

The Delicate Art Of Motherhood

You are creating something immensely valuable.

Just to give birth to a child is one thing – to be a mother is totally different. Any woman can give birth to a child; that's a very simple phenomenon. But to be a mother needs great art, needs great understanding.

You are creating a human being – that is the greatest creation! A painter paints a picture; we call it great art. Picasso – we call him a great artist. But what about the mother who created Picasso? A poet writes beautiful poems, but what about the mother who created Shakespeare?

We don't think about mothers as the greatest creative people on the earth. That is one of the reasons why women are not great painters and great poets – they need not be: they can be great mothers. Why does man try to become a great scientist, poet, painter, this and that? – he is jealous of women: he cannot create children. He feels impotent. Sigmund Freud has talked much about phallic Jealousy – that women suffer from a jealousy because they don't have penises. Now this is utterly meaningless, absurd. It is as if a woman Sigmund Freud is born and starts talking about men suffering from breast-jealousy because they don't have breasts. But, one thing is certain: deep down man always feels jealous that he cannot mother, that he cannot carry an alive life in him, that he cannot reproduce life. To substitute it he paints, he sculpts, he writes poetry, he composes music; he goes to the moon, he goes to Everest. He wants to prove at least to his woman that "I can also do something," otherwise he feels impotent. Compared to woman's capacity, he looks like a child, looks almost accidental. His work is not much: giving birth to a child, he simply triggers the process. A small injection can do that; that is not much of a work.

The woman passes through those nine months of agony and ecstasy. And then the work is not finished! In fact, then the work, the real work, starts – when the child is born.

And the child brings again a fresh quality to life. Every child is primitive, a barbarian; now the mother has to civilize. Every child is a barbarian, remember; he is animal, wild. And the mother has to give him culture, has to teach him the ways of life, the ways of man. It is a great work. You have to remember that – that your work has not finished, it has started. Take it joyously!

You are creating something immensely valuable – you are carving a life, you are protecting a life.

The work is such that no sacrifice is great enough for it – any sacrifice can and should be made. One thing. Second thing: don't take it too seriously, otherwise you will destroy the child. Your seriousness will become destructive. Take it playfully. The responsibility is there! but it has to be

taken very playfully. Play upon the child as one plays upon a musical instrument – and she knows how to play on musical instruments. Let the child be your instrument now. **Play carefully but play playfully.** If you become serious, then the child will start feeling your seriousness and the child will be crushed and crippled. Don't burden the child; don't start feeling that you are doing something great to the child. When I say you are doing something great, you are doing something great to yourself.

By helping this child to grow into a beautiful human being, into a buddha, you will be becoming the mother of a buddha. You will not be obliging the child: you will be simply enjoying your own life; your own life will become a fragrance through the child. This is an opportunity, a God-given opportunity.

And these are the two pitfalls: either you neglect the child, you are tired of it; or you become too serious about the child, and you start burdening him, obliging him.

Both are wrong. Help the child – but for the sheer joy of it. And never feel that he owes any debt to you. On the contrary, feel thankful that he has chosen you to be his mother. Let your motherhood bloom through him. If you can bloom into your motherhood, you will feel thankful to the child forever. And, naturally, there will be sacrifices, but they have to be made... joyously. Only then is it a sacrifice! If you do it without joy it is not sacrifice. Sacrifice comes from the word sacred. **When you do it joyfully, it is sacred.** When you don't do it joyfully, then you are just fulfilling a duty – and all duties are ugly, they are not sacred. This is a great opportunity. Meditate over it, go into it deeply. You will never find such a deep involvement – in fact, there is none as it is between a child and the mother. Not even between the husband and the wife, the lover and the beloved – the involvement is not so deep as it is between the mother and the child. It cannot be so deep with anybody ever – because the child has lived in you for nine months as you; nobody else can live in you for nine months as you. And the child will become a separate individual sooner or later, but somewhere deep down in the unconscious the mother and the child remain linked. If your child can become a buddha, you will be benefited by it; if your child grows and becomes a beautiful human being, you will be benefited by it – because the child will always remain connected with you. Only the physical connection has been disconnected; the spiritual connection is never disconnected.

Thank God! Motherhood is a blessing.

Raise the Children with Awareness

Osho: Seeing a truth is transforming. Truth liberates. Just see the point! -- why your parents have destroyed you. Their wishes were good, but their awareness was not good; they were not aware people. They wanted you to be happy, certainly, they wished you all happiness. That's why they wanted you to become a rich man, a respected man; that's why they curbed your desires, cut your

desires, moulded you, patterned you, structured you, gave you a character, repressed many things, enforced many things. They did whatsoever they could. Their wish was right: they wanted you to be happy, although they were not aware of what they were doing, although they themselves had never known what happiness is.

