

Why Education?

I believe we are going to talk over together this morning the question of education, because we are going to have a school here and I am sure serious people are interested in this question so we thought we would have a meeting on education - if that's all right with you. This is not a talk by me but we are going to have a dialogue about it rather than have a discussion. The word 'discussion' means, I think, argument, through argument to find what is right opinion. Whereas a dialogue is a conversation between two friends about something they are both interested in seriously. So this is a dialogue rather than a verbal, intellectual, argumentative exchange.

I wonder why we are educated at all, if we are, why we go to schools, colleges and universities, what does it mean to be educated. Why should one be educated? Is it to conform to the pattern of existing society, acquiring enough knowledge to act skilfully in that society to have a livelihood? Does it mean, to be educated, does it mean adjusting oneself to society and follow all the dictates of that society? This has become a very serious problem right throughout the world, I am quite sure. The ancients, both in Egypt and in India, and China of course, thought of education not in terms of society, nor in terms of merely conforming to the edicts of society but were concerned with the culture of the mind. That is, with the culture of a mind that is capable of intelligent action in society, not merely conform to the pattern of society but, leaving the ancients aside, when one looks round at the world with all the awful mess that is going on, the butchery in China, the threatening wars, the tyranny, the lack of freedom and all the rest of it, and in every country there are highly educated people, highly technological entities, skilled in their action, and what has education brought about? What has education in the orthodox sense of that word made man into? So that is the thing we ought to discuss - we ought to have a dialogue about, rather than discuss.

Is it merely to cultivate one segment of the mind, which is one part of the brain as memory, acquiring knowledge and therefore using that knowledge skilfully? That is what most of us are educated for, we are conditioned for that. The rest of the psychological or the wider entity of man is totally disregarded. And is it possible to educate - we use the word 'educate' in quotation marks - is it possible to educate the whole of man, including his brain, intellectually, that is, the capacity to think clearly, objectively, and act efficiently, non-personally and also to enter into a field which is generally called spiritual? Again that is a rather doubtful word. Is this possible to do in a school, college and university, that is, to educate the totality of man instead of cultivating memory, as we do, and depending on that memory to act skilfully in our labours? And that cultivation and the dependence on that memory is part of this degeneration of man because then man becomes merely mechanical, always acting in the field of the known, the known being the accumulated experiences, the great deal of words put in books, the collection of centuries of knowledge, and always acting within that field as the known, is that not a degenerating factor in our human life? Please, this is a dialogue. Because when you are acting in the field of the known all the time, which is in the field of knowledge, knowledge becomes traditional and you are then acting according to a past pattern set by various scientists, philosophers, psychologists, the theologians and their persuasive methods, then the brain must be very conditioned, it has not the flexibility. And so gradually, as it is happening in the world, degeneration in art, in literature, and in our relationship with each other - must degenerate, must end up in war, in hatred, in antagonism, and that is what is going on actually, if you consider it impersonally, not as Americans and Europeans and the rest of it but actually as human beings confronted with this problem, what is happening. One can see the destructive nature of always operating with or in the field of knowledge. And our schools, colleges and universities condition our mind to that. And seeing that, seeing the fact of that, what can we do? Come on, sir.

Questioner: Can you give us some examples of degeneration in this culture?

Krishnamurti: I don't think examples are going to help, you can see it, sir. When you are... corrupt politicians.

Q: But there has always been corruption.

K: You see, therefore is that an excuse?

Q: But look, degeneration implies things are getting worse and worse.

K: No. Degeneration implies, the meaning of that word, is, not being at the highest point of excellence. Please, sir, just look at it before you... just consider that word, what it means. Not having the highest excellence in thought, in ourselves not in somebody else, not having that highest excellence in morality, in our relationship, all that points surely to degeneracy. Not that at other times and other historical periods there has not been degeneracy. Civilisations go down, are destroyed because they become degenerate. And we are asking, is our education all throughout the world giving us, helping us, bringing about that excellency in ourselves, in our morality, in our thinking, in our reactions, all the structure of human existence, that excellence? Yes, sir?

Q: Do you think you can teach anybody to attain that state if they don't want it?

K: Why don't you want it?

Q: If they do want it even so we come here year after year to hear the talks, we want it, we don't learn.

