
 the Content and LIMITS of our thinking
 and emotions
 the very stage and boundaries
 of our Being and Knowledge.

How we take each and every thing
 and how we take OURSELVES
 is embodied in our ATTITUDE.

And
 Our A T T I T U D E is
 our very POSTURE in Life
 and is reflected
 in our Likes and Dis-likes
 in our Hopes and Fears
 our sense of Optimism or Pessimism
 and our very sense of WHO is WHO
 and WHO are WE

our Attitude is in fact
 our understanding
 and we as Individuals can be DEFINED
 by our UNDERSTANDING.
 ATTITUDE IS 'I'

MEANING or **ANXIETY**

Don't we hear of people saying: 'I have no meaning in my life.' What's wrong with you? - 'I have no meaning in my life, the meaning has gone out of my life.' Yes, I mean, I haven't heard that said so bluntly, haven't met such an honest person in a long time. But we hear that from movies possibly, after the death of somebody, or the failure of someone in a particular enterprise.

No meaning - don't feel good. Well, you could say many other things about it but first of all - don't feel good. Don't feel good - anxiety! 'I'm looking for meaning in my life,' if a young person should have the chutzpa, the audacity, to say that to an elder at some point, if he's still young enough and honest enough - meaning in life, yes yes!!

Well, now we even go too far. Unnecessary to go so far. The relationship between an investigation of the word 'meaning', and somehow paralleling it with a look at this question of 'anxiety'.

'The meaning has gone out of my life' . . . I think if we looked at it more closely we would see that in most cases they would be referring to an outer change of some kind, a loss, something had been taken away from them. Somebody died, some structure /relationship/enterprise . . . something was taken from them. Their life was interrupted. The activity that they were involved in, intentionally or otherwise, had some meaning. Something happened where that activity stopped - the meaning was gone. I would venture to say that almost invariably, people, along with this lack of meaning develop a certain type of resentment and a certain kind of sense that something outer, something done to them, has been the cause of this particular state.

It's similar to people's sense of being 'disturbed'. A person is in one activity or another doing something which has, thought of or otherwise, an element of meaning - real or imagined, doesn't matter. And something happens, or somebody happens, that disturbs the activity - takes the meaning away! Of course this is an inevitable and universal mutually administered violence that we continually see.

Yes, yes - a can of worms.

If in fact a meaningful act is: 'an act that leads to a conclusion which is significant in that it is at a more comprehensive level and, has a permanency' . . . permanency means - 'untakable awayable,' or undisturbable. That would be the result of the successful, meaningful activity - not merely a pleasurable one, not merely a noble one, not merely an inquisitive one but a successful one.

Success is again just another word. Not to depreciate it, not to depreciate words; just another word! For there to be success there must be defined aim. Without defined aim - no possibility of adjudging success or failure.

If by chance we should continue to be as presumptuous as to deal with this area that begins to look ever more vast and multi-dimensional - anxiety - just to have the courage to isolate, even tentatively, as 'the problem', the problem of man on earth, THE problem - anxiety! Fucks up everything else! Let's say, tentatively, that that's it. It's a problem. Hard to admit! One admits something is a problem . . . and the very word 'problem' has within it the suggestion that there might be something reversible about it. Problems are supposedly something that you can do something about.

There are other words for things you can't do anything about: disaster, catastrophe. 'Problem' is still something you can do something about . . . sounds it, has it there! It's hard to even say 'irresolvable problem'. You can say it but doesn't sound right. So here we isolate temporarily this question of anxiety and say - yes, it's a problem. And note we say anxiety - not 'anxiety about'. Not anxiety about health, not anxiety about war, not anxiety about property, not anxiety about guilt, not 'anxiety about' - just anxiety. Anxiety, tension, lack of ease, dis-ease, malfunctioning - any kind of anxiety. And we call it a problem. Not only a problem but problem of first magnitude. Problem of first magnitude from where we stand when we have problems. When we have problems - no problem of greater magnitude - no other problem clear, all other problems distorted.

NOT PROBLEM > 'ANXIETY ABOUT'

PROBLEM > ANXIETY

FIRST OF ALL

Problem - seems to be place for meaning

Ain't no problem - can't have meaning
(if our mathematics have been o.k. up to now)

Problem - opportunity for meaning

No problem - no meaningful activity

MEANING-FUL

Problem, with envisioned solution of the problem
or aim, if you wish.

Solution of problem 'anxiety' - no anxiety.

Well, so far simple. That wasn't so difficult.

Requirements: significant change. Well, no anxiety - definitely significant change from anxiety. Check it. Requirement two: permanence. Maybe we laid a heavy requirement there. Permanence! But we've already dealt a little with that, because permanence is also a difficult word, and permanence can be in time, and permanence can be in scale. Let us not back track or be cheap with ourselves. Let us also put in a requirement of permanence. Why not. Difficult to handle the whole question - anxiety, don't want to touch it. Too big, too everything!

So, if we continue along the path, which God knows who is treading, we've got a problem. Anxiety - we wish to deal with it successfully - we know what we start with, we

know where we want to end . . . that's two nice pieces. What else is required? Means are required. In a meaningful activity which commences with an aim, which strives for a solution/fulfilment that re-members the aim, requires the means to travel the distance from the problem to its solution.

* * *

Certain so-called sympathetic men of good will view the society they live in and throw it out - 'the baby with the dirty water.' The baby in this case being the mind in its rational but sincere normal functioning. The rational mind that can see that if there is such a thing as an end there must be a beginning and the activity of moving from the beginning to the end is something different called 'means'. Legitimate to consider; legitimate to itemize; legitimate to relate to; legitimate to check. The baby gets thrown away , because the baby has been ill-used and is identified totally with the world of objective violence (i.e. activity with 'no meaning'). Politicians, businessmen, builders, scientists - plan! Planning has become a dirty word. Words, we are told, are meaningless - except if you want to get from one point to another.

Man, contemporary, so thoroughly and absolutely confused within society, has not the energy to pose a real question, nor the guts to believe in any possible solution. And with any degree of humanity still functioning within him, has been reduced to a whimpering, finger wagging, hushing, pacifying, frightened child - crying: naughty, naughty, naughty, naughty.

Man's major problem in his human existence, in the human condition, is not tackling this issue - tackling this issue of anxiety. What else will he tackle? And should he tackle what he wishes to tackle, other than this question of anxiety, with what intelligence will he tackle it?

What, pray tell, is anxiety? Nice word! Comfortable even! Known!

Thesis : Anxiety is essentially an emotional state, caused, or coming from confusion of the mind.

Anxiety : An emotional state; a result of/caused by/transmitted through confused

thinking.

Confusion : Activity of the mind! Activity of what we call - our 'thinking parts'.

Confusion : Not-knowing-what-to-do!

Implication : 'Should do!'

Doing : activity!

Well, that might not be the whole story but we'll let that stand for a moment.

Anxiety : Emotional! Confusion: intellectual! Active ingredient: 'not knowing what to do'.

Assumption : Should do!

Assumption : Should do good!

Assumption : Should not do bad!

Assumption : Sufficient will/understanding/energy to commence something and finish it!
Can we know what anxiety is? Can we know what anxiety is, other than with words, like the extension we just made, how-ever true that might be, leaving out the analytical, so to speak, specifics, the individual specifics. Can we know anxiety directly?

Proposition : Anxiety can never be understood through logical extension or analysis - at least not in its more gross state. Anxiety, like anything else in the world, can be known or understood in reality, only by direct perception.

That which one wishes to rid oneself of
can never be observed impartially.

That which one wishes to rid oneself of
for whatever good reason

will not lend itself to observation.

That which is judged is not observed.

That which we wish to rid ourselves of
is something that has been judged.

If anxiety is indeed the major human problem, at a particular level, before one would take the next logical step, as we talked about before, in treating a problem with aim and a means, with requirements as to what would constitute success, before one could deal with a problem, one would have to know the problem. In this particular case - anxiety. If one meant to deal with that seriously, also using the mind, also realizing a starting point and a destination, a hoped for resolution of the problem, an aim - they would, first of all, want to know what the problem is, explicitly, before trying to do something about it. Even the thinking process would have to start at that point. Problems are definitely things we want to resolve. Problems are some-thing we want to do something about. The word problem is a problem. Problems are to be gotten rid of. If anxiety is a problem, before anything else, people will be pushing it away, trying to do something about it, trying to do something about something they had not seen and will never see as long as they are continually trying to push it away.

Could there possibly be a connection between anxiety and attitude?

What is attitude? Attitude is 'how we take things'!

Ricky had a cherry tree. Someone picked the cherries. Ricky didn't care so much. Cherry tree picked - no anxiety. Some-thing must be right. Maybe it had something to do with attitude, whatever that might be, and however it happened. Maybe. I've been around many farmers with trees, many people with trees, and I've seen the anxiety from the time the buds come out - because someone is always picking at their trees. Someone's always looking at their wife. Someone's always doing something. But they shouldn't do something, these people out there, shouldn't do something, shouldn't do, shouldn't do - makes me anxious!

That's the general attitude - if only everybody or somebody would not do what they're doing but do something different, then I wouldn't be so anxious. They're either doing what they shouldn't be doing or they're not doing what they should be doing. And you're god damn right I'm anxious, I'm also angry! What, I shouldn't be angry, and agree to what they're doing! Rapers of my tree! You're god damn right I'm angry.

Our anxiety has got a lot of morality in it, it appears. From the clear eyes of the anxious hysteric - from the clear eyes of the anxious hysteric, comes forth our morality. That's why we don't want to deal with the problem of anxiety - it's immoral!

Someone fails to recognize me. Someone fails to appreciate me. Someone fails to treat me according to how 'I am', how I see myself. In a word - they're bastards! And that makes me very uncomfortable! - and I should let those bastards get away with that? I shouldn't feel bad? I shouldn't do anything? That wouldn't be moral! Somebody's got to tell them! It wouldn't be honest, it wouldn't be sincere. Somebody's got to tell them! Them! No, no, no, no, anxiety, we don't want to go near that, consider that a problem, do something about it - we would disappear, at least in our morality. It feels good to feel bad! Gur-r-r-r-r-! If I didn't feel bad I probably wouldn't do anything. No, no, I think it is easier to fantasize about Earth coming to an end in ten years and the scientists getting us all off to the moon or at least the worthy ones like you and me! Not the moon, Mars, yes, yes, Mars!

