

Krishnamurti, Jiddu, *The Book of Life: Daily Meditations with Krishnamurti*, Harper Collins Publishers, 1995

## ***Self-Knowledge Is a Process***

*January 23*

So, to understand the innumerable problems that each one of us has, is it not essential that there be self-knowledge? And that is one of the most difficult things, self-awareness— which does not mean an isolation, a withdrawal. Obviously, to know oneself is essential; but to know oneself does not imply a withdrawal from relationship. And it would be a mistake, surely, to think that one can know oneself significantly, completely, fully, through isolation, through exclusion, or by going to some psychologist, or to some priest; or that one can learn self-knowledge through a book. Self-knowledge is obviously a process, not an end in itself; and to know oneself, one must be aware of oneself in action, which is relationship. You discover yourself, not in isolation, not in withdrawal, but in relationship— in relationship to society, to your wife, your husband, your brother, to man; but to discover how you react, what your responses are, requires an extraordinary alertness of mind, a keenness of perception.

## ***The Untethered Mind***

*January 24*

The transformation of the world is brought about by the transformation of oneself, because the self is the product and a part of the total process of human existence. To transform oneself, self-knowledge is essential; without knowing what you are, there is no basis for right thought, and without knowing yourself there cannot be transformation. One must know oneself as one is, not as one wishes to be, which is merely an ideal and therefore fictitious, unreal; it is only that *which* is that can be transformed, not that which you wish to be. To know oneself as one is requires an extraordinary alertness of mind, because *what is* is constantly undergoing transformation, change; and to follow it swiftly the mind must not be tethered to any particular dogma or belief, to any particular pattern of action. If you would follow anything, it is no good being tethered. To know yourself, there must be the awareness, the alertness of mind in which there is freedom from all beliefs, from all idealization, because beliefs and ideals only give you a color, perverting true perception. If you want to know what you are, you cannot imagine or have belief in something which you are not. If I am greedy, envious, violent, merely having an ideal of non-violence, of non-greed, is of little value.... The understanding of what you are, whatever it be— ugly or beautiful, wicked or mischievous —the understanding of what you are, without distortion, is the beginning of virtue. Virtue is essential, for it gives freedom.

## ***Active Self-Knowledge***

*January 25*

Without self-knowledge, experience breeds illusion; with self-knowledge, experience, which is the response to challenge, does not leave a cumulative residue as memory. Self-knowledge is the discovery from moment to moment of the ways of the self, its intentions and pursuit, its thoughts and appetites. There can never be “your experience” and “my experience”; the very term “my experience” indicates ignorance and the acceptance of illusion.

## ***Quiet Mind, Simple Mind***

*January 27*

When we are aware of ourselves, is not the whole movement of living a way of uncovering the “me,” the ego, the self? The self is a very complex process that can be uncovered only in relationship, in our daily activities, in the way we talk, the way we judge, calculate, the way we condemn others and ourselves. All that reveals the conditioned state of our own thinking, and is it not important to be aware of this whole process? It is only through awareness of what is true from moment to moment that there is discovery of the timeless, the eternal. Without self-knowledge, the eternal cannot be. When we do not know ourselves, the eternal becomes a mere word, a symbol, a speculation, a dogma, a belief, an illusion to which the mind can escape. But if one begins to understand the “me” in all its various activities from day to day, then in that very understanding, without any effort, the nameless, the timeless comes into being. But the timeless is not a reward for self-knowledge. That which is eternal cannot be sought after; the mind cannot acquire it. It comes into being when the mind is quiet, and the mind can be quiet only when it is simple, when it is no longer storing up, condemning, judging, weighing. It is only the simple mind that can understand the real, not the mind that is full of words, knowledge, information. The mind that analyzes, calculates, is not a simple mind.

## Self-Knowing

January 28

Without knowing yourself, do what you will, there cannot possibly be the state of meditation. I mean by “self-knowing,” knowing every thought, every mood, every word, every feeling; knowing the activity of your mind— not knowing the supreme self, the big self; there is no such thing; the higher self, the atma, is still within the field of thought. Thought is the result of your conditioning, thought is the response of your memory— ancestral or immediate. And merely to try to meditate without first establishing deeply, irrevocably, that virtue which comes about through self-knowing is utterly deceptive and absolutely useless.

Please, it is very important for those who are serious to understand this. Because if you cannot do that, your meditation and actual living are divorced, are apart— so wide apart that though you may meditate, taking postures indefinitely, for the rest of your life, you will not see beyond your nose; any posture you take, anything that you do, will have no meaning whatsoever.

... It is important to understand what this self-knowing is, just to be aware, without any choice, of the “me” which has its source in a bundle of memories— just to be conscious of it without interpretation, merely to observe the movement of the mind. But that observation is prevented when you are merely accumulating through observation— what to do, what not to do, what to achieve; if you do that, you put an end to the living process of the movement of the mind as the self. That is, I have to observe and see the fact, the actual, the *what is*. If I approach it with an idea, with an opinion— such as “I must not,” or “I must,” which are the responses of memory— then the movement of *what is* is hindered, is blocked; and therefore, there is no learning.

## Creative Emptiness

January 29

Can you not just listen to this as the soil receives the seed and see if the mind is capable of being free, empty? It can be empty only by understanding all its own projections, its own activities, not off and on, but from day to day, from moment to moment. Then you will find the answer, then you will see that the change comes without your asking, that the state of creative emptiness is not a thing to be cultivated— it is there, it comes darkly, without any invitation, and only in that state is there a possibility of renewal, newness, revolution.