K: You want it. Then what do you do about it? We want a kind of education where the whole of man is concerned, the whole of man, not just the cultivation of a certain segment of man but the totality of man. There is no such education. No university, no school, no college offers that. And of course religions aren't concerned with that; they are concerned with dogma, with belief, with rituals and authority. So what shall we do?

Q: Could you give an example of actual immorality?

K: Oh, my lord! I can't. (Laughs) Do you think it is right to kill somebody for your country? Do you think it is right - oh, you know, I don't have to give examples.

Q: Why not?

K: Because it is dangerous to give examples.

Q: Mr Krishnamurti, you asked twice, what can we do. One thing we can do is to question within, we can question the authority of these teachers, we can question why we are doing what we are doing, we can question how we are conditioned by all of these things. As he is saying, find out for ourselves through ourselves in relationship by asking questions. That's how we can do it.

K: Not only that, sir, if you had a son or a daughter and are deeply concerned, as you must be concerned, what will you do?

Q: In talking about education in a structure trying to find how to be free, I don't understand how that can be done without taking recourse to a methodology, or understand how this is being done - a methodology.

K: You want a method.

Q: I don't want a method, I want to understand how it can be done without one.

K: We are going to find out, sir. First look at the problem before we ask what to do. Look at the problem all round. I think if we can look into the problem without the question of what to do, then the problem itself will answer, we will find the way out of it. But without looking at the problem all round, be totally involved with the problem, totally committed to that problem - you have that problem, it isn't that you must be committed to it, it is your problem. If you are a parent it would be tremendous agony to find out what to do. And what to do can only come about if we understand the problem itself, the depth of the problem, the seriousness, the complexity of the problem. Without looking at that we say, give us a method. And the method is part of this deterioration.

Q: Seeing the complexity of the problem takes time, and children are growing, they haven't got time.

K: Yes, sir, children are growing but we have an hour here. (Laughs) We Can, during that hour or hour and a half go into this question, to see the depth of this question.

Q: I experience the problem as a dichotomy. You mentioned that there is a place in this world for knowledge, that we need it to function, and at the same time that I have experienced trying to accomplish that I have wanted to achieve some confluence with a questioning and a search about the higher purpose in life, but it seems like there is a struggle. I experience a division. At the moment when I am pursuing or guiding students or trying to lead them towards searching themselves I find this dichotomy of needing to disseminate knowledge. To achieve the confluence of those two is what I am searching for. How does one do that?

K: The dichotomy, that is the division between knowledge and freedom from knowledge. As we talked about it the other day, the word 'art', the meaning of that word 'art' means to put everything in life in its right place. Please understand the meaning of that word first - to put everything that is concerned with living in its right place. That is the meaning of that extraordinary, beautiful word 'art'. Now to learn the place of knowledge and to learn the freedom from that, then there is no dichotomy, there is no division. I wonder if I am making myself clear.

Please, I would like to go back to education, not... this is part of it. Wait a minute. Doesn't education mean to learn? The word 'school' means a place where you are learning. That's the meaning of that word 'school'. Now here is a school and we are learning, I am learning and you are learning. We are trying to learn or trying to find out what is the depth of that word 'education'. We are trying

to find out whether man can be free totally and yet live with the knowledge which we have acquired, which doesn't condition us, which doesn't shape our minds and our hearts. You understand? Yes sir?

Q: What good is knowledge from without of oneself I we all live on to mortality?

K: I haven't quite heard that.

Q: If all people die what is the good of an education outside of oneself? Is not a real education only known from within oneself?

K: Are you saying, sir, you must have knowledge about yourself and not merely the knowledge outwardly? Is that what you are saying?

Q: He says what good is knowledge about temporal things, temporary things, the outside, if it is not going to carry you through after you are dead.

Q: A person might say, what is the reason for this life - is it just to live to die?

K: How does external knowledge, technical knowledge, help to bring about an understanding of ourselves, is that it?

Q: Well, in other words, are we only mortal beings and are we living on the earth only as mortal beings? Or can a person know other than that?

K: I don't quite follow this.

Q: I think what you are saying is, what good is knowledge if we are going to die.

K: Ah, what good is knowledge, yes, I understand.

Q: No, no, it is to say if there is a knowledge other than the human knowledge, other than just being concerned with mortal human beings, are we other than mortal human beings?

Q: Is there knowledge beyond this temporal world, is there knowledge that will perhaps be of another life - is there just this temporal knowledge or is there another knowledge?