I'm so anxious to be anxious that if somebody doesn't do some-thing to me, I don't like what they do to somebody else - that makes me anxious! It's not me! And if they don't do anything to anybody else I'm very anxious of what they do to themselves; I'm most anxious about that! And from my anxious state about people doing what they shouldn't be doing, from my anxious state I sometimes wonder whether my perception is clear! Maybe there's no reason to be anxious - a voice keeps saying.

I think this particular phenomenon is akin to the snake eating its own tail. So, if nothing else up to this point, we can see what an emotional question the question of anxiety is. The incredible resistance to coming even close to it.

* * *

Well again we digressed, not really digressed, talked a little bit about the problem that we're setting ourselves, as the possible source or vehicle to be involved in an activity with meaning; the original subject of this 'get together'. So we come down to choosing a subject in the non-fantastic, so-called real world, in man's ordinary condition - we isolate the question of anxiety, suggesting that it is really a very core issue, the major problem!

I would like to backtrack just a bit, not taking all the forgoing completely for granted, and check first of all to see whether we're on track.

We have taken anxiety. Why have we taken anxiety? We have taken it because we were looking for a problem, the biggest practical problem that we could think of; that's why we took anxiety. Now, why were we looking for a problem? We were looking for a problem because we had come to the conclusion - in connection with the subject we're speaking about 'meaning', 'meaningful doing', 'meaningful action' - that a meaningful activity must have an aim and that aim is to resolve a problem. Therefore we need a problem, therefore we found the problem, or a problem - anxiety. It was needed, so to speak. We have discussed a bit, it appears enough, to establish that this, in fact, is a major problem, and most probably the key problem in the human condition, until it has been successfully dealt with.

So it looks like we have a piece for the meaningful activity and we're giving the piece, that is the problem, the benefit of taking what we consider to be the largest piece on the board. So let's stop beating around the bush and spell out clearly what we seem to have come to at this particular point.

First of all we can start with a positive attitude, even though it's a little difficult in the normal circumstances, as we're dealing with the question of problem; it's hard to think about problems as something positive. But there is something, somehow, within man, that likes to have activity with meaning in it. He operates best from a sense of meaning. And it also appears that for something to have meaning, it must be directed at something; be directed at the solving of, what we call, a problem. So looked at this way we can see, first of all, a problem is in fact an opportunity to participate in a meaningful activity. Nice! And then we've gone ahead and we have picked a problem - anxiety.

O.K. we have our problem - anxiety; we have an obvious aim connected with it - we assume that we can solve the problem. Anxiety is the problem, problems can be solved, and the solution of the problem would be the elimination of anxiety. And then we see that we have to rephrase, or get some sub-headings in this question of our aim. Because we also saw that if we deal with a problem as something to get rid of, we've created another problem which is: that one cannot get to know something if one is pushing it away, if one has judged it - bad. We could carry that further too and say that we understand that if we are in a state of anxiety and we judge something bad, we are also judging from a questionable perception; a questionable state of functioning, because we know that anxiety disturbs.

ANXIETY - LACK OF EASE - DIS-EASE

-

ILL FUNCTIONING

How can we wish to change something without having first judged it undesirable or bad, and therefore instinctively pushing it away? Possibly we may start dealing with this question of anxiety in a different way, and setting a preliminary aim, a different aim, which would be, not to change anxiety to a state of non-anxiety, but to study anxiety; to see what it is. What do we know about it now; anxiety is uncomfortable. It is tension provoking, or tension inclusive. (are we ready to feel the discomfort?) Yes, we know it's uncomfortable and it's not pleasant, therefore our inclination to rid ourselves of it, to get rid of it. Always the struggle to rid ourselves of anxiety - that seems to go on automatically. But unfortunately not successfully, it seems!

The intensity of the activity of ridding oneself of anxiety is so overwhelming that the recurrence of this activity is something we're not aware of. We slip again and again into new struggle with anxiety, whatever the assumed details/causes/circumstances are, with such an intensity that we completely forget that we have just finished struggling with another anxiety; that's now slipped into the background! Now this, of course, is just a statement but if this statement were true it would have considerable implications for us in viewing or understanding the dynamics of anxiety.

* * *

I am reminded of the feeling that I had as a child in connection with the necessity to eat three times a day. There were so many things that I wanted to do; eating wasn't particularly one of them; and the requirement to be back at the house at a particular hour, stopping whatever was going on, leaving wherever one was to come back to do this thing, seemed definitely to be - something always in the way!

And I can recall some discussion, probably from some newspaper report, and this goes back over thirty years and they are still talking about such things, and that is the possibility of a man being able to just pop a pill into his mouth and have all the nutritional intake that his organism requires. That to me was just a wonderful idea. Somewhere, somehow I was aware of a repeating requirement that disturbed that which I wished to do, whatever that might be. And that repeating requirement was something that I didn't wish to do - and seemed to be repeating itself regularly and unavoidably!

Later in life I could see examples where this, in fact, had a very strange effect on people. One could see people out of their own home, in various situations, traveling, doing any number of things together, alone, and already implanted in them this incredible anxiety, in fact, of where they would be at a particular, what was called, eating time! They would pick the hotel that they stayed at, possibly even the city that they went to, according to what food was reputed to be, whether it was available, whether it was good! They would fly their airline schedules in order to have breakfast at a particular time, and dinner at another city. Oh there are so many aspects about this food that one could talk about it forever, but the point of the matter is, that in most cases it became completely taken for granted.

An outside observer who wasn't so fixated on this question of food could see how in a very subtle way, certain patterns had become unconsciously accepted as a primary necessity, not only, not merely, in the intake of enough nutrition to sustain the body - but it had developed all the surrounding requirements of type of food, quantity of food, time of consumption, place of consumption, company of consumption - a lot of requirements, in fact, binding people to accepted patterns where they weren't aware of the overriding consequences relative to their other activities.

The question of anxiety is similar in one's continual effort not to go to places that are

considered anxiety provoking, or to immediately disengage oneself from situations where anxiety is felt.

The simple conclusion to the forgoing is simply that people are moved around by their anxiety. They are moved around by their anxiety; their anxiety moves them around. It also appears that talking about anxiety is anxiety provoking!!

If we take a problem, implicitly 'it is taken' as solvable. Anxiety, as the problem, is solvable. If it's not solvable we have to choose another word. Problems are solvable. It's such a key question, nobody could deny, no sane person could deny the utility of dealing with it, in the hope of being able to function at ease and not at dis-ease. If we say it's a problem - anxiety - and we don't go any further with it then we're either lazy or asleep or completely without intellectual integrity.

If it's a problem, a big one, or the biggest, then solve it! If it's not solvable, it's not a problem, it's a catastrophe, it's a jinx! Definitely implied possible solution as the word problem is used here. So that, of course, appears to pose an incredible challenge. An incredible challenge!

'What are you doing?'

‘

Oh, I'm in the post office.'

'Oh, I'm building a house.'

‘Oh, I'm shoeing horses.'

'What are you doing?'

'I'm studying anxiety!'

Well, that would be a conversation stopper!! 'I'm studying anxiety because it fucks me up, that's what I'm doing - I'm studying anxiety, because when I'm doing anything else anxiety fucks me up. It fucks up the work that I'm doing, it fucks up the relationships I

have, it fucks up . . it fucks up. So, I'm studying the fuck up of everything, I'm studying anxiety'. . . . 'Oh!!'

Anxiety as we're studying it, must be taken out of the category of being a problem and must be dealt with, objectively, as an activity, as an element, that is effecting everything, and as such should be studied. Can we assume that we hit on anxiety as the one common denominator to all our activities? Oooh what a suggestion - the common denominator! Divides into everything!

So we've got a problem, and we, as educated people, know, have been taught to deal with problems; and the problem is anxiety, and it affects things - so we want to study it. But in order to study it, we want to study it as it is. We don't want to change it, we don't want to get rid of it - we don't want to change it. Because you can't study things that you're changing. If you go into a laboratory to study something, you go in sterile (you make sure of the lighting . . .), you watch that your presence within the laboratory isn't affecting that which you're trying to study. You want to study it in its pure form. So we don't want to change our anxiety - we want to study it. What does that mean - study it? Direct perception! How can we study it? Can it be studied? Is it a problem? If it's a problem it should be able to be solved! If it's not a problem, call it something else - catastrophe! But we're saying - no, it's not . . . we call it a problem, we're saying it isn't inevitable. It doesn't have to be!

Going further we're saying it shouldn't be; for what we want. It's a problem, it's an obstacle! If it's not a problem that can be solved, then 'call a spade a spade', admit that everything is useless, and nothing is but a mass of confusion, with the resulting anxiety, and that is it! Then it's not a problem anymore, that's a fact! An irreversible fact! I think that strikes not really right with most people who are still feeling a little bit . . . never mind analyzing . . . It doesn't feel right!

It appears that it is necessary to clearly label it as a problem, to start with, and then to realize, recognize that something functions within us, once we label something a problem, that pushes it away. Just to recognize that. Emotionally, problems are something we don't like. Pain is a problem. We do every-thing to get rid of it. We don't want to feel pain - we want to get rid of it. We don't even have to think about that . . . an

energy is pushing it away.

A scientist in his laboratory trying to study a poisonous insect. When he is examining the insect to find out what the poison is, if there's something in him that always is trying to kill the insect at the same time - he's in trouble. He's got to let the insect live in order to study him! He might also find out, for instance, that his notion that the insect is 'bad' and should be killed, is wrong; he might find out that the poison that is in the insect, at a different density, is a life saving drug; or mixed with something else . . . yes, under certain circumstances - poison, under other circumstances - something else.

