

KFA Bulletin

#92

2018

Freedom from the Known

K KRISHNAMURTI
FOUNDATION
OF AMERICA

This annual Bulletin is offered to a small group of supporters and typically includes previously unpublished material by Krishnamurti. In our archives we have a great deal of unpublished content, including audio recordings, which require some work to transcribe and verify. There are some compelling materials in the vault that will one day be put into book form.

Dear Friends,

We selected *Freedom from the Known* as the theme for this year to be the focus of activities across the Foundation, Oak Grove School and Krishnamurti Center. Of all Krishnamurti books, *Freedom from the Known* is probably the best selling. First published in 1969, the book is unique in that the editor, Mary Lutyens, took great liberty patching together bits and pieces from several talks that occurred in 1968. Later editors of Krishnamurti's books have stayed much closer to the original transcripts. In this Bulletin, we share previously unpublished excerpts from the materials gathered for the compilation of *Freedom from the Known*.

This title is more relevant than ever. The question "what is the known?" continues to be pushed to its limits. Are we only moving within the constraints of our past? Are we unknowingly executing an evolutionary program with small individual differences? Is the notion of "freedom" just another romantic projection of the mind to escape from our suffering?

Krishnamurti suggests looking at the following koan: "You are faced with this problem: *I am confusion. Whatever I do leads to further confusion. I must act. Therefore what am I to do?*" In the text of this Bulletin Krishnamurti somehow implies that staying with this problem, without trying to escape, holds the key to freedom.

We hope you enjoy Bulletin #92.

Sincerely,



Jaap Sluijter
Executive Director
Krishnamurti Foundation of America

I AM CONFUSION

SECOND PUBLIC DIALOGUE IN NEW YORK

11 OCTOBER 1968

K: Look, I am confused. That's a fact. And I see that whatever action I do, whatever activity I indulge in—whether I commit myself to a political party, communist, socialist—is absurd, because I am confused. And whatever I do in my relationship is still confused. So I say: First, I have to learn about this confusion. Right? I have to learn it; I must know what it is. I can know only what it is when I know how to look at it. Right? I can only look at it if I don't say, 'How terrible, I must change it. I'm frightened of it.' I can only look at it when there is no evaluating or censor in the look. Now, I've learnt that. Can I look at this confusion without the censor? Can I? Do it, sir.

Q: I think I do, and then...

K: We will go into it. If I can do that, I am already beginning to understand what meditation is, because I have learnt one of the greatest things. Because we look at things through tradition, which is, condemn, judge, accept the censor, which is a tradition. I reject tradition. I've learnt that. Therefore I can look at this confusion without judgment. Is this clear? Can we go on with this?

Q: This is jumping ahead, but I want you just to keep this question in mind. You think that when one is not censoring, when one is trying to be impartial to the confusion.

K: Ah, not impartial—you see...

Q: When one is not censoring...

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K: Yes...

Q: I may be all wrong about this. As the confusion is going on, what is not censoring?

K: Is this what you mean, sir? Would there not be confusion as long as there is a censor? Is this what you mean?

Q: I am trying to express a moving process—as there is confusion, to try to institute another state of non-censoring.

K: That's right. That is what we are doing now.

Q: Well, one is confused all the time. In other words, one wants to constantly have the state of non-censoring, and since one is always confused there must be something that is standing aside from the confusion and looking at it.

K: Yes, I understand, sir, quite.

Q: Is there any entity apart from the confusion which can look at it without...

K: I understand. That is what I am proposing, sir. That is, the observer, is it not the very entity that brings confusion? There is no confusion there, and I am different from that confusion. But I am confusion. No?

Q: Are there actually different parts of us, inside, which are the confusions, and also the observer which is...

K: That's right. That is, some part of us is clarity and the rest is confusion. That is, to put in different terms, there is the observer who is not confused looking at confusion. Is this all getting too complex? Yes, sir?

Q: Do you mean then that whatever we are thinking—it doesn't matter what kind of thought we are thinking or what kind of

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action—but it is like you sort of just observe that it is there without making any change or anything, but just observing it's there. You know, just like when you go by a store and your shadow happens to be in a mirror when you walk by it.

K: A little more than that, sir. Surely it is much more than that. Now, sir, wait a minute. Let's look at a much simpler issue than confusion.

You are jealous—one is jealous—not you, sir—one is jealous. Is jealousy different from the person who feels it?

Q: Yes, jealousy is a word.

K: Jealousy is a word; the word is not the thing. Wait, look at it. Do look at it. Behind that word, the feeling which we call jealousy—for the moment we will give it a name—is that jealousy different from the person who says I am jealous?

Q: That's his thought, his feeling, his emotion...