K: I see. Sir, to have knowledge other than temporal knowledge you must understand the right place of temporal knowledge first, because that is what we have first. Then putting that knowledge in its right place we can then proceed to enquire if there is another knowledge, if there is a knowledge that is far superior, or there is no knowledge at all except temporal knowledge. Please, when we talk on Saturday we are going to talk about death, suffering and all that, then you can bring up this question, what is the point of having temporal knowledge if you are going to die pretty quickly.

So now let's, if you don't mind, confine ourselves to this question. As one observes in the world, wherever one goes, knowledge has become the factor of conditioning the mind to a certain pattern according to which you act. If I am a communist, that pattern of thinking, acting, brings about certain misery and so on, so on, so on. This is happening right through the world and this is what we call education, whether it is the education under Mao or the education under the politburo or under the capitalist society, or other societies. Where there is the cultivation of a particular segment of human life disregarding the rest it must inevitably bring about human degeneration. That's obvious. If I am cultivating my left arm all the time it becomes too silly. So we are asking, is it possible to educate human beings, children, from childhood and keep on, to cultivate, to nurture the whole outward and inward totality of man? That is what is, for me, right education. Yes, madame?

Q: I wonder if you feel that in perhaps establishing any school you would be limiting yourself, you would be setting up one system and therefore limiting the totality of the personal... (inaudible)

K: Are you saying we mustn't have schools?

Q: I am saying I wonder if it is possible to have...

K: We are going to find out. Please we must stick to one thing and go into it otherwise we disperse and waste our whole morning. We are asking a very simple question. Look at it, please, before you answer it. Is it possible in our life to educate ourselves completely, totally, both inwardly as well as outwardly? Yes, sir?

Q: It seems to me that it might have to be done on a kind of like a research basis because you are saying that to break out of the limitations and finding new things about education and do new things like how can we create peace in the world and in ourselves, and how can we create love in the world and in ourselves, it seems we have to set up research programmes to do that.

K: Sir, let us put it this way: you have a son and a daughter, some of you, must have, I hope you have, some of you, what are you going to do with those children, how are you going to educate them? What's your responsibility? Have you any responsibility? If you have responsibility, which means care, attention, love, what are you going to do with those children? Oh, gosh, you don't face all these problems!

Q: Sir, we're talking about schools and education. It seems to me that any school whether it be a Krishnamurti school or any school no matter how ideologically instituted, it becomes an authority and conditions.

K: Yes, we are going to go into that question of authority and conditioning, but you are not... you are ready with...

Q: Sir, I have a daughter and one thing I have noticed is that I am conditioned, and I am conditioning her through my conditioning, I have to be aware of mine. I see that. It seems to me I have to help her understand the rest of conditioning, of the whole society around her that she is growing up in.

K: Are you saying, sir, in a school, both the educator and the educated are conditioned?

Q: Yes.

K: Wait, wait, take it. I have been at this game for fifty years, sir! (Laughter) I have helped to form several schools in India. This has been one of the major problems, how to deal with the parent who is conditioned, the child, the children also conditioned, because they live with their parents, with the society, with their group, and the teacher is also conditioned. Conditioned in the sense they are prejudiced, they are violent, they are nationalistic, class conscious, the rich and the poor, you know, the Hindu, the Muslim, the Christian - conditioned. Now how to deal with this problem, both at home, and in the school. That is a question we are discussing now. You are a teacher, I am the student, I am the child. You realise you are conditioned, you are aware you are conditioned, and I, the student, am not aware of it because I am still too young. I am being conditioned by the TV, by the magazines, and so on, so on, by my friends, now how will you deal with this? Just first look at it, how will you deal with this problem? You are conditioned and the student is conditioned, your child is conditioned and the teacher is conditioned, the educator. Now in the school - we have tried this, that's why I am talking about it - in the school the teacher and the student are both conditioned. For the teacher to wait till he is unconditioned you might just as well wait till the rest of his life. So the question is then: can he and the student in their relationship in a school uncondition themselves? You follow the problem? That is, in teaching or before giving certain facts about mathematics and so on, discuss this problem, talk it over with the student: look, I am conditioned, and you are conditioned, and explain all the complexities of conditioning, the result of that conditioning, show him the picture, the real picture, not your fanciful picture, imaginative picture, but the actual picture of a human being's conditioning, as a Jew, as a Muslim, as a this or that, they are at each other's head. I would discuss this problem and have a dialogue, go into this with the student, every day, as part of the school work. Then the teacher begins to uncondition himself and the student at the same time.