Our judgements from anxiety are made under conditions of mal-functioning. Mal-functioning mind, mal-functioning emotion, mal-functioning body. Big mistake to identify something as bad. How can you know? Because it feels bad? I hear it feels bad to give birth to a baby, for a mother, it feels bad, sometimes, I hear they scream like hell! We don't know what good is, we don't know what bad is, we don't have it related to anything! And that happens automatically! It's possible to recognize that it happens automatically - the judgement and the reaction to the judgement, and to consciously 'work against' that.

This probably ends what could be called the philosophical proposition. And what could come next would be an investigation of a theoretical and practical solution to this problem. We could get into a new category; from philosophy into psychology. Wouldn't it be nice to feel nice - and probably useful to any-thing else we wanted to do!

Anxiety is much talked about; different words used, not always 'anxiety'. Whatever the word used, anxiety or uptight, or whatever . . . whatever the word used, I cannot recall where anxiety had been looked at as just anxiety. It's always 'anxiety about'! Our society is full with 'anxiety about' . . . anxiety about politics . . . anxiety about money . . . anxiety about health . . . anxiety about being alone or dying alone

Always anxiety about. There are so many things. Some people pick women's liberation, women's position vis-a-vis men to be anxious about, they spend their whole life there; some are anxious about who the political leaders are going to be, so they spend their life there; others are anxious about their health, they do a lot of jogging. It appears that the 'psychology' that seeps down to average man, westerner, only deals with things that

people are 'anxious about'.

In the so-called Eastern approach to psychology it's very different. They make no mistake about that. In the east you are unlikely to hear anybody say 'don't be anxious'. That's only western talk - 'don't be anxious'. Complete idiocy of that comment. In the east it would be understood that man is inevitably anxious; they've known that for a long time and for a lot of good reasons. Nothing to be ashamed about, impossible to even avoid. Everyone is born into an anxious world, that's the first thing they learn. No one can avoid that. How to become not anxious is a major work, a major study, which 99% of the people never attempt because they never realize that they are anxious. Not because they couldn't deal with it - they have no reason to, everything's fine . . . stock market is going up . . . they have just bombed the reactor in Bagdad . . . we're safe for another five years . . . just had a baby, it's going to have a birthday soon, we'll have a Bar-Mitzvah in thirteen years and he's going to be married at twenty-one, everything's fine . . . my daughter just got her degree . . . deal with anxiety? What for? Everything's fine, and what isn't fine I'm going to fix that tomorrow . . . yes just that one thing . . . two things, that I have to deal with!

I think that the one word that gets used most in the English language, in the western countries, more than any other word, is 'fine' . . . everything fine . . . fine . . . fine . . . telephone - fine! Fine! Fine! . . . I'm sure that word gets used more than any word. You hear some say 'how do you feel'? . . . terrible!? . . . it happens sometimes . . . but generally fine!

I wonder if western man's anxiety has anything to do with his lying, for instance. Does he lie? No . . . man doesn't lie . . . how are you? . . . fine! . . . well well, I mean, social . . . you have to answer something . . . be nice . . . that means you don't have to think of the question . . . questions don't have any meaning . . . you can come back with the automatic response because it doesn't matter anyways . . . because words are just words . . . so if you call it lying, you're being a little bit harsh! I wonder whether that attitude towards communication which results in continual lying would have any connection with anxiety? I wonder.

I think the philosophical aspect of the question has been resolved already; it's led to a conclusion - however eclectic the approach, I have no doubt that it has 'pinpointed' the

problem of humanity, where it functions, and it functions pretty generally. And it is so incredibly obvious to any one who can remember, who can think! I mean don't tell me you're doing this, you're doing that . . . that you're doing anything . . . you're going to tell me that's not a problem . . . you're going to tell me that what you're doing . . . you're resolving more of a problem than this issue . . . I defy anyone who claims to be serious, to tell me of any issue in the world more vital, in any sense! So I think that point has been made. What to do about it? How to deal with the problem? Well, one would have to learn how to deal with problems. You have to find out how to deal with problems. We have to get into the question of problems. Can we do anything about anything? And if so - how? And if not - why? To use our intelligence for the first time other than for little defensive moves, a little money in the bank, a few stocks, nice relationship with somebody you can stay with, sex on demand.

All these demanding things that we consider so important are to keep our physical body alive in the misery of anxiety. We want to keep alive and healthy and looking good, surviving by hook or by crook in the misery of our anxiety. Only because our anxiety is at such a high level, our minds don't function well enough, don't have the energy to pursue, to ask ourselves the question: 'what is our biggest problem?' We can't even get to it. The anxiety level is too high. We're confused. We're jumping from pillar to post.

We go around impressing people how wonderful we are, and most of all, how intelligent. We certainly want to be intelligent because we're in a world of such intelligent people. We want all those other intelligent people to see that we're also intelligent. What are they doing intelligently? Well, nothing! They're running around with their pants full of ants. They're getting sick, they're dying, they're going to mental hospitals, they're going to the geriatric wards, they can barely keep the show running for fifty years. They're in conflict with their children, they are sexually deranged, they don't know what they are doing unless they can get somebody to judge them - favorably! They are most interested in how they appear to other people, none of which are interested nor capable of even seeing them!

They're living 'from being seen', and the joke of it is, they're not even being seen. Their 'act' isn't even being seen really; appreciated certainly not.

Anxiety you say?

* * *

How very 'far afield' we go, but in fact we're dealing with the whole field so we didn't go anywhere.

There cannot be any argument; but it certainly brings up an interesting point - how the issue is avoided. It seems almost fantastic. It's like everyone running around with bubonic plague and nobody realizes it. 'Once-upon-a-time' - once upon a time there was a cure for bubonic plague; it has been known, and here it is endemic; but not everybody's got it. Not everybody's got the plague! Well you can cover up with pancake make-up, maybe, but it's still fuckin' uncomfortable, I bet.

So instead of covering up the sickness with cosmetics, maybe we can study the disease.

Krishnamurti says: 'if the house is on fire and you're nervous - you should be . . . get out of the house!'

Gurdjieff said: 'no one will work on oneself until he can see the terror of the situation.'

But we have learnt to say in the west 'everything's fine!! Everything ain't fine . . . no . . . 'all right Jack' . . . 'I'm all right Jack!' You know where I think that comes from - because if you don't say 'I'm all right Jack', the jackals will eat you. We are told by our society that we should be anxious. If we're not anxious we're useless for the society.

What, you don't care about money?
You don't know the value of a dollar?
What, you are not preparing for your old age?
What, you are not taking care of your health?
What, you let your insurance lapse?
What, you don't care who the prime-minister is?
What, you don't go to the army?
What, you don't care if there is war?
What, you don't care if you're an 'old maid?'

What, you don't care if you are childless?
What, you don't care if your parents like you?
What, you're not a Zionist?
What, you are not anxious?
What good are you if you are not anxious?
What help are you if you are not anxious?

You'd better be anxious or all the rest of us are going to suffer! If you're not anxious you're a fool, you're naive. You think you can fight city hall? You think you can change anything? You better be anxious enough to 'man the barricades' of the family, of the state, of the race.

Not anxious, haa . . . feel good, haa . . . stoned maybe, haa . . . you told me you were coming over to my house at five o'clock, and you didn't get there until eight, and you don't feel sorry? It didn't make you anxious? You're not even anxious that I'm anxious? You don't care whether I'm anxious? You want me to be anxious?!

Well, society, not only likes us anxious . . . it needs us anxious . . . because if we're not anxious we're not going to run their dirty machines in dirty places for dirty results. We're not going to fill up all their forms if we're not anxious; we're not going to pay their tickets if we're not anxious; we're not going to fight their wars if we're not anxious; we're not going to defend the faith if we're not anxious; we're not going to take care of our parents in their old age if we're not anxious; we won't be around when we're needed if we're not anxious; and we're usually needed to dissipate their **anxiety**.

I wonder whether there is any connection between anxiety and violence. I wonder . . . whether that might not come up . . . In . . . I wonder . . . I wonder what the relationship of anxiety is to love . . . How many words we've put down here that we could take a look at . . . that we're using all the time . . . I wonder what they really mean . . .

A man, anxious, no matter what else he thinks he is doing, at some level is trying to reduce his anxiety . . . always. The only question we're posing now is whether that can be done intelligently. It's obviously not being done successfully . . . only partially and periodically. Instead of significantly and permanently, it's partial and infrequent and

constantly masquerading under the front of 'everything's fine' and 'you can bet your fuckin' ass that I'm more intelligent than you - maybe I didn't study this, that or the other thing, maybe I didn't run an empire, but come play my game - see how you do.' I would like to ask the next person who was putting on a real front and being, you know, having life pretty much wrapped up, 'God by the balls', and ask them how they deal with this question of anxiety. Because anyone who has dealt with it, should be able to talk about it . . . somehow . . . it's unlikely they could deal with that without using their mind and words.

* * *

There is one thing about our anxiety - the level of it can be reduced incredibly fast under certain circumstances, just by the shape of something sometimes. We have been told, it seems, by one religion, at least, and implied probably in all, that we have fallen from a 'state of grace'. I wonder what that has got to do with anxiety. It is definitely implied that if we have fallen off some place, then it is possible to return to the place from which we have fallen - it's implied.

How can we know what to follow, what to do, with so many groups and institutions offering a road back to grace. How are we to judge if we were to, particularly, think that was the way to deal with the problem. In a way it's suggested that somebody else is going to deal with that problem for you. The church, the encounter group, etc. So many people want to help. Isn't that nice. How are we to judge them? How are we to judge who lies and who doesn't lie? Well, it seems that we can't tell who is lying and who's not lying. I mean, everyone is suspect because we can't tell the difference. Why can't we tell the difference? Well, I don't know . . . maybe we too are lying.

How can we tell the difference if we're anxious? How can we tell the difference between anything if we're anxious. How can we judge, how can we choose. It can be said, this is clearly axiomatic, that if we are anxious we are not functioning clearly. Can someone else do something about our anxiety? Can someone else help us with our anxiety so then we can see clearly?