Their wish was good -- don't feel angry about them. They did whatsoever THEY could. Feel sorry for them, but never angry at them. Don't feel any rage! They were helpless! They were caught in a certain trap. They had not known what happiness is, but they had some ideas that a happy person is one who has much money. They worked for it their whole lives; they wasted their whole lives in earning money, but they remained with that stupid idea that money brings happiness. Their dreams were good, their wishes were good, but they were unhappy people and unaware people. Now be aware. Search for happiness. Find out how to be happy. Meditate, pray, love. Live passionately and intensely! If you have known happiness, you will not be cruel to anybody -- you cannot be. If you have tasted anything of life, you will never be destructive to anybody. How can you be destructive to your own children? You cannot be destructive to ANYBODY at all.

If you have known awareness, then that's enough. I can only give you an insight. The insight is: your parents were unhappy -- please, be happy. Your parents were unaware -- you be aware. And those two things -- awareness and happiness -- are not really two things but two aspects of the same coin.

Start by being aware and you will be happy! And a happy person is a non-violent person. And always remember: children are not adult; you should not expect adult things from children. They are children! They have a totally different vision, a different perspective. You should not start forcing your adultish attitudes upon them. Allow them to remain children, because they will never be again; and once lost, everybody feels nostalgia for the childhood, everybody feels those days were days of paradise. Don't disturb them.

Sometimes it is difficult for you to accept the children's vision -- because you have lost it yourself! A child is trying to climb a tree; what will you do? You immediately become afraid -- he may fall, he may break his leg, or something may go wrong. And out of your fear you rush and you stop the child. If you had known what joy it is to climb a tree, you would have helped so that the child could learn how to climb trees! You would have taken him to a school where it is taught how to climb trees. You would not have stopped him. Your fear is good -- it shows love, that the child may fall, but to stop the child from climbing the tree is to stop the child from growing.

There is something ESSENTIAL about climbing trees. If a child has NEVER been doing it, he will remain something poor, he will miss some richness -- for his whole life. You have deprived him of

something beautiful, and there is no other way to know about it! Later on it will become more difficult for him to climb on the tree, it will look stupid or foolish or ridiculous.

Let him climb the tree. And if you are afraid, help him, go and teach him. You also climb with him! Help him learn so he doesn't fall. And once in a while, falling from a tree is not so bad either. Rather than being deprived forever....

The child wants to go out in the rains and wants to run around the streets in the rain, and you are afraid he may catch a cold or get pneumonia or something -- and your fear is right! So DO something so that he is more resistant to colds. Take him to the doctor; ask the doctor what vitamins should be given to him so that he can run in the rains and enjoy and dance and there is no fear that he will catch cold or will get pneumonia. But don't stop him. To dance in the streets when it is raining is such a joy! To miss it is to miss something very valuable.

If you know happiness and if you are aware, you will be able to feel for the child, how he feels. A child is jumping and dancing and shouting and shrieking, and you are reading your newspaper, your stupid newspaper. And you know what is there -- it is always the same. But you feel disturbed. There is nothing in your newspaper, but you feel disturbed. You stop the child: "Don't shout! Don't disturb Daddy! Daddy is doing something great -- reading the newspaper." And you stop that running energy, that flow -- you stop that glow, you stop life. You are being violent.

And I am not saying that the child has always to be allowed to disturb you. But out of a hundred times, ninety times you are unnecessarily disturbed. And if you don't disturb him those ninety times, the child will understand. When you understand the child, the child understands you -- children are very very responsive. When the child sees that he is never prevented, then once you say, "I am doing something please..." the child will know that it is not from a parent who is constantly looking to shout at him. It is from a parent who allows everything.

They have their vision, their understanding, their ways. Try to understand them. An understanding mind will always find a deep harmony arising between him and the child. It is the stupid, the unconscious, the non-understanding people, who go on remaining closed in their ideas and never look at the other's vision.... Children bring freshness into the world. Children are new editions of consciousness. Children are fresh entries of divinity into life. Be respectful, be understanding. And if you are happy and alert, there is no need to be worried about how not to commit the same mistakes -- you will not commit. But then you have to be totally different from your parents. Consciousness will bring that difference.

Children's liberation

Osho : Man is born unconditioned, man is born as freedom... just an open sky, with no clouds, with no boundaries, with no adjectives, no definitions – neither Hindu nor Christian nor Communist – just pure existence, an emptiness.

But immediately the society starts closing in on you, starts making boundaries; those boundaries are conditionings. Then one forgets one's original face. Slowly slowly one becomes identified with all that has been said, told, repeated again and again. This is a kind of hypnosis that is being practised on every child.

It is a violation of the most fundamental human right, but it seems very difficult to know how to fight it because children themselves cannot fight it. Children's liberation is needed. It is the greatest need in the world because no other slavery is so deep and so dangerous and so destructive. The child is not allowed to know his self; rather, the society creates a false self – that he is this, that he is that, to behave this way....