Q: But there is no method?

K: Of course, how can there be a method? The method is our conditioning.

Q: How can you do that with a very young child?

K: You follow, sir?

Q: Yes, absolutely.

K: Therefore it becomes very alive, intelligent, active, creative.

Q: At the moment it's happening.

K: So the teacher and the student have to establish a relationship. That means a relationship not of one who knows and the other who doesn't know; he sits on a platform - I am sorry, here there is no platform! (Laughter) So the establishment of right relationship between the teacher and the student is imperative. And the teacher has the responsibility, he is dedicated to this. The parent is not, because he has got to go to the office - you follow? - he hasn't time, the wife hasn't time either, the mother. So the teacher, the educator becomes tremendously important. He is the highest profession in society, it is not the lowest, as it is now. Wait, you and I see this, now what are we going to do about it? You follow, sir? Follow it up.

Q: Krishnamurti, you just now said something a second ago, when you said the mother and father have no time because they have to work all day, father has to go to the office, and that's a big problem, and I don't want you to skip over it because that's disturbing a lot of people. Think of who have children and there aren't all these educators around and we do have to work and take care of the children at the same time, so we end up sending them to schools. And that's a big problem.

K: I know, madame, that's the problem. So we are trying to find out how to deal with all these problems, whether the school should be a residential school - and not isolated. You follow, sir? It is not just you and I in an hour settle the whole problem, you can't. But if you are interested, if I am interested, we can together create this thing.

Q: I have found an answer for myself because I believe that I am responsible for my children. I have three. I have taken them every three to four years to a different environment, to a different culture, and I have experienced that culture with them and so I am released. They are transformed. To experience for myself with them, but I have found I have had to do a lot travelling! (Laughter)

K: That means you are a fairly well-to-do man.

Q: No!

K: Oh.

Q: Because I am willing to live on a little. That's why.

K: That little must be considerable to travel. Sir, that doesn't solve it, you are missing the point. By showing him different cultures, different societies, different, you know, ways of thinking, does that solve the problem?

Q: No. But the problem is solved by the experience of seeing and being involved with the situation then coming back for the inward education. Addressing myself to the question that you asked about the possibility in our life to educate ourselves inwardly and outwardly, the outward I find in the travel, in the cultures, in the different religions or beliefs and ways of living.

K: I understand that, sir.

Q: And then the inward is how we are able to relate to it between ourselves to it, or for ourselves individually.

K: I understand that, sir, but this is a much wider and deeper problem because we may not be able to travel. We may be living in a village, in a town, confined, and we have not too much money. You follow? It is not just a casual problem that one human being has solved, it's a collective problem, it's a problem for each one of us, how to deal with this problem. We say we are responsible for our children. I question that responsibility.

Q: Responsibility is instructing the children and learning ourselves with them.

K: Madame, you say you are responsible, are you? What does responsibility mean?

Q: You are responsible only when you love, that's the only responsibility.

K: What does the word 'responsibility' mean? Please, go slowly into this.

Q: The ability to respond directly to what is happening.

K: That is, adequately. That means if you don't respond adequately there is conflict. Responsibility means to respond totally to the problem of the child and the parent. Now just take, sir, if you feel utterly, totally responsible for the child and therefore love the child, you want to educate him not to be killed or kill, but you don't. So don't let's go into all that because that's a tremendous problem.

So our question is this, sir: if you want to educate a child, for what reason do you want the child to be educated? Why are you all educated, what for? You have been to schools, colleges, if you are lucky, or university, what for?

Q: To be free of conditioning. (Laughter)

K: You are further conditioned, aren't you?

Q: Yes, in regular education, schools...

K: I mean in all the colleges and all the universities and all the schools that exist now you are conditioned.

Q: (Inaudible)

K: Go slowly, sir, take it step by step, you will see it. So education must have a different meaning, mustn't it. And that means education implies cultivating the totality of man, the outward intellectual, emotional, sensitive, and also the cultivation of a mind that is capable of seeing something real, true, reality. You follow, all that is implied. And we are saying no school, no college, university is doing that. They are doing it as a master's degree in something, but they are not concerned and they are not concerned because it would lead to tremendous danger.