Well it seems that we're always looking for someone to help us with our anxiety, that seems to have been tried even before - psychiatrists, priests, therapists of all kinds; we try children, sometimes, to help us with our anxiety, that usually makes things better; we

try husbands and wives - is that going to take care of our anxiety? Sometimes we try drugs, or liquor, that's supposed to help us with our anxiety; vacations help us with our anxiety; a good friend helps us with our anxiety; looking good helps us with our anxiety; buying things helps us with our anxiety; having what the neighbors have helps us with our anxiety. A lot of outside things claim that they help us with our anxiety.

Do they help us with our anxiety?

* * *

U must not be afraid to die
You must not be afraid to die
You must not be afraid to die
it's sure to happen by and by

You must not be afraid to die
You must not be afraid to die
You must not be afraid to die
it's sure to happen by and by

Our lives are short
like one big dream
it's only yesterday
it seems
that we were kids
without a thought
about the future
and what it brought

And when we see
reluctantly
around the corner
we will be
as dead as doughnuts
as cold as ice
we think well
that's not very nice

It went so quick
and which way round
who could have guessed
that this con-found-ed
complex thing
that one calls life
would pass like this
For Jesus Christ

LOOKING AHEAD

It seems that in order to move ahead we have to think ahead. How do we think ahead? What can we see ahead of us that we can't see in front of us? Can we see anything other than what we can see in our immediate surroundings? By seeing we mean the sum total of our perceptions. Well, we seem to leave the present, the immediate circumstances, when we think ahead.

So, in order to move ahead we have to think ahead; and that means imagine ahead. Make an image of what would be if we moved out of our present field of perceptions; moved into something new. But before we can move ahead we would like to know what we're moving to, so we start thinking about it - we imagine, we make an image. Where does that image come from? When we think ahead we're not really there, and what might be there when we get there isn't there now. So how do we imagine when we think ahead? First of all, that takes place inside of us, independent of immediate outer surroundings.

When we are where we are, and not thinking ahead, we are aware of what we are picturing with the confirmation of our senses and whatever other more subtle receptive faculties we might have. We have the evidence of our immediate surroundings. No doubt we are involved in a certain process of imagining, of image making, within that too, but whatever the image making is and whatever we might read into the situation, we still have the possibility of checking the reality of our immediate perceptions, sense and otherwise. So, it appears that if we're not looking ahead in order to move ahead, and if we take a person where he is, whatever imagining he might be doing, there is the living reality of his immediate situation.

When we start thinking ahead in order to move ahead we do that from where we are, first of all, but the focus is different; the focus is in this thing called ahead, or further on. I suppose, if anything, the immediate circumstances can even disturb the thinking ahead.

Let us take the example of a man who is thinking of going on a vacation. He is trying to think ahead of how it would be, let us say, if he were in Spain. He can picture himself being in Spain, with the weather ideal, lying on a beach, possibly with a beautiful girl

beside him, or a wonderful stallion to ride . . . he can imagine . . . but if he is, let us say, in the company of his mother-in-law who is trying at that moment to pressure him in connection with her daughter, it is very difficult for him to imagine different circumstances . . . the demands on his energies and attention in these present circumstances would not be a helpful/contributing factor to imagining or thinking ahead. Whatever he has to deal with in the present obviously requires energy and attention and thus his whole imagining mechanism, more or less . . .

Another example. One might be thinking of going to Moscow, for whatever reason . . . looking ahead to Moscow. Now, one of two circumstances exist - he's either been to Moscow or he's never been to Moscow. If he's never been to Moscow he's heard about it from people or from the media . . . there's a reason that he wants to go there, he 'knows', he's been told that it exists, he's been told certain things about it, things that he believes more or less. On the other hand if he has been to Moscow he has a picture, but it is from some time before; it's not the same now. His picture of Moscow is from a year ago, let us say, and things have changed. Things do change. The same people are not there. Even if the same people are there they are not doing exactly the same thing. If he intended, say, to do some business there or whatever else he decided to do he will not step into the same circumstances that he left, had he been there a year ago personally. So, he imagines what might be there when he gets there; what the new circumstances will be, the weather, the people and whatever other elements he believes he knows something about; he has to imagine what it will be then when he looks ahead. So, in a way, whether he has been there or not doesn't create an essential difference, because at the point where he is considering what he will do in the future, things of the past can still exist, but he needs to make a new picture. If he doesn't make a new picture he certainly cannot look ahead with any 'authority' because one thing that he knows is that it cannot be the same!

Well, one could say it could be the same because the buildings would be the same, the weather could be pretty much the same, and the general atmosphere of the people . . . the culture doesn't change so very quickly, it's generally the same. Or if we look again to Spain, to the beach, many things would be very much the same but the point is, that we usually think ahead in order to be active in the area that we are thinking ahead to, and not to a place where we're ready to bury our-selves or to become completely inactive . . .

then one could pick a mountain top or a desert, where they are dealing with things that change only over very long periods of time.

So in thinking ahead one makes an image of what would be ahead . . . well, never an easy thing to do, we know that . . . now we look at whether it is a possible thing to do - that is - is it possible to look ahead?

Is it really looking ahead when one imagines? . . . or does one only imagine that he looks ahead? But we know that he can only imagine that he looks ahead because when eventually he might act upon this process of his looking ahead, and therefore move ahead, he knows that when he reaches this place that he's moved to it must again be unlike the imagining that he did while he was thinking ahead, just as the imagining that he did while he was thinking ahead was different from his memory of what was from his previous experience.

And now we will make a statement which could have been said at the beginning but might have been 'jumping ahead', and that is the thesis that: when one is in the process of looking ahead he is, in fact, really looking behind. All the material that he takes for looking ahead comes from his impressions, his experience - no matter how they got to him, directly or indirectly - from the past. He takes his pictures from the past, looks at them, adjusts them, consciously or otherwise, to a small or greater degree, with certain assumptions of possible change . . . tries to project some change into the pictures of the past . . . but even those insertions of change in his pictures of the past come from other pictures of the past.

He pictures himself again, let us say, in Spain on the beach on a vacation . . . he has been there before . . . he knows certain people go there, certain people might still be there. He has a picture of what was there when he was there last time, he tries to think ahead, he imagines this from the past, he adjusts it, let us say, by speculating that if so and so whom he knew there was twenty-three when he last saw her, let us say one year has gone by . . . now twenty-four . . . he's had other experiences with somebody between twenty-three and twenty-four, he knows changes take place - they had one boyfriend then, now they have another . . . they had a particular relationship with their friends, family, etc., then . . . it's changed now . . . he knows there has been some change . . . he's seen other people at

that particular age. But these insertions of change that he puts into his picture of the past, come from other pictures in the past. So, he marries, let us say, two or more pictures, all from the past, and this is what goes into looking ahead.

* * *

I don't know who said it first or where, but what has come through to us is the saying: 'the generals are always fighting the last war.' Well, we haven't read so much of military history, but we've seen some of it, and of course the generals are faced with the same dilemma - the calculating of the future, looking ahead to what might be if another war came. The statement itself seems to indicate that they are overly burdened with the past in terms of their picturing which is based on the last war. So, people say 'ah yes, the generals, they're always getting ready for the last war!'

How else is a general to look ahead? He takes his own experience and things that he has studied about war, theories about it, other people's experiences; all things from the past; he adds to that the new equipment that has been developed and its possible effects on the course of battles. He tries to add up these and other factors into a new picture. Certainly the generals don't have the experience of what a future war will bring. They try to imagine that. 'Generals are always fighting the last war.' It seems that this statement indicates that they are over-burdened with their picture of the last war at the expense of, maybe, their 'creative' thinking in connection with the possibility of a new war, that is . . . thinking ahead to a new war.

Once we touch on things of this nature, why not give a real live example. Just a few years ago, in 1973, the Israelis were attacked simultaneously by the Egyptians and the Syrians in the so-called Yom Kippur war. A 'surprise attack'. For those who can remember, in the period just before that it was assumed that because of the incredible strength of the Israeli tank corps, in open desert warfare there was nothing that could touch them. They had a highly skilled, highly mobile and tested tank force - specially equipped, very well trained and highly successful. Then the '73 war came and in the first couple of days the Israeli tank forces in the north with Syria and in the south with Egypt, were devastated by a new weapon, a new anti-tank weapon, an anti-tank missile! Not so much news came through as to what the Israelis knew about this, but it seemed obvious that they did know that there were such weapons. They also knew that the Russians, to some degree, had

supplied some to the Egyptians and to the Syrians. For whatever reason, they obviously did not project the devastating effect this weapon would have on their army. It seems that during the fighting they somehow readjusted and somehow dealt with the situation.

But if we look back, say, to some time just before the '73 war, we can imagine clearly that the generals in the Israeli army prepared for the possibility of war - they're always preparing for the possibility of another war in this area - taking into account their experience in the past against the same enemies, keeping some kind of track on how things were changing by virtue of new equipment and new training on their part and on the part of the enemy. Obviously they would do that - they had to look ahead, they had to imagine what would happen in another war. The Egyptians had to do the same thing, they had to imagine. Well, in the case of the missiles it appears that the Egyptians imagined better than the Israelis. On the other hand, other things happened in the war which did not at all conform to the imagination of the Egyptians . . . although they advanced on the front, they ended the war with the Israelis behind and surrounding them. So some things in the imagination of both came true and some didn't - they were thinking ahead, they had to think ahead, that kind of thinking ahead was literally 'life and death' thinking ahead.

* * *

In this question of looking ahead we assume that the look ahead is within the dynamics of life, within life situations. And within life situations there is interaction between people. When people encounter one another they are in one sense living in their 'ahead' - each of them at some time in the past was looking ahead, and in some way directed their activities according to the look they did ahead, and the result of these activities of looking ahead brought them into contact 'on the road to where they were moving'.