K: Isn't the observer, the feeler, the experiencer the same as the experience, jealousy?

Q: At that instant.

K: At that moment.

Q: Yes.

K: That's all I'm—at that instant the experiencer is the experienced. Now, wait a minute. So there is confusion. It isn't: I am not confused but there is confusion. I am confusion. No?

Q: Why do you reject the word 'impartiality' to describe that observer seeing...?

K: Sir, impartiality—what does that word impartial mean, to be neutral?

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Q: Well, without becoming either the one or the other.

K: Yes, all right—which is what? Because partial, impartial, you know all that...

Q: But can you see with this clear state and still be confused with those outside things?

K: Sir, if you don't mind, we are putting the question differently. Here I am; I am confused. I am asking myself, is the confusion different from the me that says I am confused?

Q: No.

K: No? Is it different?

Q: Yes.

K: Yes?

Q: Yes, I think it is.

K: Why?

Q: Well, I think when you set up the subject/object, when you say, 'I have a mind, I have a body, I have emotions', or, 'I have a mind, and anything that comes from the mind is part of the mind', then you have set up two things, and they are not the same.

K: Therefore, the mind separates it.

Q: The mind is not the 'I' that has the mind.

K: Can you have the mind without the feeling, without saying, 'I am not that, I am this'?

Q: If you say, 'I am not this, I am not that'.

K: But who is the entity that says that?

Q: That is what you find out by meditating. *[Laughter]*

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K: Wait. You see, you see! You see how they slip out? [*Laughter*]
We escape through a word. I refuse to escape through a word.
Yes, sir?

Q: It seems that the observer can always be permanent, whereas the states that we call jealousy...

K: Yes, sir. That is, the observer is the censor.

Q: And he can be a permanent...

K: And he is permanent, for most of us. He is the entity that is judging, evaluating because of his tradition, of his conditioning. If I was brought up in Tibet, I wouldn't accept certain values as you do here. So the acceptance of that value is the entity who is conditioned, who is the observer—that becomes a permanent.

Q: Of course we can't call those states like jealousy or happiness...

K: No, the censor is what may be called the 'permanent'—let's put it in quotes—he may not be permanent.

So, let's come back: Is confusion different from me? Please, find out.

Q: Yes.

K: Why?

Q: Your confusion is dependent on your awareness of that confusion, and there is always a part of us that is not involved in this confusion.

K: Therefore, you are saying there is a part of me that is not confused and knows what confusion is and what it is not. So you are saying, there is an uncontaminated part which is always clear.

Q: I'd rather not use the word 'contaminated' because I can't undo it...

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Q: ...or uncontaminated.

K: I am using that word quickly, sir. There is a part of me which is always clear.

Q: Yes.

K: Now, why do I say that? Why do we say that? You know, what you are saying, sir, is put in different words in India: higher self, lower self, the atman, the ego—all these words are used to indicate there is a part which is not this. Right? Do look at it carefully. Look at it, sir. There is a part of me—call it what you like—which is timeless, which is not bogged down. Now, first of all, how do I know it?

Q: By experience.

K: Wait, wait. You think about it, don't you?

Q: No, not anymore.

K: Not anymore, but to say there is an entity in me which is not of this quality...

Q: I said it was not confused, I didn't say it was not necessarily of this quality.

K: ...of this confusion—I am using different words—there is part of me which is not confused. How did that part—please, I am very serious because this is a very serious question—how do you know that part? Or is it a wish, or you have thought about it and established it as something separate from this? It must be related by thought; otherwise, you couldn't have it. Wait, see the importance. Just a minute, sir.

Sir, man has accepted throughout the world that there is a permanent entity—call it the soul, the atman, God, whatever it

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is. First of all, he establishes that because everything is fleeting, moving, changing; at least, he wants something which is permanent, which is secure, which is whole, which is light, which is not confused, and so on. That means, he must know it through thought. Otherwise, how do I know it? The moment I know it, it belongs to the realm of thought. I am not trying to corner you, sir, please. And what you can think about is the result of thought, and therefore thought is the past. Thought is always the old. So, if you think about something which is clarity, thought has created it, otherwise you can't think about it.

Q: I still don't see how your thought process which involves a number of steps really is opposed to what I said.

K: Sir, first of all, I don't know anything about having an entity, a part of me that is clear. I don't admit it. I don't know. I may invent it. I may want it, I may hope for it. It may be something I have sought and created and put in there, but I know nothing about it, I won't even accept it, because that leads to duality.

Q: No, I don't think so. It does according to the way you approach things, but as I see it, it is an experience, it is a part of life. As you said, it is life, it is experience. What thinking has encouraged me to do, when I find myself confused, is one, to relax the body, because confusion finds itself running through the body in a very physical way—it sets up certain patterns of mind which become familiar and therefore you can let them pass through. So there are a number of things that can be done, practically...