The society gives ideals, ideas and very soon the child becomes accustomed to the fact that he is a Christian, that he is a man and he has to behave in a manly way, that he should not cry because that is sissy. The girl starts behaving in a feminine way – she learns that she should not climb on trees, that that is boyish. Slowly slowly more and more boundaries, more and more boundaries, and they go on becoming narrower; then everyone feels suffocated. That is the situation: everybody is suffocated and everybody hankers deep down to be free. But how to be free?

It seems that the walls that surrounded one are really very powerful and strong. And people live in this kind of imprisonment for their whole life. They live in prison and they die in prison, never having known what life was, what life was meant to be, never knowing the glory and the grandeur of existence.

Buddha has called this state 'shankaro', the conditioned state of mind. The whole process of meditation is to uncondition it, to withdraw those walls. What the parents and the society and the priests and the politicians have done has to be undone by the master. So the master is basically against the society. If the society poisons Socrates it is not accidental. If it kills Jesus it is very logical.

To be initiated into sannyas is to be initiated into a world of unconditioning; drop, slowly slowly, become more aware and go on dropping all adjectives and all identities. In the beginning it is painful because you will feel confused. You will not know who you are because all that you have known about yourself will start disappearing; you will be in a kind of chaos, in a limbo.

And that is where courage is needed. If one can go on dropping all the boundaries, all the definitions, all that has been told, all that is borrowed and has come from the outside, one day suddenly one is free. In that freedom is joy... and that freedom is god! My work here consists of destroying your conditionings; it is a painful process but the end result is tremendously beautiful.

It is arduous, but when one has reached to the top for the first time one starts being really alive. And that aliveness I would like to give you. That is your birthright – it has to be attained. The man who is not trying to attain it is not worth much – is not worth being called a man. The search for freedom is the most important value; it is the summum bonum.

Osho Quotes on Children

1. We go on forcing children to go to sleep when we think it is time. But sleep is not to be manipulated by time, sleep is something inner. When the child feels sleepy he will go to sleep, but mother and father go on forcing the child to go to sleep, as if sleep can be ordered. Children must think that you are foolish, they think that something has gone wrong in your mind. How can a child force sleep? He can pretend, so when you are there he can close the eyes and when you have gone he can open the eyes, because sleep cannot be forced. Nobody, not even you, can force sleep. If you don't feel sleepy how can you go to sleep?
But this is how society destroys.
2. If there exists in the future any possibility of a real human society, the first thing, the basic thing that will have to be done is this: don't make children automatic. Even if it takes a little longer to make them efficient, make them efficient with awareness; don't make them machines. It will take longer, because two things have to be learned: the efficiency and awareness. A human society will give you awareness, even with less efficiency, but efficiency will come by and by. Then when you are alert you will be able to be efficient with alertness.
3. Very few people are accepted as creative: A few painters, a few poets -- one in a million. This is foolish! Every human being is a born creator. Watch children and you will see: all children are creative. By and by, we destroy their creativity. By and by, we force wrong beliefs on them. By and by, we distract them. By and by, we make them more and more economical and political and ambitious.
4. If you miss your youth, you will miss your old age also -- remember. So I am not saying become old while you are young. I am saying be whatsoever you are; let that moment be your totality. When a child, be a child; never enforce your wisdom on any child because that is a crippling thing. Don't try to make a child old before he is old, don't crush him. That's what has happened in the world: old people are dominating children, and they want to pull them out of their childhood faster than nature allows. They kill and they crush -- the child loses something forever. And when a child was not a child when he was a child, he will not be young when he is young. Something will always go on missing. He will always be late in life -- he will miss the train.
5. Children are careful watchers, observers of what is happening all around. Of course, their senses are very clear, unclouded. They see the truth immediately. You cannot cheat a child; he knows it immediately, intuitively. And he is so innocent that it is impossible for him to be formal. But he has to be formal to survive. And man's child is very helpless. It is because of man's child's helplessness that our whole civilization exists. We can manage, mold the child in every possible way, whatsoever way we want.

Children are not supposed to say things that they know. They know much more than they ever tell you. They pretend to be innocent because you don't want them to know more than is taught in the school, than is taught by the preacher, than is taught by you; and they certainly know more. They move in society, in life, with keen, alert senses. They are

watching everything, whatsoever is happening all around. But they learn one thing sooner or later: that they have to be diplomatic -- with the grown-ups you can't be true, honest, sincere.