Two individuals come into contact. They have met their future, so to speak. Let us say that these two people develop what is called 'a relationship'. That is - after their original contact they continue in regular contact with one another, regular and satisfying contact with one another. Because the contact is satisfactory it continues to be regular(!?) An example of that could be an employee and an employer. Man and his secretary . . . a businessman and his secretary. A businessman makes plans for the future, he moves ahead towards it. The secretary's image of the future is being 'independent', working at a

job where she can earn money in order to live and also do the thing that she enjoys. Within the businessman's plans for the future are particular business activities which require the assistance of a secretary with certain qualifications. This particular girl becomes his secretary; she fills this particular role. He fills the role for her, she fills the role for him - on their moving ahead. They see each other every day at certain hours, at certain times, they continue to complement a need for each other in respect to the activity that is going on, which is a result of previous thinking ahead and is part of moving ahead.

Or we take the example of two people meeting, in their own city or on vacation, a boy and a girl, a man and a woman. Whatever they imagine they are doing, however planned, however automatic, they are in some kind of a movement individually; their paths, as they say, cross and they continue to move in close proximity. Let us say they begin to live together. So, from wherever they have come, to the place that they met - new circumstances, a new life, a new reality is taking place. Then, individually or together, they wish to look ahead - they want to move ahead.

That seems to over-complicate the discussion on thinking ahead because up to this point we were talking about an individual, what he might use from the past and add to the past - a combination for change - the whole process of imagining the future that he would like to move to. We look at this process of looking ahead in the dynamics of life where there are many things involved, and in particular people. So in fact maybe we don't complicate it really too much, because we don't take all the people that the individual has to consider, those that he is dealing with and might deal with, but just one other.

Now we take the relationship which is the most intense that we usually find in society, that is a relationship between a man and a woman who decide to live together, or in fact find themselves living together. Their paths of activity have crossed. Those paths were leading in some direction with one degree or another of consciousness, one degree or another of looking ahead. Now they've met on this road and end off living together. New circumstances develop - new circumstances become familiar circumstances, they have certain repetitive elements in them which then become known.

At some point somebody again thinks in terms of looking ahead. They become aware

that what now are their circumstances are somewhat different from their circumstances previously, and new circumstances will also be arising in the future; certain things they may have control over, other things they will have no control over. They decide that they wish to look ahead, not leave the future as a completely accidental phenomenon. To look ahead - to move ahead, and not to be, let us say, victimized by the whole process.

Now, in connection with this cohabiting couple; two individuals, one female one male, each one with many individual differences, not only in sex but also in backgrounds and past experiences, in past relationships, some known to one another, others un-known to each other. Two people, usually labeled male and female but, in fact, with an incredible number of differences, not even to speak of the question of temperament, the question of talent, the question of essential inclinations. People with essential differences which they were born with, and circum-stantial/environmental differences that have been the result of their individual lives. Maybe an over-simplification to say man and woman living together because then everything gets focused on the particular difference of sex - in fact many differences. Cohabiting - and one or both not wanting to be a total victim of time and change decide to look ahead! They may live in a different place, they may have different friends, they may individually or together participate in different types of activity, they may study something, experiment with some-thing, live in the country, live in the city, live among people, live alone, live with children, live without children, live in connection with past friends, live in relationship with new friends, live in connection with family, live not in connection with family. Many possibilities for the future - individually or perhaps together they look ahead.

* * *

So we started with an attempt to look at this activity that people are involved in, that is, moving ahead from where they are, and of looking ahead in some kind of preparation for this moving ahead - and we've come around to an example of two people doing this activity, living together, a man and a woman cohabiting.

Let us set a stage for this couple in western society - established and integrated - in what is generally taken as the 'middle class'. The middle class, educated and conditioned as we have in western society - whether in America or Europe or for that matter in most parts of the world which have become so alike, especially in connection with the ideas and

functioning of this massive group of people called the middle class. Be it a Jew or a Christian, Moslem or Hindu, there would be no difficulty in placing them within this category - the middle class is spread across the globe. The couple living together usually make some kind of an arrangement for the future - it's called 'marriage' - they get married.

What are the implications of that, getting married? Well . . . There are two main historical forces involved in this kind of accommodation. The first is the religious marriage - performed by a religious personality, a priest or a rabbi. The couple gets married under the particular laws, the particular traditions, of that particular religion. However different these religions appear to be, I suggest that they may not be all that different, other than in certain differences in ceremony. The essential thing in religious marriage is that two people bind themselves in a relationship called marriage, in order to 'serve God'! Religion sees man's primary goal in life as developing a proper relationship to God, the creator. They see that as a work on the part of individual people. They also recognize that people function within a community, and that when they join in this institution called marriage they do so to facilitate the fulfilment of their individual responsibility - to God.

Then, there is what is called 'civil marriage' - handled differently in different countries; a government sponsored commitment between two people who live together. The governments have their interpretations of that. Responsibilities and privileges backed up by the law of the land. The couple, then, makes a commitment to the law; not a commitment to God. They make a commitment to the law of the land. According to the law there are obligations and restrictions. It legalizes their sex; they are restricted from having sex outside of this particular partnership. They have the privilege of authority over their children; they can discipline their children, 'educate' their children - under the law. If they don't send their children to school they can be prosecuted by the law.

So, the state has its rules - dispenses privileges to people who marry under their auspices, and imposes certain conditions and obligations upon them, under the general heading of the 'well being of society'.

Two types of marriage - religious and civil marriage. Now whatever the intentions of those who perform religious or civil ceremonies, whatever their ceremony or whatever

their documentation, whatever their witnessing elements, whatever promises elicited from the various parties, regardless of the structure - within society we have a mixture of civil and religious considerations. Most people are not very familiar with what the law or the religions have in mind, but society develops a functioning relationship with this institution. That develops over the years and has a particular dynamic in what we call our middle class western society - at least in the middle class western society, but not limited to it.

The people who involve themselves in this institutionalized relationship of marriage - are they thinking ahead? Well, to the extent that all people do, to one degree or another, consciously or otherwise plan ahead, they do as well. And of course the ceremony of marriage focuses on this. Two people involved in a particular activity, the activity of getting married, take a step into the future. They've made a choice, supposedly of their own free will. They shall be supporting each other, doing things together, having children together, building a home together, growing old together, loving together; marriages are happy occasions. Generally all of this is highly undefined, but generally there is this activity of looking or planning ahead.

* * *

Let us leave aside the strictly pragmatic marriages, the business marriages - it happens. We've seen people make very calculated decisions that it would be materially beneficial to be married - but that is not the way it usually happens. There seems to be another element - and that is usually considered the emotional element - which is called 'love'.

People connect with each other in emotional affinity, affection and love. They are not calculating so much with this question of moving ahead, but rather the emotional feeling called love or affection. Satisfying to both of them; they enjoy being together, 'sharing' they say - sharing experiences, outer and inner experiences, emotional experiences, sexual experiences, possibly even intellectual experiences. That is closer to the area we have been talking about in terms of thinking and planning ahead - definitely an intellectual activity involved there. The emotional connection they have between them may be extraordinarily powerful, may be very central to them, it may touch them in a very deep place. However real and sincere that might be, other aspects of their individuality come into play, in time. Who they are, essentially and otherwise, where they have come

from, what experiences they have collected, what views they have, what habits, what prejudices, what their relationship is to friends, family, money etc. All these come into play in the relationship. In other words how they see themselves, how they see the world, and how they project all that into what we call the future; how they might move ahead, how they might think ahead. A very complicated individual phenomenon - certainly no less complicated when two people are together.

It seems that in the 'throes of love' all of the other details are put into second place - they 'fall' into second place. Love - definitely seems to be something of a different dimension, a different category, but even so, not immune to all the vicissitudes of life, not immune to all the conditioning factors of life.

Let's get back to our cohabiting couple, living together even with this wonderful cover of love. New circumstances are created, new dynamics which become known, the mystery comes out of it. People become more known to each other, known in reality, known in imagination; they get a feeling of familiarity with the situation. Also an awareness that life does not stand still, even though they have this special relationship, and again, individually or together they attempt to look ahead.

Marriage, whether understood in the religious or civic sense has to do with 'binding'. They bind themselves 'for better or for worse, until death do us part'. That would be the maximum position; some may have the attitude that they are bound together for as long as it is mutually advantageous; but definitely bound together for the period of this contract. All the expectations and practical dynamics however, are not always successful. What is really the expectation, individually, in this arrangement called marriage? How will they move ahead?

* * *

I hear voices in the distance listening to a conversation of this kind and saying - 'Oh my goodness sakes alive, what complicated nonsense is going on in connection with these things - two people - I mean people get married, obviously, that is the way it works, get married, have a home, have children. I mean, what else? Play around all your life? I mean, what a nonsense business. Of course it's individual, of course it's complicated, but it always has been that way! What is one trying to figure out in a thing like this?'

We really are using this only as an example, because people are doing all kinds of things that 'always have been done'. If we had access to any kind of real data or experience we would know that the things that 'everybody always does' are not necessarily successful - usually quite the contrary. Within society there are some fine dreams, there are some wonderful dreams. There is the dream of financial success, there is the dream of fame, there is the dream of blissful marriage, there is the dream of the beauty and glory of raising a family, there is the dream of the growing and strengthening nation. These dreams have been wonderfully packaged by Hollywood over many years, and presented to the public in the theater and on their television sets into their own homes; the wonderful variety of life packaged in Hollywood. So we take a look at one of the dreams presented to us; what we are really doing; what it leads to; how it conforms to our intelligent functioning, if there is such a thing; and try to relate it to our question - 'how do we think ahead in order to move ahead?'

* * *

ON THE ROAD OF GREED - TO NEED
or
ON THE ROAD OF TIME - TO ETERNITY

If my money is invested in shares of General Motors, my SENSE OF TIME is distinctly different from the man's whose money is 'on the nose' of a Greyhound in the middle of a race!

If I am rushing to an important Business meeting my SENSE OF PRIORITY (within Time) will be in CONFLICT with, say, my current case of dysentery and my immediate need to go to the bathroom.

Our wish to invest in Personal Life Insurance is, or could be, at odds with our wish to buy a new CAR, that is, if we have limited funds.

Our wish to climb a mountain may be at odds with our wish for a LONG LIFE.

Our wish to have a Family will be at odds with our wish to be 'foot loose and fancy free'.

Our wish to know the TRUTH may be at odds with our wish to be COMFORTABLE.