Q: Krishnamurti, you spoke of the possibility of educating a man totally. Is it possible in educating man totally externally, of learning of everything without, to automatically learn of everything within, or to learn of everything within, to automatically have a knowledge of everything without?

K: (Laughs) You know this is a battle that has been going on between the commissar and the yogi. (Laughter) The commissar says: pay attention to everything external, arrange everything properly outwardly, control, subjugate it, tyranny, all that, arrange everything first outwardly and then if you have time think about the inner. And the yogi, that word 'yoga', I won't go into the meaning of that word for the time being - the yogi says: don't bother with the outer, begin with the inner. And he disappears into the woods and so on, so on, or joins a community and so on. So this battle has been going on throughout the ages. And we are saying it is neither that nor this, it is the totality. You understand? It is the whole, don't break up the whole as the outer and the inner.

Q: There seems to be a self-righteous platform, a mental platform and a subject.

K: I didn't quite follow that.

Q: If you are going to build a school and you say, all the universities in the United States they don't teach you right, so I'm going to teach you right.

K: Oh, no, no, (laughs) I don't say that, sir. For the love of Pete, I am not saying that.

Q: What you are saying is through the admission that you don't know something we can begin to learn about it. Like if a teacher says I am conditioned and I really don't know how to deal with this problem...

K: Sir, look, to learn physics, about physics, I must go to a man, a scientist who knows about physics. I must go to a man who knows mathematics, to learn mathematics, there I have to learn a certain - and all the rest of it. And I learn, which becomes my knowledge. Now is there anyone - please listen to this carefully - anyone who can teach you about inner knowledge? Or there, there is no authority and only then you will learn about yourself. You understand? There must be the authority of knowledge as a scientist. Right? He teaches you what he knows and therefore he becomes the authority, like a doctor, if he isn't after money, like a good doctor, he tells you what to do if you are unhealthy because he has studied medicine, practised, you know, all the rest of it, he has spent years and years and years, and he has accumulated knowledge and he becomes the authority and you, if he is a good doctor, you talk it over and he tells you what to do, and you follow it. Now is there - please listen - is there any authority for inward understanding of yourself? And if you have an authority for that then you are merely following the authority, not the understanding of yourself. This is simple enough! Therefore I say, authority has its place as knowledge, but there is no spiritual authority under any circumstances - the gurus, the priests, the churches, the temples, the whole thing is based on authority. And that is one of the factors of degeneration of the mind. We carry the outward authority - you understand, sir? - about mathematics to inward authority.

Q: It's important to learn, not how to be free, but the importance of it from someone who is already free, rather than someone who is...

K: All right, sir, just a minute, go into it. You are free, suppose, I don't say you are, suppose you are free, and I want to learn from you that freedom.

Q: No, I can't give it to you.

K: No, then what will I do?

Q: No, but we can, together we can talk about the importance of it.

K: We are doing it now! (Laughs)

Q: All right, all right. But if I am free then it has meaning to discuss it, but if I am not free and you are not free how can both of us become free together?

K: By both realising that we are not free. (Laughter) Of course, sir. And in going into it, having a dialogue, discussing it, observing it in our relationship, in our action, everything, find out.

Q: Wouldn't this require an extraordinary energy to maintain an honest enquiry and not degenerate through the focus of our conditioning?

K: It does, sir. It does. You are saying, doesn't this require a great deal of energy, it does. So how do you get that energy?

Q: Yes, how.

Q: By wanting to be free.

K: Do you want to find out how?

Q: Yes, how?

K: Now the moment you ask, how, you want a method and therefore you are back again into the degenerative process of thinking. But if there is no 'how', what will you do? You understand? This is a central issue sir, do please pay attention to this a little bit.

Q: How do we achieve then a moving relationship, I hear you saying that. That is if there is no method there but we talked about relationship a while back and this has to do with learning. How does one achieve a moving relationship in an educational setting?

K: First of all, sir, let's be clear. There is a method to learn mathematics. Right? If I want to learn mathematics there is a definite method. Right? That's simple enough. Now, can I learn about myself through a method? And who is going to give me the method? The guru, the psychologist, the analyst, the priest? And will method, following the method help me to understand myself? Or I must look at myself. I must be free to look at myself. That means I must be free of all authority to look at myself. Therefore I must be free of the guru, the priest, the psychologist, everybody and learn to look at myself. And that gives me tremendous energy because I have got rid of all the superficial, unnecessary and destructive barriers.