6. In schools children are sitting for five or six hours -- by and by they are dulled, their intelligence is lost. Every child is born intelligent and almost ninety-nine per cent of people die stupid. The whole education dulls the mind -- and you can do it yourself also.
7. The moment you are born, conditioning starts, from your very first breath; it cannot be avoided. The parents will condition you, the children you play with will condition you, the neighborhood will condition you, the school, the church, the state. And consciously not much conditioning is being done, but unconsciously the child goes on and on accumulating it. The child learns by imitating. So don't be worried. This is the normal situation in the world: everybody is conditioned. And everybody has to come out of the conditioning. It is difficult. It is not like undressing -- it is like peeling your skin. It is hard, it is arduous, because we have become identified with our conditioning.
8. That's why children look so beautiful: because they are yet full of hope, full of dreams, and they have not yet known frustration. Old people start looking very very dead. Hopes have leaked out, by and by, and only frustration -- a very bad taste on the tongue. Experience makes people bitter. Experience makes people lose their innocence, lose their hope, lose their trust. But it is not experience really -- because they wanted to make their dreams real, that's why. Otherwise you could remain as innocent to the very end of your life as in the beginning -- in fact, even more -- because the innocence that happens in childhood is just natural. It has not been tested against fire; it is very fragile. It has no crystallization in it. It is just a gift; it has not been earned. But when an old man is childlike, innocent, then nothing can destroy it. Then it has a solidity to it, then it is substantial; he has earned it.
9. Psychologists have come across a very significant fact: that if small children are left to themselves, they always choose the right thing to eat. You put everything around, you leave it on the dining table, don't force anything, and don't say what to eat and what not to eat. It has been a tremendous discovery that children eat only the right thing in the right time. If a child is suffering from something and a certain thing is needed which will be helpful for it, he will choose to eat it. By the time that suffering disappears he will stop eating that. We confuse them. We tell them to eat this and don't eat that. Then by and by, their natural instinct functions no more.
10. Children are trusting, but by and by there will be experiences in which they will be deceived, in which they will get into trouble, in which they will be opposed, in which they will become afraid. By and by they will learn all the tricks of the world. That's what has happened to everybody, more or less.
11. The children first have to be taught the physical joys. Help them to climb the trees, help them to run, help them to swim, help them to dance, help them to do physical yoga, hatha yoga, so they can have a feel of their bodies, so their bodies can be felt as alive phenomena -- not something dead around them, not something disconnected, not like a machine to be used -- so that they can have a respect for the body, love for the body, so their bodies can

become sacred temples.

And then don't be in a hurry. The next step has to be taken very slowly. The movement from the body to the mind has to be very, very delicate, because you are moving from the gross to the subtle. And the movement cannot be very direct; it has to be very indirect. Slowly, slowly let the child know about music, poetry. Let the child know about great paintings, architecture. Let the child enjoy the exercise of his mind.

And then when the child is ready, when he has fulfilled his mind needs, help him to meditate. And nothing has to be done in haste. Let everything ripen, help everything to become mature. Just remember one thing: that the child should not get stuck anywhere. There are many who have become stuck at the body, the physical pleasure; then sex remains their center of life. There are many who have got stuck in the mind; then thinking, philosophizing, logic, and the joys of thinking and philosophizing and logic, remain for their whole lives. These people are half-grown people. Before the child gets stuck somewhere, push him to the further level, to the further plane. Help him to meditate.

Give your children your love, not your ideologies

Osho – TO BE A MOTHER IS SWEET.... Why? Just giving birth to a child is not to be a mother, remember. Otherwise there are millions of mothers on the earth — and there seems to be no sweetness. In fact, if you ask the psychologists they will say just the opposite. They will say the only problem to be solved is the mother. The only pathology that millions of people are suffering from is the mother. And what they are saying they are saying after fifty, sixty years of constant analysis of thousands of people. Everybody's illness basically comes to one point: that it has been given to you, transmitted to you by your mother.

There are people who are afraid of women; and if you are afraid of women you can't love them. How can love arise out of fear? And why are you afraid of women? — because your childhood was lived in fear of your mother. She was constantly after you, she was constantly hammering you. She was constantly telling you to do this and not to do that — of course, for your own good. She has crippled you, she has destroyed many things in you.

She has made you phony because she has told you what is right to do. Whether you like it or not, whether it is spontaneously arising in you or not, you have to follow the order. And you were so helpless... your survival depended on the mother so you had to listen to her. She conditioned you. And it is because of the fear of your mother that you are afraid of women.

Millions of husbands are henpecked for the simple reason that their mothers were too strong. It has nothing to do with the wife; they are simply projecting the mother on the wife. The wife is only a new edition of the mother. They are expecting everything from the wife that they expected from the mother. On the one hand it cripples them; on the other hand they start expecting things which are not possible from the wife's side — because she is not your mother. So you feel frustrated. And how can you make love to your wife?

A boy who has really been dominated by the mother, who has been reduced into absolute obedience, will not be able to make love to a woman, because as he will come close to the woman psychologically he will go impotent. How can you make love to your mother? It is impossible. Hence many people become impotent with their wives, but only with their wives. With the prostitutes they are not impotent.