Each of these, and other apparently contradictory wishes, in fact represent various PROCESSES in TIME that have no clear COMMON DENOMINATOR.

Our Wishes are at CROSS CURRENTS.

They tie us in KNOTS.

* * *

PROCESSES

There are various currents in life - that is an expression that we hear quite a bit - 'currents in life.' This really represents something very distinct. Another word for currents would be processes. We are faced with processes in life. Any view, at any particular moment, of any particular aspect of life, is merely a cross section, an immediate snapshot, of what is in fact a process - that had a beginning and will have an end.

The fact is that we are psychologically involved with and following a large number of processes - everything from the development of our head cold to Cold War politics - trying in each case to judge its direction and how it will affect us individually.

The longest process, and the one which is the hardest to look at is the 'process of the totality of our physical life'. Processes, being things with beginnings, middles and ends, the most extensive of these, of course, is our life cycle. The life cycle starts with an infant, having minimal survival capacity, requiring a lot of care, gradually strengthening, becoming independently mobile, able to express itself, moving into greater strength physically, otherwise moving into adulthood, and by the age of roughly twenty-one maximum growth has taken place. There is then a slow but steady deterioration of the physical organism which ultimately ends in death. That is the cycle of our life. Growing, reaching full maturity and then slowly disintegrating. That is the overall process.

Within that, again, we have some shorter processes, such as the taking of a meal. First an awareness of hunger, then the decision to get some food, an evaluation of where that might be available, preparing the food or moving towards where it is, eating the food, being satisfied. The process repeats. A somewhat longer process is the process of education starting roughly at six years old in elementary school, then high school, then university. There are variations but somewhere between the ages of six and twenty-five we have an educational process.

Marriage is also a process, and like all other processes has within it many sub-processes: the ceremony of the marriage is a sub-process, the sexual activity is a sub-process, the rearing of the children arising in the world is a sub-process.

DEMANDS

We are in processes all the time, large and small, connected and not connected. And each process that we attach ourselves to or find ourselves attached to, has certain obvious demands. Those demands become, somehow, our wishes. We wish to fulfil the demands of a process, otherwise we may 'fall off the train'.

We take a trip from Paris to Munich on a train - that's a process. We get on in one place, we get off at the other, but as we pass the Franco-German border we know we have to show our passport. So as we approach the border we get ready, we 'want' to find our passport, we start looking for our passport, we want it! Why do we want it? Well, we want it so we won't interrupt the process of getting from Paris to Munich because should we not get our passport out they'll put us off the train, not let us cross the border. So there we find a little thing that we want, which allows us to fulfil a process. We have many 'little wants' of those kinds. Wants that have to do with our imagining mechanism which is always, in some way, watching where it came from and where it is going. Watching individual processes, in fact - and certain demands develop out of that, which a person, if asked, will say 'he wants to do'!

Two men at the front line in a war. Both are told to attack a position up ahead. The main concern of one of them is to stay alive, as best he can, in these adverse conditions. His immediate concern is the preservation of his own life. He doesn't move because he feels it is a hopeless situation, or that the odds are highly against him. The other man's main consideration is to defeat the enemy, which will give him protection for himself and his family in the future. That's his picture, that is his evaluation. He must advance as ordered to - regardless of the risk. In his case he sees his individual life as less important, it's the safety of the country that matters. These two men appear to be in the same process, the process called war - in fact they are in two quite different processes, corresponding to their individual picture and imagination of the situation and their relationship to it.

The average person in a socialized environment is subject to a wide variety of demands other than his intuitive/instinctive physical and emotional demands. A large number of

these demands are due to his situation in society and the number of processes that are revolving. Some of these processes he might have originally instigated himself, chosen a particular path, made a decision for a long term process. Then all kinds of sub-processes arise: he decides to get married - he finds himself in the sub-process of maternity hospitals, in the sub-process of the education system, in the sub-process of in-laws, in the sub-process of estate building. Or, the man decides to go into a particular business - he finds himself in the sub-processes of labor organizations, insurance and banking.

It appears that we in life are continually at the disposal of demands of the processes that we are in. And we run from one demand to another demand with a certain sense of priority that the general morality of the society demands - i.e. if you had planned to go to the dentist, by virtue of 'the process of your decaying teeth', and you received a last moment invitation from the president of your company to join him at a special meeting - you would be expected to bypass the dentist and go to the meeting with your boss. If, on the other hand, on the way to the meeting with your boss, which is, of course, part of the 'process of business', you were to hear that your mother was critically ill at the hospital - you would then drop the meeting with your boss and go to sit with your mother. In fact, there would be no real decision in most cases of this nature, because it is already programmed within society - just which things are 'more important' than others. If you should go to the dentist instead of going to the hospital for your mother you would be ostracized. If you should go to a business meeting instead of going to see your mother who had just been put in hospital you would be ostracized. So it is with the demands of your spouse and children, and your government if it should decide to go to war, and should decide that it needs you in a uniform!

So, how indeed do we look ahead! We look ahead, usually, to the next demand that is made upon us - that is as far as we look ahead. There are certain things that we are 'ready to do', that seem 'normal', that appear as if we wanted them, that have the image of looking ahead - far more apparent than real. Choosing a profession or getting married, for instance. It appears to be looking ahead, but it is more like something that rises up as a necessity or a possibility within the framework of the society - it appears to be 'the thing to do' - so we move into it.

A legitimate question would arise at this point and that would be: is there one process, one possibility, one dominant activity that we could pursue in our life, with some consciousness of our intention in 'the long run'? Is there any process that we could instigate or attach ourselves to that would take us out of all the confusion and, in fact, the tearing apart that we are subjected to by all the miscellaneous processes that we are involved in, and all the demands that they make upon us, all the contradictions and paradoxes that are the result of these non-aligned processes? Processes without a common denominator, that very often cross over, one on the other. The question really is - is there anywhere for a man to go? Is there anything for a man to attain or to acquire? And should he do this one thing, at the expense of all other non-essential demands that are made upon him, sacrificing his image within society which judges on the basis of a strict order of priority which they call 'morality'?! Can a man aim at something and make his own order of priorities, relative to that aim, and with all other demands clearly secondary?

If we say no to a question like this it becomes obvious that man can only progress from life to death in continual small activities based on the immediate demands that are placed upon him by his physical organism, his emotions and his imagination within society. In fact, man could only be a victim of a mass of considerations with no direction within it.

Question 1:

Is it possible for a man to do what he wants in this life?

Question 2:

Is it possible for him to want anything that will benefit him in the long run?

Question 3:

Is there such a thing as a 'long run' success for an individual?

Question 4:

Is it possible for a man to attain anything in life that he will not lose at death?

This last question will seem exaggerated to the person who has accepted death of the physical body to be the end of every-thing. Everything that we know of will be stripped from us at death. Without a hope or a view that there is something permanent and survivable within us, all our activities in life can only be for temporary comforts and relief of anxiety, be that the thought of our next meal or thoughts about the future in life of our child or grandchild. If everything leads to total and absolute extinction at death, life ever more looks like a rather sadistic joke.

* * *

TEACHINGS & RELIGIONS

Real teachings and religions tell us that God is eternal, ever-lasting, and at the same time tell us that God is Love. We are also told that we have, or can develop, a soul which also is eternal and everlasting, and that the soul is somehow connected with the eternal and everlasting God.

Religions and teachings point very specifically to the continuation of something real and essential in us, past the border of death of the physical body. Some aspect of soul is born within us; some aspect of the eternal and everlasting is born within us, that may mature and consciously survive the death of the body.

Man in the body - experiencing and thinking only in accordance with the data of the limited senses - has no way of confirming or imagining life after death of the body. Unconsciously he is forced into a frame of reference, a frame of mind, trying to justify his activities within the limited field of life with all its contradictory processes and all its growing demands.

A person with sufficient experience and a sufficiently wide perspective - having seen the contradictions and the inevitable confusions of recurring, small, demanding wishes

dictated by any number of processes, having seen the futility of life as it is lived by normal average man - can at last dedicate his attention to studying and pondering these 'rather preposterous claims' of teachings and religions which say to you, 'Hey, mister, nothing happens here! All we can do is to prepare ourselves to leave - leave under conditions that will be survivable, in another state that we will enter after death.'

So, true religions and teachings spend a good part of their early training in giving people the tools to study life as it is, so that they can see for themselves, deeply and thoroughly, the inevitable futility and nonsense of it all. Serious and real teachings and religions tell a person clearly that - 'you are all worrying and struggling and manipulating in an area which is absolutely useless;' that everything you are doing will be lost sooner or later; and even before that ties you up in painful and confusing knots.

They also say that love is at a different level from all the other disjointed functionings, and should our love be pure enough, and our understanding clear enough, even in the state of the physical body - we can come to know and experience the greater reality called God.

So, it appears that in order to know what this thing called God is, in order to know that now, within this life, we must know what real love is. We must be real love. We must practice real love. We must manifest real love. In order to become aware and reap the benefits of understanding and perception of God now, to fulfil our destiny, which is the survival of the soul after the death of the body - we must have sufficient strength and crystallization of this love, embodied in a soul, which will survive the shock of death and allow our entry into God's greater domain and dimensions.

B'chol le'vav'cha
ou've'chol naf'sh'cha
ou've'chol me'o'de'cha

But in order to accomplish this development of love and under-standing we must cease our fearful and compulsive activities, predicated on the notion that all ends at death, and, as they say, 'grab your money and run.' That is, we must recognize the foolishness and uselessness of life aims, and do no violence to our love in the name of this foolishness.

There is no such thing as a successful life
There can only be a successful death

* * *

THE PROBLEM OF FEAR

New Delhi, 1 November 1964.

J. Krishnamurti

We were talking the other day about learning. Learning obviously implies a state of humility. But humility is not meekness; it is not a low estimation of one's own importance; it is not that 'I do not know and you know; so teach me', but rather a mind that is alert and demands to know, to learn; it is not a state of acquiescence, acceptance. Humility is not a virtue. Humility cannot be cultivated - it is there, or it is not there. It is only the vain, proud people who cultivate humility - they put on a mask of humility; but they are not really, in the real sense of that word, humble.