Q: Sir, so you feel that if you really desired that enough you wouldn't have to ask 'how'?

K: Sir, again why haven't you got that? You see if you had that intense desire you will get it. Why haven't you got that? You are going off all the time.

Q: Sir, I don't understand in my life how a person doesn't have energy when all you have to do is to look around and see, just go down a few miles and see all the trash homes and the traffic, and a lot of junk on the television, and the television is insane, just looking at that and seeing everybody destroying the earth right in front of your eyes, how can anybody sit back and not do something. I don't know.

K: Yes, sir.

Q: If you want the knowledge of yourself - OK? - then you must have some idea that that knowledge of yourself is attainable, therefore you need an experience of some kind to at least get you in that direction.

K: So you take drugs.

Q: OK, let's say you take drugs and you get that experience and then you look into yourself somehow.

K: No, sir. Why do you want to take drugs? You see you are off, gone to something else when we are talking about education.

Q: I am talking about education, how do you show a child that that experience is attainable?

K: So, what is happening in the world? The young people are taking drugs, as the old people are taking alcohol, whisky, tobacco, so the young people take to drugs, different kinds of drugs because they say, we want to have a different kind of experience. Right? That will help us to have an experience of reality, uncondition our minds and all the blah that goes with it. Right? Do you know what is implied in the word 'experience'?

Q: To go through.

K: The word means to go through, but also it means something else too. To experience implies recognition, doesn't it? Do think it over together, sir: I experience something, how do I know what I experience? I can only know it because I recognise it. Recognition implies that I have already had it. Of course. Therefore when I experience through drugs I experience something which I have had which is my conditioning projected. Don't you know all these little things, for god's sake!

Q: What happens when you take a drug and it so disrupts your conditioning, it just disturbs the ego structure so much that you, as you have been and led your life, are not anymore, and you can see the world through a different set of eyes.

K: So you take drugs, marijuana or LSD or some other kind, there are so many of them, that it disrupts, breaks down for the time being your ego structure - that's what he is saying - and at that moment you see something totally different. And after a certain period that disappears and you take to drugs again.

Q: What if you incorporate this experience into your day to day consciousness and no longer need to take the drugs.

K: So, that is, you are incorporating what you have experienced through drugs in your daily life. You are all so childish, sorry!

Q: Sir.

K: Wait, let me finish this, sir. So you incorporate, include something you have experienced which is dead, into your living daily life.

Q: What I mean to say is...

K: Yes, sir, that is simple. I experience through drug, through mesmerism, through all kinds of ways, something which is free, that experience becomes a memory and I want to live according to that memory, or include that thing in my daily life. A dead thing with a living thing, how can you do it! This is what I have been saying, which is, we are functioning all the time within the field of the known and never free from that. And that is one of the factors of deep degeneracy, whether you like it or not that's a fact.

Q: Sir, didn't you say once that it took the strength of a genius to overcome circumstances of one's life?

K: I don't know if I said that, but it doesn't matter.

Q: Have you ever heard of alcoholics anonymous?

K: Oh, for the love - yes, sir, yes, sir, I have heard a lot of words.

Q: What if older people honoured the question of can we educate the total man.

K: I know, sir, that's what I am saying.

Q: (Inaudible)

K: Look, madame, the gentleman is asking, which we have asked before, how can we educate the totality of man, in schools, in colleges, in universities, in the family, in our relationship intimately, how can this be done? Can we stick to that thing for the time?

Q: I think the point is that one cannot be educated totally as a human being, perhaps the schools can teach about mathematics or history or something, but that one must learn on one's own self-realisation, I don't think one can be taught that.

Q: As I understood it, first the meeting was to have a dialogue on right education, and then we decided that the way to go into that was to first look at the problem and then out of that we came up with, one of the problems was conditioning of the teacher and the student and the parent. And another problem that seemed to arise in the dialogue was the one of authority of each of those. So that's where we are so far.

K: That's right, sir.

Q: Sir, that brings up a point that I would like to discuss, and that is, why do we separate our educational environment from the so-called real environment? In other words why do we have schools which are separate from what is happening in real life? If you understand the question.

K: Real life is part of the school, isn't it?

Q: But in most cases it is not, sir, in most cases you go and you hear somebody talk about something and they are not doing it, they are not really involved with it.