It is strange: why are they not impotent with the prostitute? — for the simple reason that they can't think of their mother as a prostitute; that is impossible. Their mother, and a prostitute? The prostitute is a world apart. But they can think of their wife as a mother, they can project the mother. The wife becomes simply a screen. They want the wife to take care of them like a small child, and if she is not taking care they feel offended.

Thousands of neurotic people and psychotic people are there in the world because of the mother. And Buddha says: TO BE A MOTHER IS SWEET. He must mean something else. He can't mean a Jewish mother! He means not just giving birth to a child; that does not make one a mother. To be motherly is a totally different phenomenon. It is something absolutely human; it transcends animality. It has nothing to do with biology. It is love, pure love, unconditional love.

When a mother loves unconditionally — and only a mother can love unconditionally — the child learns the joy of unconditional love. The child becomes capable of loving unconditionally. And to be able to love unconditionally is to be religious.

And it is the easiest thing for a woman to do. It is easy for her because naturally she is ready for it. She is just on the verge of transcending biology through being a mother. You can be motherly without giving birth to a child. You can be motherly to anybody. You can be motherly to an animal, to a tree. You can be motherly to anything. It is something inside you.

Being motherly means being capable of unconditional love, loving the person for the sheer joy of loving, helping the person to grow for the sheer joy of seeing somebody grow. A real therapist is a mother. If he is not, he is not a real therapist. He is only a professional exploiting people, exploiting them because of their misery. But a real therapist is a mother. He becomes a womb for the patient. He gives the patient a new birth. He starts the life of the patient again from ABC. He gives him a clean sheet to write his life again.

That's what I mean when I say "the psychology of the buddhas"; that is real therapy. A master is a real therapist; his very presence is therapeutic. He surrounds you like a mother. He is a cloud who surrounds you from everywhere, from all the sides, in all the dimensions, like a mother.

TO BE A MOTHER IS SWEET, AND A FATHER. To be a father is a little more difficult. To be a mother is easier because each woman is born intrinsically to be a mother. But fatherhood is an institution invented by man; hence it is very difficult to come across a real father. But when you come across a real father it is a miracle. A real father is also a mother. He is called a father because he is a man, but his whole approach is of unconditional love.

In ordinary life lovers are exploiting each other; it is a mutual exploitation. Unconditional love means no exploitation. The other is not being used as a means but is respected as an end unto himself or herself. Give your children your love, but don't give your ideologies. Don't make them Catholics and communists; that is poisoning them. Don't make them Hindus and Jainas and

Buddhists; that is very destructive. Give your love, give your loving nourishment, and give them strength enough to inquire who they are, what this reality is all about. Give them every support so they can go on in life with an adventurous spirit. Then you are helping them; then you are really educating them. Ordinarily, whatsoever exists in the name of education is nothing but mis-education.

Real education is helping the person to be himself. It is possible only if you love the person for his own sake, for no other motive. If there is a motive, your love is contaminated. Then you are not a real father or a real mother.

Source: from Osho Book "Dhammapada vol 9"

Children and their success

J.Krishnamurti

Jiddu Krishnamurti : IT WAS AN enchanted evening. The hilltops were aglow with the setting sun, and in the sand on the path that led across the valley, four woodpeckers were taking a bath. With their longish beaks they would pull the sand under them, their wings would flutter as they pushed their bodies deeper into it, and then they would begin all over again, the tufts on their heads bobbing up and down.

They were calling to each other and enjoying themselves thoroughly. Not to disturb them we stepped off the path onto the short, thick grass of recent rains; and there, a few feet away, was a large snake, yellowish and powerful. Its head was sleek, painted, and cruelly shaped. It was too intent on those birds to be disturbed, its black eyes watching without movement and its black, forked tongue darting in and out. Almost imperceptibly it was moving towards the birds, its scales making no noise on the grass. It was a cobra, and there was death about it.

Dangerous but beautiful, it was shiny in the darkening light, and it must recently have shed its old skin. Suddenly the four birds took to the air with a cry, and then we saw an extraordinary thing take place: a cobra relax. It had been so eager, so tense, and now it seemed almost lifeless, part of the earth – but in a second, fatal. It moved with ease and only lifted its head when we made a slight noise, but with it went a peculiar stillness, the stillness of fear and death.

She was a small, elderly lady with white hair, but was well preserved. Though gentle of speech, her figure, her walk, her gestures and the way she held her head, all showed a deep-rooted aggressiveness which her voice did not conceal. She had a large family, several sons and daughters, but her husband been dead for some time and she alone had had to bring them up. One of her sons, she said with evident pride, was a successful doctor with a large practice, and also a good surgeon.