So a mind that is learning must have this quality of not accepting, not denying, not estimating its own importance at any level, at any time; or it must have the quality of denying and really inquiring, asking, questioning, being critical - not only critical of what is being said, but also critical of oneself - critically aware, choicelessly aware of what is being said, and of oneself. Such a mind is necessary to learn. And we need to learn totally anew about our relationships because the world is undergoing an extraordinary transformation, changing rapidly, and old traditions really have no meaning at all anymore. Class divisions are disappearing - except perhaps in this country where tradition is very strong, where a certain pattern established by a few people, such as saints and mahatmas and all the rest of it, is followed, but it has no meaning at all.

We must question critically, intelligently the whole problem of relationship, not only relationship with the family, but the relationship of man, between man and man as society; and that demands a mind which is critical, non-accepting, learning. But, unfortunately, most of us are so eager to be told what to do, so happily follow someone - a political leader or a religious leader or in fact any leader - if he can tell us what to do, because we do not want to inquire, learn, ask, demand; we are just satisfied to be led. And a mind that is being led, that is following authority, is incapable of learning and therefore cannot possibly understand the state of humility, which is not humbleness - that word is a dreadful word.

Humility is an energetic state of mind when it is totally aware of itself, of all its intricacies, its limitations, its conditioning, its prejudices, its shortcomings. It is only such a mind that

can learn and can understand this extraordinary, complex relationship between man and man, which is called society. Society is progressive, blindly driven by dictators, by revolutions, by economic circumstances, by war, by a few leaders who are really very capable and have drive; and that society is under-going constant change, evolving. Therefore a mind that is not capable of learning about this movement of social evolution cannot possibly comprehend this vast movement; and therefore it becomes a mind that is dull, stupid, accepting, adjusting. So a mind that is learning is always ahead of society, however much that society is evolving. That is why we have to understand this quality of humility.

What is the state of your mind as you are listening? Are you listening to words, ideas? Are you waiting to be told what to do? Or, do you have a pattern of action which, for you, is very important, because it touches your immediate life - and when that pattern is questioned, you resist, you withdraw? You have to find out for yourself what is the state of your own mind, because we are going into the question of fear, and that requires an extraordinarily sharp, clear mind that is capable of learning, questioning, asking, demanding.

As we said just now, society is progressing, evolving. There are those who hinder, who go back; they go back to tradition, to all kinds of ideas which are traditional, old-fashioned - with a mind that is not contemporary, that is not ahead of society. They force society into a particular pattern, because they live in ideas, in concepts, in abstractions - as the communists, as the socialists, as the people in this country. They have patterns, concepts which they try to force on people; therefore such minds are not contemporary minds. I mean by a contemporary mind, a mind that is aware of the whole world-situation, not only economically, but politically, scientifically, morally, psychologically, of the world that is torn between the East and the West, of the tremendous powers of destruction. These are facts, and one has to come to them with a fresh mind to understand, to learn - not come to them with a mind that is traditional, pattern driven.

So, before we go into this question of fear, you have to find things out for yourself as a human being - not as an individual, because individuality comes much later. Individuality comes only when you are completely human, not animalistic - with its ambition, greed, envy, hate, and all the rest of it. When the mind is free of all that, then only is it an

individual mind. And in that state of mind which is individual, at that moment, something tremendous takes place, and you can go beyond that. You may pretend that you have got a soul, that you are independent, that you are the higher self and all the rest of it: they are just words that have no meaning, because you are merely the result of your environment. You are being taught certain patterns of thought; you live in a particular social tribe or race or group or family, and that conditions your mind, and then you repeat that. So a mind that is awake; that is demanding, questioning; that is aware of all the things that are implied in modern existence - such a mind must have the intense quality of humility. It is not a state of underestimation of oneself, or of accepting, acquiescing, adjusting - such a mind is no mind at all. You have to think very clearly, to question very clearly, sharply - not only the speaker but everybody, all your political, religious, economic leaders so that your mind is made sharp through learning. But that learning is denied when you follow authority.

I do not know if you have not noticed this worship of authority, in yourself and around you - particularly in countries that are old, in countries that have ancient traditions, in countries that are overpopulated. You know, the word 'authority' originates, stems from the one who originates something - originates. We are not original because we do not know, or we have not realized, what it is to think clearly, independently of what Shankara, Buddha, or anyone else has said. To think clearly for oneself demands that one has no authority. But, unfortunately, in this country especially - and perhaps in other countries also - we are talking about it. We are not comparing this country with another country: that is an old trick of the politicians; when you say that this country is corrupt, the politicians say that it is better, that it is not so corrupt as the other country, and they think they have done some marvelous thing. What we are talking about is something entirely different. We are not comparing. We are seeing facts. And to see facts there must be no comparison - how can you compare? And to see facts - not intellectually - demands a great deal of affection, a great deal of sympathy, an intense sense of love, empathy. But that affection, love, is denied when you are worshiping authority.

Do consider what the speaker is saying; don't agree with it. Watch what is taking place in your own life because following authority is one of the origins of fear. We have the Gita or some other book, and that book is our authority; that authority has no meaning whatsoever in relation to contemporary existence. Because the mind is afraid to wander

away from what, it thinks, is the real - the real as asserted by a certain group of people or by certain persons - it accepts. You accept authority not only spiritually, if I may use that word, but also politically, religiously, in every way. Authority is not in just one particular direction, the authority of the wife over the husband and of the husband over the wife - to dominate. We all want power; and power goes with ambition, and ambition is a form of self-expression. We all want to express ourselves; which is, we want to be somebody in this world - as a writer, as a painter, as a politician, or as a religious leader, and so on and so on. So a mind that is enslaved by authority - whether it is by the wife or by the husband or by society or by the people - a mind that worships authority cannot possibly have either affection, love or the capacity to learn. You can follow another, and by following another you do not solve your sorrow. You might run away from your sorrow, from your despair, because he might offer a hope, and that hope might be illusory, unreal, non-factual. Because we are so frightened of existence, we want some hope, and we invest the authority with that hope.

So a mind that would understand fear must understand authority, self-fulfillment, and the demand for power. Function gives power. That is, you are capable of doing something - capable of running a government, capable of putting machines together, capable of running a house properly, cleanly, simply - and that gives you a functional capacity. But, unfortunately, with that capacity goes status which is position, which is money. So a mind that would learn has this intense - I was going to use the words 'intensively aggressive humility'. Aggressive humility is, of course, contradictory; but you understand what I mean - such a mind has the intensity of non-acquiescence because humility goes with freedom. And if there is no freedom, you cannot possibly learn. So, to understand fear, you must understand this whole psychological process of authority - which does not mean that you disobey; you have to pay taxes. To understand why you obey is important, not that you must disobey. You obey because inwardly, psycho-logically, inside your skin you are frightened: you might lose your job if you are not extra polite and kowtow to some big man, the manager or the dictator, the boss or your guru; or you might lose your spiritual values and so on.

Sirs, you are not listening to a lecture. This is not a harangue, a moralizing talk. We are communicating with each other. We are trying to understand this complex problem of living together, and it is a very complex problem. It needs a fresh mind every day to

understand your family, your wife or husband, or your children; it needs a fresh mind to learn your job efficiently. So we are trying to understand the problems. They are your problems, and therefore you are not merely listening to words, rejecting, or accepting, or saying it is this, or having opinions. We are together looking, together understanding, together trying to explore this complex problem. So you are as active as the speaker, if not much more active.

So one has to differentiate, when one understands authority, as to why one obeys the law, why one obeys psychologically. One has also to understand function and status because through function one wants status. What we are more concerned with is not function but status. Because status gives us certain privileges, status becomes much more important than function. But if you are only regarding function - not status at all - then the cook is as important as the prime minister. They are merely doing functions, and therefore you approach the two with quite a different mind - you do not kick the cook, nor do you lick the shoes of the prime minister. You treat them as functionaries - and therefore not as machines - as human beings liable to make mistakes. But the moment you think of status, then disrespect comes in; and the moment disrespect comes in, then you are lost; then you show respect to one and disrespect to another. A mind that understands this whole complex psychological problem of authority must go into all this because that is one of the roots of fear.

We all demand self-fulfillment, we all want to be somebody. Probably you want to be sitting here instead of me; it is there in the mind. Because we all want to be somebody, to be known, to be famous, to have our names appear in the papers, we want to express ourselves - by writing a book, by painting a picture, or through the family, through the wife, through the children, through the work. Through everything, we want to express ourselves. We never question if there is such a thing as self-expression, but we want to express. The moment you begin to question this whole problem of expression, especially of oneself, then you will see that a mind that is seeking self-expression is always in conflict, is always inviting despair and therefore always frightened and therefore resisting, aggressive. So, you have to know, you have to learn, you have to be aware of this urge to self-express. What do you want to express? What do you mean by self-expression? It essentially comes down to this: to be known by the world - which means what? - to be recognized as a big man, as somebody important, some-body who

is very clever, who has attained enlightenment, and all that stuff. And we are craving everlastingly to express ourselves in little things, in big things; and therefore there is competition. Out of this competition there is ruthlessness. And we think that this ruthless capacity, efficiency is progress. Do watch yourselves, please! You are not listening.

Please watch your own life. Then you see how the more capacity, the more intelligence, the more drive you have, the more deeply, the more longingly you want to fulfill, you want to be somebody. When you want to be somebody, this desire is to self-fulfill, either in God or in an idea - for God is an idea - or in a State or in the family. What is implied in this self-expression? You want to be, and the 'you' is merely an idea, an abstraction, a memory; and that is one of the great sources of fear. So there is ambition, authority, self-expression and there is the fear of the tomorrow.

Now, what is fear? Fear cannot exist by itself. It is not an abstraction. An abstraction comes into being only when one runs away from fear into an idea, into a concept, into certain activities. Suppose one is afraid, and one's mind is incapable of facing it and seeks an escape from it; then any thought, any activity arising from that escape, from that flight from the fact of fear, breeds an abstraction, a life of contradiction; and a life of contradiction brings more fear, more conflict - all the complexities of existence. So you have to understand fear, because fear breeds illusions, fear makes the mind dull. I do not know if you have not noticed, when you are frightened for various reasons, how your mind absolutely withdraws, isolates itself and looks immediately to somebody to help it out; how it builds a wall round itself through various activities, through lies, through every form of activity except facing that fact.