K: Of course, sir. Can we please, that gentleman asked and I am asking, and you have answered, which is, in this dialogue we have said authority, unconditioning ourselves and the student, and a relationship not only between the parents and the children but between the teacher, the educator and the educated. Right, sir? Shall we stick to that for the time being and see what is involved in total education. That is, authority denies freedom, but the authority of a doctor, mathematic teacher and how he teaches, that doesn't destroy freedom. And there must be freedom to learn, that is the essence of learning, surely. Right, sir? Freedom. Now what does that mean? In a school or in a family where we are trying to learn the totality, the cultivation of the whole of human being, what place has freedom and authority? Please listen to this.

Q: So then that's one of the problems in a right education to establish the correct...

K: To understand it, to understand, the student as well as the educator, to understand what place has authority and what place has freedom. Can the two go together?

Q: That's the question.

K: We are investigating, we are having a dialogue about it. So what does freedom mean? Does it mean every student doing what he likes? Go into, sir. And every student wants that, because he has been conditioned to that: this permissive society, do what you want, individual expression and all that. So he comes with that conditioning and says, 'I am going to do what I want to do. If not, I am going to be violent, do vandalism', you know all that follows.

So. Does freedom mean doing what you want to do? And can you do what you want to do? And what is it you want to do? Express your conditioning freely? (Laughter) Go into it, sir, go into it, you play with all this.

Q: Sir, freedom has to exist, and does exist in relationship.

K: Madame, please listen to this, first thing. Freedom is absolutely necessary, that is human demand, historically it is so. And does freedom imply doing what you, as a human being, want to do? That's what you are doing now, isn't it, each one doing what he wants to do.

Q: Is there such a thing as beneficial conditioning?

K: No, all conditioning - you see conditioning is conditioning- not beneficial. You may call one conditioning beneficial and I might call that evil. So we are talking of conditioning, there is no good, and being better. There is only good - you know the French phrase, 'the better is the enemy of the good'. Right? Let's proceed from there. Let's see this, please stick to this. Does freedom imply each one doing what he wants to do? Go into it, sir, don't answer me, look at it in yourself. As a human being, does freedom mean doing what you want to do, does freedom mean to choose? And we say, freedom implies choice. Right? The capacity to be allowed to choose this, that or the other. Now choice implies confusion. I don't know therefore I choose; if I am clear there is no choice. Therefore being not clear I choose and therefore deny freedom. Come on, sir, move sir!

So does freedom mean being attached to this, that or the other, which is choice - you understand, sir? I am a Hindu and I become a Catholic because I am free to choose!

Q: But if you are a Hindu and you stay a Hindu then you are conditioned to be one.

K: I don't want to be a Hindu, I am not a Hindu, or a Catholic. But I am just showing to you.

Q: I understand that. What I am saying is that if you were to remain a Hindu then it would be because of your conditioning.

K: Of course.

Q: Just like it would be your conditioning to have the free choice to choose to be a Catholic.

K: I am saying sir, I am a Hindu, born a Hindu and I am free to choose and therefore I say, I won't be a Hindu, and I will be a Catholic. And I think that is the freedom of choice. From one conditioning I go to another conditioning.

Q: Does freedom not involve seeing?

K: We are seeing now, madame, we are making the picture clear, for goodness sake, look at it. So does freedom mean doing what you like, does freedom mean choice, does freedom mean expressing, fulfilling yourself? Right? Doing what you want to do: I want to fulfil - what is 'you' to fulfil? You are the conditioned entity and you want to fulfil according to your conditioning. And that's not fulfilment, you are just repeating the pattern. So does all that mean freedom? Obviously not. Therefore can you as the educator, as a parent, be free of that, not just verbally?

Q: That's the problem.

K: Not a problem. If you see that, sir, you won't be.

Q: I see that for five years sir, I see that point but I can't sustain it.

K: Ah, sir, wait a minute, you can't sustain it. I'll show you, wait, go into it.

Q: Be aware of the fact, that I understand. That I do too. In attention be aware of the inattention.

K: I'm going to show you something, sir, once you see this you will understand it quickly. When you see a snake you react instantly. That reaction you don't have to sustain. Whenever you meet a snake you will react always in the same way - why? Because your parents, your society, your books, said, snakes are dangerous. That's your conditioning. That conditioning says, that thing is dangerous, and therefore you react. And that conditioning is your sustaining factor. Right? You are following this, sir?