One of her daughters was a clever and successful politician, and without too much difficulty was getting her own way; she said this with a smile which implied, "You know what women are". She went on explain that this political lady had spiritual aspirations.

What do you mean by spiritual aspirations?

"She wants to be the head of some religious or philosophical group."

To have power over others through an organization is surely evil, is it not? That is the way of all politicians whether they are in politics or not. You may hide it under pleasant and deceptive words, but is not the desire for power always evil?

She listened, but what was being said had no meaning to her. It was written on her face that she was concerned about something, and what it was would presently emerge. She went on to tell of the activities of her other children, all of whom were vigorous and doing well except the one she really loved.

"What is sorrow?" she suddenly asked. "Somewhere in the background I seem to have had it all my life. Though all but one of my children are well off and contented, sorrow has been constantly with me. I can't put my finger on it, but it has pursued me, and I often lie awake at night wondering what it is all about. I am also concerned about my youngest son. You see, he is a failure. Whatever he touches goes to pieces: his marriage, his relationship with his brothers and sisters, and with his friends.

He almost never has a job, and when he does get one something happens and he's out. He seems incapable of being helped. I worry about him, and though he adds to my sorrow, I don't think he is the root of it. What is sorrow? I have had anxieties, disappointments and physical pain, but this pervading sorrow is something beyond all that, and I have not been able to find its cause. Could we talk about it?"

You are very proud of your children and especially of their success, are you not?

"I think any parent would be as they have all made good except the last one. They are prosperous and happy. But why are you asking that question?"

It may have something to do with your sorrow. Are you sure that your sorrow has nothing to do with their success?

"Of course; on the contrary, I am very happy about it."

What do you think is the root of your sorrow? If one may ask, did the death of your husband affect you very deeply? Are you still affected by it?

"It was a great shock and I was very lonely after his death, but I soon forgot my loneliness and sorrow as there were the children to be seen to and I had no time to think about myself."

Do you think that time wipes away loneliness and sorrow? Are they not still there, buried in the deeper layers of your mind, even though you may have forgotten them? May it not be that these are the cause of your conscious sorrow?

“As I say, the death of my husband was a shock, but somehow it was to be expected, and with tears I accepted it. As a girl, before I married I saw my father’s death and some years later that of my mother also; but I have never been interested in official religion, and all this clamour for explanations of death and the hereafter has never bothered me. Death is inevitable, and let us accept it with as little noise as possible.”

That may be the way you regard death, but is loneliness to be so easily reasoned away? Death is something of tomorrow, to be faced perhaps, when it comes; but is not loneliness ever present? You may deliberately shut it out, but it is still there behind the door. Should you not invite loneliness and look at it?

“I don’t know about that. Loneliness is most unpleasant, and I doubt if I can go so far as to invite that awful feeling. It is really quite frightening.”

Must you not understand it fully, since that may be the cause of your sorrow?

“But how am I to understand it when it is the very thing that gives me pain?”

Loneliness does not give you pain, but the idea of loneliness causes fear. You have never experienced the state of loneliness. You have always approached it with apprehension dread with the urge to get away from it or to find a way to overcome it; so you have avoided it, have you not? You have really never come directly into contact with it. To put loneliness away from you, you have escaped into the activities of your children and their success. Their success has become yours; but behind this worship of success, is there not some deep concern?

“How do you know?”

The thing you escape into – the radio, social activity, a particular dogma, so-called love, and so on – becomes all-important, as necessary to you as drink to the drunkard. One may lose oneself in the worship of success, or in the worship of an image, or in some ideal; but all ideals are illusory, and in the very losing of oneself there is anxiety.

If one may point out, your children’s success has been to you a source of pain, for you have a deeper concern about them and about yourself. In spite of your admiration of their success and of the applause they have received from the public, is there not behind it a sense of shame, of disgust, or disappointment? please forgive me for asking, but are you not deeply distressed about their success?

“You know, sir, I have never dared to acknowledge, even to myself the nature of this distress, but it is as you say.”

Do you want to go into it?

“Now, of course, I do want to go into it. You see, I have always been religious without belonging to any religion. Here and there I have read about religious matters, but I have never been caught in any so-called religious organization. Organized religion has seemed too distant and not sufficiently intimate. Beneath my worldly life, however, there has always been a vague religious groping, and when I began to have children, this groping took the form of a deep hope that one of my children would be religiously inclined.

And not one of them is; they have all become prosperous and worldly, except the last one, who is a mixture of everything. All of them are really mediocre, and that is what hurts. They are engrossed in their worldliness. It all seems so superficial and silly, but I haven't discussed it with any of them, and even if I did, they wouldn't understand what I was talking about. I thought that at least one of them would be different, and I am horrified at their mediocrity and my own. It is this, I suppose, that is causing my sorrow. What can one do to break up this stupid state?”