So we are going to face the fact, this evening - not the speaker's fear, but your fear. How is one to understand that fear? The understanding of that fear is freedom from that fear, and we are going into that. We are going to take a journey, we are going together to commune with that thing which we call fear, because one has to see the importance of understanding fear. It is a necessity to understand it. A mind that lives in fear is a dead mind, is a dull mind; it is a mind that cannot look, see, hear clearly, directly. So, it is very important to understand one's relationships with others, with society, with everything, and to be free of fear, totally - not partially, not fragmentarily, not on various occasions, but completely. I say it is possible, and we will go into that. So, fear is not an abstraction, it

is not a thing from which you can run away; it is there. Whether you run away for a day, for a year, for sometime, it catches you up wherever you are, and goes with you. You may turn your eyes away from it, but it is there.

Fear exists only in relationship to something else. I am afraid of public opinion, I am afraid of my wife, I am afraid of my boss, I am afraid of losing my job, I am afraid of death, I am afraid of pain; I am not healthy, I would like to be healthy, and I am frightened of going back, of falling ill again; I am frightened because I am lonely; I am frightened, because nobody loves me, nobody has a warm feeling for me; I am frightened, because I have to be nobody. There are various forms of fear, conscious and unconscious. If you are at all aware - aware, not in the narrow sense, but extensively - you can see the obvious fears: of losing a job and therefore playing up to the man above you, bearing all the boredom of it, his insults, his in-humanities; being frightened of not fulfilling; being frightened of not being somebody, being frightened of going wrong. So we have innumerable fears, and consciously we can know them quite easily. If you spend half an hour consciously, deliberately, to find out your fears, outwardly at least, you can easily stop them. But it is much more difficult to find out the unconscious fears, deep down within you, which have a greater importance and which during your sleep become dreams and all the rest of it. I am not going into all that now.

So one has to understand fear. Now, fear may take different forms: I am afraid of public opinion, I am afraid of falling ill, I am afraid of losing my wife, I am afraid of being nobody. I am afraid of being lonely - do you know what that word means? Have you ever been lonely, have you ever felt what it is to be lonely? Probably not, because you are surrounded by your family, you are always thinking about your job, reading a book, listening to a radio, listening to the infinite gossip of the newspapers. So probably you never know that strange feeling of being completely isolated.

You may have occasional intimations of it, but probably you have never come into contact with it directly, as you have with pain, with hunger, with sex. But if you do not understand that loneliness which is the cause of fear, then you will not understand fear and be free of it.

Fear may express itself in many forms - as it does - but there is only one fear. Fear is fear,

not how it shows, not what are the mediums through which you are aware of the existence of fear. I may be afraid of public opinion, of death, of losing a job, of a thousand other things; but the fear is the same. Now, whether that fear is conscious or unconscious, one has to find out, one has to go into it. Unfortunately, we have divided life - as has been done by the latest psychologists and so on - as the conscious and the unconscious. Please listen to this: you may not be interested and probably you have not even thought about it. You might have read about it, if you are interested in psychology, or heard somebody talk about the conscious and the unconscious and so on. But it does not play a great part in your life, as hunger does, as losing a job does, as belonging to a certain class does. So we are going into it briefly for the moment. We are not going into any detail or to explore it at great depth; one can, but we are going into it briefly.

One has divided the mind as the conscious and the un-conscious. The conscious mind is the educated mind, the modern technological mind that goes to the office every day, which is bored, which is fed up with all the routine of it, the lack of love of doing something for itself. So the conscious mind becomes the mechanical mind - watch it, sirs - it can think mechanically, it can go to the office and function. It does all the things mechanically - sex, affection, being mechanically conscious of everything, being kind when it pays, kicking when it does not pay; the whole thing, the strange phenomena of modern civilization. Then there is the unconscious which is very deep, which requires great penetration, understanding. Either one can understand the whole thing - both the conscious as well as the unconscious - immediately, with one look, or you take time through analysis, through analyzing all the intimations and hints of the unconscious which arise through dreams and so on. Please follow this.

As I said, you can understand this whole structure of conscious-ness which 'you', as a man or a woman, as a human being, the whole consciousness of two million years - not reincarnation of man, who has evolved from the lowest to the present state. All that development, all that psychological structure of society can be understood immediately, and also the whole psycho-logical structure of society with its greed, envy, ambition, despair, can be completely eliminated. Or you can analyze the whole process of consciousness, analyze it step by step. We feel - not feel, but it is so - that analysis will not free the mind. Then, what will free the mind from ambition, greed, envy, anger, jealousy, and the demand for power? - which are all animalistic. I do not know if you have

watched animals. Go to a poultry yard where there are lots of chickens and observe the chickens. You will notice how one pecks the other and how they have established a social order. We also have all the animalistic instincts, consciously as well as unconsciously. And we can understand this whole psychological structure, and be totally free of this animalistic, instinctual relationship of man with man, immediately - and this is the only way to do it, not through analysis.

But to understand this thing, to understand this consciousness, one has to be really free, totally, of fear. Fear is the essence of the animal. Now, to understand fear one must come directly into contact with it - that is, non-verbally. Please do take your fear. You are afraid of something: maybe of your wife, husband, children. Take it, look at it, bring it out - not suppress it, not accept it, not deny it, but take hold of it, look at it. To look at it demands a mind fully aware, not a vague dull mind. Because when you look at fear, either you come directly into contact with it or you go off to an asylum as people do, or you know what to do with it. And we are going into it directly, non-abstractly, non-verbally so that you come directly into contact. We said there are many causes of fear, but fear is always fear. The objects of fear and their relationship with you may vary, but fear is always the same, though it expresses itself in different ways.

Now, most of us do not come into contact with fear. The moment fear shows itself in any form, we run away from it. There is the fear of death. I am not going to talk about death today, but we will do it another day if there is time. When you are afraid of death, your whole defensive psychological machinery is set going immediately; you invent beliefs, you run away from it, you have visions, you have dreams; but you avoid that thing. So the first thing to realize is that any form of escape not only perpetuates and strengthens fear but creates conflict, and therefore the mind is incapable of coming directly into contact with fear. Suppose the speaker is afraid; he has an idea, he has some hope; and that hope, that idea, that escape, becomes much more important than the fear itself because he is running away from the fact, and the running away - not the fear - creates conflict. When a man is directly in contact with something, non-verbally, non-abstractly, without escape, there is no conflict; he is there. It is only the man who has ideas, hopes, opinions, all kinds of defenses - for him there is conflict; and that conflict prevents him from coming directly into contact with fear.

Most people have fear and they have invented a network of escapes - going to the temple, the incessant activity of a restless, stupid mind - they have invented so many fears, so many escapes, and therefore their conflicts increase. So one has to be aware of it - not 'How am I to escape'? or 'How am I to stop from escaping'? Because the moment you understand that every form of escape from fear only creates more conflict and there-fore there is no direct contact with fear, and that it is only with a direct contact with fear that you are free - when you understand that, not intellectually, not verbally, not as some-thing you hear from somebody, but actually, for yourself when you see that - then you do not escape at all. Then the temple, the book, the leader, the round-the-corner guru - all those disappear. Then you are not ambitious.

The escape from fear can be actual - that is through radio, temple, activities. Or it can be through abstractions - that is, the word helps us to escape from fear. Please listen to this, and you will see. Fear is not an abstraction, it is not a word; but, for most of us, the word has taken the place of the fact. You see that? The word 'fear' which is an abstraction has taken the place of the fact, which is the actual fear, and therefore you are dealing with the abstract word and not with the fact. I hope I am making myself clear. So, you have to understand fear - I mean by 'understand' not verbally, not intellectually, but face it - and be completely free of it, totally, right through your being. And you can only do it when there is no escape of any kind - escape through activity, through some form of running away, or escape through the word which, for most people, takes the place of the actual fact. When you understand this, then you are directly in contact with fear. In that contact there is no time interval, there is no saying, 'I will get over it' or 'I will develop courage' - which is equally stupid - when you are frightened. It is like those people who are violent and everlastingly talking about non-violence. It is too stupid, because it has no validity at all. What has validity is violence, and you can deal with it; but to talk, to go round the world preaching about non-violence is just a hypnotic, unrealistic mind. So we are dealing with facts, and we cannot deal with 'what is' if there is any form of escape, conscious or unconscious.

There is physical fear. You know, when you see a snake, a wild animal, instinctively there is fear; that is a normal, healthy, natural fear. It is not fear, it is a desire to protect oneself - that is normal. But the psychological protection of oneself - that is, the desire to be always certain - breeds fear. A mind that is seeking always to be certain is a dead mind,

because there is no certainty in life, there is no permanency. And because you try to establish permanency in your relationship with your wife, with your family, and all the rest of it, you have jealousy and the dreadful thing called family. When you come directly into contact with fear, there is a response of the nerves and all the rest of it. Then, when the mind is no longer escaping through words or through activity of any kind, there is no division between the observer and the thing observed as fear. It is only the mind that is escaping, that separates itself from fear. But when there is a direct contact with fear, there is no observer, there is no entity that says, 'I am afraid.' So, the moment you are directly in contact with life, with anything, there is no division - it is this division that breeds competition, ambition, fear.

So what is important is not 'how to be free of fear'? If you seek a way, a method, a system to be rid of fear, you will be ever-lastingly caught in fear. But if you understand fear - which can only take place when you come directly in contact with it, as you are in contact with hunger, as you are directly in contact when you are threatened with losing your job - then you do something; only then will you find that all fear ceases - we mean all fear, not fear of this kind or of that kind. Because out of the freedom and the understanding and the learning about fear comes intelligence, and intelligence is the essence of freedom. And there is no intelligence if there is any form of conflict, and conflict must exist as long as there is fear.

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