Q: Could you repeat it?

K: Oh, no. I have to repeat it? Sir, you asked a question, how to sustain what you have perceived. You have perceived a snake and you react, that reaction is your conditioning that is responding. That conditioning has been the result of past knowledge, experience, parents have told you that is a dangerous thing to touch a snake, or your books have told you, so you are conditioned. And that conditioning is the sustaining factor which says, move, run away, leave it alone. Now is there a sustaining factor when you see all this is not freedom? You understand, sir? No? I see freedom is not choice. Right? Freedom is not to do what I want. Freedom is not fulfilling myself.

Q: Freedom is to observe.

K: Wait. Freedom is not authority. Right? I see that. Not verbally, not intellectually but as truth, because I have an insight, I have an insight into the fact that where there is authority inwardly there is no freedom. Right? I see very clearly the truth that the demand for fulfilment is the fulfilment of my conditioning, and that's not freedom. Right, sir? I see the truth of it and seeing the truth of it is the sustaining factor. I don't have to have any other factor. Got it?

Q: Didn't you repeat it just now?

K: Of course, if you are not paying attention, as you didn't just now, then you don't... I have to repeat it ten times. If you pay attention you'll see it and it is finished, you don't say, 'Well, I must pay attention to it again', you see the truth of it. When you see a bottle marked poison, finished, you see it, you don't take it.

So the total education of man implies, for that education there must be complete freedom, not the freedom which you have called freedom. Right, sir? Therefore can you have that freedom in a school where the teacher, the educator, really has seen the truth of it and therefore helps the student to see it, in conversation, at table? You follow? Every moment he points it out, discusses it. And therefore out of that freedom there is order. You understand, sir?

Q: We relate about encouraging discoveries.

K: We have done this just now. (Laughs)

Q: What do you mean by total education?

K: I am explaining, sir. Seeing, listening, learning about mathematics, learning what freedom is. Right, sir? So total education implies the art of learning, to put everything in its right place: knowledge in its right place. Right, sir? If I didn't know how to drive a car, I learn. I must know mathematics, it's part of the structure of life, mathematics means order, the highest form of mathematics is the highest order in life, not just learning some trigonometry and all the rest of it. And total education implies the learning about authority. And also learning, if there is something sacred in life, not invented by thought but really something holy in life. Not the things invented by priests and the statues and the beliefs, that's nothing sacred, it is the outcome of thought. So all that is the cultivation of the whole of the human being. Right, sir?

Q: Sir, can we remember that this is not dependent upon a specific place?

K: No, I don't think so, sir. I mean to have a school in this beautiful place, it's marvellous, I am glad we have got it. We are going to have a school here, we are working for it, we have to have money and all the rest of it. This is a beautiful place, we will do it, but it can be in other places.

Q: By education do you mean right living in and out?

K: Of course, sir, that's what we...

Q: Sir, I am not sure this is completely relevant but I really hope it is. I heard you once say that freeing the mind is a different action. There are two different actions required, one if you are partially confused and one if you are completely confused. Two different actions.

K: No, sir, no, there is no partial confusion and complete confusion.

Q: We discussed this in Switzerland. You talked about it there.

K: Sorry, I don't know, perhaps we didn't quite hear properly what I said. Either one is confused or not confused, there is no partial confusion. It's like partial something or other.

Q: Where do the parents, Mr Krishnamurti, fit in with what we have talked about?

K: I'll show you. Parents. Oh my god. Sir, in a school of our... what we want the parent is part of our school, the parent must be interested in what we are learning, what we are doing, otherwise he is not a parent responsible. It's like sending off a child and getting rid of it. We are saying the parent, the teacher, the student are all concerned with this. Therefore - all that. Is that enough for this morning? I think so. No?

Q: Isn't right or wrong a matter of social conditioning?

K: Right and wrong, is it not a matter of social conditioning. Of course it is. If you go to India, they think it is very bad to do certain things which you consider quite normal here. And that is their conditioning, and that is your conditioning. But the good is not conditioning. You understand, sir? What is good is not good here and bad over there; what is good is good everywhere. And that good, which means the goodness, the flowering of that goodness, the beauty of that, is not to be touched by thought. You understand, sir? Thought can't produce goodness. I think that's enough.