In oneself or in another? One can only break up mediocrity in oneself, and then perhaps a different relationship with others may arise. To know that one is mediocre is already the beginning of change, is it not? But a petty mind, becoming aware of itself, frantically tries to change, to improve, and this very urge is mediocre. Any desire for self-improvement is petty. When the mind knows that it is mediocre and does not act upon itself, there is the breaking up of mediocrity.

“What do you mean by ‘act upon itself?’”

If a petty mind, realizing it is petty, makes an effort to change itself, is it not still petty? The effort to change is born of a petty mind, therefore that very effort is petty.

“Yes, I see that, but what can one do?”

Any action of the mind is small, limited. The mind must cease to act, and only then is there the ending of mediocrity.

Educating the Child without Influencing

Question: How is one to deal with a very small child if one is to avoid influencing him in any way?

Jiddu Krishnamurti : Why does one try not to influence a small child? Let us consider. Are we not all influenced? You are influenced by climate, by society, by the food you eat, by the papers you read – you are influenced by everything around you. It is not a matter of good or bad influence – we are considering influence itself.

What you call a good influence, another society might call bad or false. What is important, I think, is to understand the whole problem of influence, and then perhaps we shall approach differently the education of the child. We know that we are being influenced in some degree by everything around us; and is it possible to be free from the influences which are strongly or subtly impressing us, dominating us? To be free of such influences, we must be aware, must we not?, of the many factors which create them.

Take, for instance, the influence of the flag, of the nation, of the word 'patriotism'. We accept that influence all over the world, for every school, every government is sedulously conditioning us to accept it; and that is one of the basic causes of war, because it separates man from man. So can we, the grown-up people, free ourselves from this influence? If we can, then perhaps we shall be able to help the child to be free. But to be free from this particular influence demands a great deal of insight, understanding, for there is the possibility that you may be ostracized, you may lose your job, and you will be a nobody in society.

Let us take another example. Whether we live as of the world, or try to be religious, most of us are ambitious. We can see that ambition is destructive, but socially and religiously we accept it. The ambitious man can never love, because he is concerned with himself and his success – success in the name of God, in the name of family, in the name of country.

The worship of success is also an influence throughout the world, is it not? And can one free oneself from this influence? Can you as an individual do it? Do not say "If I am not ambitious I shall be crushed by society". If you really see the truth that ambition is destructive and deeply understand the whole process of influence, you will be a different person; and then perhaps you will be able to help the child to understand and be free of all influence.

How to help children?

Questioner: It is the universally accepted conclusion of modern intellectuals that educators have failed. What is, then, the task of those whose function it is to teach the young?

Jiddu Krishnamurti : There are several problems involved in this, and to understand them, one must go very carefully into them. First of all, why do you have children? Is it mere accident, an unwanted event? Do you have children to carry on your name, title, or estate? Or do you love, and therefore you have children? Which is it? If you have children merely as toys, something to play with, or if you are lonely and a child helps you to cover up that loneliness - then children become important because they are your own self-projection.

But if children are not a mere means of amusement or a result of accidents, if you really love them in the profound sense of the word - and to love somebody means to be in complete communion with them - then education has quite a different significance.

If as a parent you really love your children, you will see that they have the right kind of education. In other words, children must be helped to be intelligent, sensitive, to have a mind and heart that are pliable, able to deal with any situation.

Surely, if you really love your child, you as a parent will not be a nationalist, you will not belong to any country, you will not belong to any organized religion because, obviously, if you are a nationalist, if you worship the state, then you inevitably destroy your son because you are creating war.

If you really love your son, you will find out what is your right relationship with property, because it is the possessive instinct which has given property such enormous significance and which is destroying the world. Again, if you really love your children, you will not belong to any particular religion because belief creates antagonism between man and man. If you love your children, you will do all these things. So, that is one aspect.

Then the other aspect is that the educator needs educating. What are you educating the children for? To become clerks or glorified clerks, governors, engineers, technicians? Is that all life is - merely a matter of glorified clerks, technicians, mechanics, human beings made into cannon fodder? What is the purpose and intention of education? Is it to turn out soldiers, lawyers, and policemen?

Surely, the occupations of soldier, lawyer, and policeman are not right professions for decent human beings. (Laughter) Don't laugh it off. By laughing it off, you are pushing it aside. You can see that these professions do not contribute to the total well-being of man, though they may be necessary in a society that has already become corrupt.

Therefore, first of all, you have to find out why it is that you have children, and what it is that you are educating them for. If you are merely educating them to be technicians, naturally you will find the best technician to educate your child, and he will be made into a machine, he will discipline himself to conform to a pattern. Is that all there is to our existence, our struggle, and our happiness - merely to become mechanics, tank or airplane experts, scientists, physicists inventing new ways of destruction?

Therefore, education is your responsibility, is it not? What is it you want your children to be, or not to be? What is the purpose of existence? If it is merely to adjust to a system, to efface oneself for a party, then it is very simple; then all that you have to do is to conform and fit in. But if life is meant to be lived rightly, fully, joyously, sensitively, then there must be quite a different process of education in which there is the cultivation of sensitivity, of intelligence, and not mere technique - though technique is necessary.

So, as a parent - and God knows why you are parents - you have to find out what your responsibility is. Sirs, you love so easily; you say you love, but really you don't love your children. You have no feeling. You accept social events and conditions as inevitable; you don't want to transform them, to create a revolution and bring about a new culture, a new society.

Surely, it depends on you what kind of education your children will have. As the question says, education throughout the world has failed, it has produced catastrophe after catastrophe,

destruction and more destruction, bloodshed, rape, and murder. Obviously, education has failed, and if you look to the experts, the specialists, to educate your children, the disaster must continue because the specialists, being concerned only with the part and not with the whole, are themselves inhuman.

Surely, the first thing is to have love, for if there is love, it will find the way to educate the children rightly. But you see, we are all brains and no heart; we have cultivated the intellect, and in ourselves we are so absurdly lopsided - and then the problem arises of what to do with the children.

Surely, it is obvious that the educator himself needs educating - and the educator is you, for the home environment is as important as the school environment. So, you have to transform yourself first to give the right environment to the child, for the environment can make him either a brute, an unfeeling technician, or a very sensitive, intelligent human being. The environment is yourself and your action, and unless you transform yourself, the environment, the present society in which we live, must inevitably harm the child, make him rude, rough, unintelligent.

Surely, sirs, those who are deeply interested in this problem will begin to transform themselves and thereby transform society, which will in turn bring about a new means of education. But you are really not interested. You will listen to all this and say, "Yes, I agree, but it is too impracticable." You don't treat it as a direct responsibility; you are not really, fundamentally, concerned.

If you really loved your son and knew the war was coming, as it inevitably is, do you mean to say you would not act, you would not find a way of stopping war? You see, we don't love; we use the word love, but the content of that word has no meaning anymore.

We just use the word without a referent, without substance, and we live merely on the word, so the complex problem is there still, and we have to face it. And don't say I have not shown you a way out of it. The way is yourself and your relationship with your children, your wife, your society. You are the gleam, you are the hope; otherwise, there is no way out of this at all.

Look at what is happening. More and more governments are taking charge of education, which means they want to produce efficient beings, either as technicians or for war, and therefore, the children must be regimented, they must be told not how to think but what to think. They are taught to live on propaganda, slogans. Because those who are in power don't want to be disturbed, they want to keep the power; it has become the function of government to maintain the status quo with little alterations here and there.

So, taking all these factors into consideration, you have to find out what is the meaning of existence, why you are living, why you are producing children; and you have to find out how to create a new environment - for, what the environment is, your child is. He listens to your talk, he repeats what the older people think and do.

So, you have to create a right environment, not only at home, but outside, which is society; and you have to create a new kind of government which is radically different, which is not based on nationalism, on the sovereign state with its armies and efficient ways of murdering people. That implies seeing your responsibility in relationship, and you actually see that responsibility in relationship only when you love somebody. When your heart is full, then you find a way. This is

urgent, it is imminent - you cannot wait for the experts to come and tell you how to educate your child. Only you who love will find the way, for those hearts are empty that look to the experts.

You have listened to all this, and what is your reaction? You will say, "Yes, very nice, very good, it should be done, but let somebody else begin" - which means, really, you don't love your child, you have no relationship with your child, so you don't see the difficulty. The more irresponsible you become, the more the state takes over all responsibility - the state being the few, the party, left or right. You yourself have to work it out because we are facing a great crisis - not a verbal crisis, not a political or an economic crisis, but a crisis of human degradation, of human disintegration.

Therefore, it is your responsibility as the father, as the mother; you have got to transform yourself. These are not just words I am indulging in. One sees this calamity approaching so closely and dangerously, and we sit here and do not do a thing about it, or if we do, we look to some leader and turn our hearts over to him. It is an obvious fact that when you pursue a leader, you choose that leader out of your own confusion, and therefore the leader himself is confused. (Laughter) Don't laugh it off as a clever remark - please look at it, see what you are doing.

It is you who are responsible for the appalling horror which we have come to, and you are not facing it. You go out and do exactly the same thing that you did yesterday, and you feel your responsibility is over when you ask that question about education and pass your child on to a teacher who teaches and beats him. Don't you see?

Unless you love your wife, your children, and not merely use them as a tool or means for your own gratification, unless you are really touched by this, you will not find a right way of education. To educate your children means to be interested in the whole process of life. What you think, what you do, and what you say matters infinitely because that creates the environment, and it is the environment which creates the child.