K: Oh, yes, yes, I know that, sir.

Q: ...whereby you resolve the confusion. You see the origin of your confusion. You have done something about it. It goes and becomes rather amusing, usually.

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K: But, sir, may I say—I am not talking about you, sir—that one has to doubt every experience. What do we mean by experience? Let's take that one word—what do we mean by experience?

Q: That is the part of us. You said that we must have an experience and we do have that experience—I think that is the proof of the permanent part of us.

K: What?

Q: The doubting of the experience is that which is permanently clear.

K: No, sir. Please, sir, first find out. What do we mean by experience? To experience a feeling, to experience a sunset, to experience pleasure—experience, to go through. I have an experience. If I recognize it, then it is an experience. If don't recognize it, it is not an experience. Wait, sir, go slow, go slow, go slow. That is, experience involves recognition, otherwise, how do I know that I have experienced?

Q: You don't necessarily have to consciously know that you have experienced in order for that experience to condition your behaviour. In other words, we can experience things through the subconscious without being conscious of it, and our subconscious then determines our behaviour.

K: Sir, wait a minute. The unconscious, the subconscious must also recognize the experience, otherwise, you couldn't retain it.

Q: The subconscious might recognize the experience but the conscious may not.

K: Wait. The unconscious, subconscious, whatever, the hidden part of the mind must recognise every experience, otherwise there is no experience. If I don't recognize you because I have

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seen you yesterday, I haven't seen you. So, recognition is implied implicitly in the whole process of experiencing.

Q: There is a difference, though, between conscious recognition and unconscious recognition.

K: I may unconsciously recognize and the conscious mind may not recognize. Or the other way round. But recognition is essential for experience. So, go step by step, sir. Therefore, recognition implies the past. I meet you today, otherwise—sir, wait a minute—you have been introduced to me, I know you, we have met each other, and tomorrow I meet you again. I recognize you. That is, the memory of yesterday meeting you remains with me, and when I meet you tomorrow, I recognize you. So, recognition, conscious or unconscious, is essential to experience. Why? Recognition implies the thing that has been. Otherwise, I can't... Therefore, I am experiencing with something which I have known. Otherwise, it is not an experience. So when I say, there is a part of me which is not confused, I have recognised it as non-confusion, because I have experienced it. Because I have experienced it, it is already in the past and therefore a contributory cause to confusion. Got it! [Laughter]

No, please, we are not being logical. I am just—you see, I am trying to understand this whole process of confusion, whether the mind can ever be free of confusion; not just partly, but without duality. Duality implies confusion.

Q: The mind implies duality. Duality seems to me to be implicit in the content of the mind.

K: Is it? We think so. It may not be. And it may be. Therefore, is it possible for the mind to go beyond itself?

Q: Then it is not thinking.

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K: Ah, no, no. Something else happens. We will go into that.

So, I am confused and I am not different from that confusion. Then, what am I to do? See the question, sir? I am confused, and confusion is not different from me who says, 'I am confused.' Right? I am confusion. Then what am I to do, knowing that whatever I do leads to further confusion? Sir, this is what they call in Zen a problem—you are faced with it.

Q: A *koan*.

K: *Koan*—that's it. You are faced with this problem. That is, my mind says, 'I am confused', and this confusion is me, is not something separate from me. It also says, 'I cannot act, because if I act, I further bring about confusion.' Therefore, what am I to do? You see the position? I must act; I can't live in confusion. So what am I to do? Please, do remain with this for two minutes. I am confusion. Whatever I do leads to further confusion. I must act. Therefore, what am I to do?

Q: Sir, the obvious answer to the question is observe the confusion.

K: No, no. No, no.

Q: May I just go back one step?

Audience: No.

Q: Could you stop giving obvious answers to the questions and just listen?

K: Sir, don't go back. What is the difficulty, sir?

Q: I am angry or I am jealous, and in the state of anger or jealousy, I recognise and understand that I am of this thing. But what is it in me that recognizes these things?

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K: Sir, then that means you have divided—there is a division between the recognition and the fact. It is the same thing, sir.

Q: The understanding that I am confused is not an act of confusion.

K: No.

Q: Therefore, there is more in me than confusion.

K: No, sir.

Q: That is what I am asking.

K: I know that is what you are asking, sir. That is going back again.

Sir, I am confused. I am not different from that confusion. You cannot say, 'my arm is different from me'—I am the arm. The pain which I have—toothache, tummy ache, or whatever it is—the pain that I have is me; it is not something apart from me. So, in the same way, I am confused. Please, do stick to this one thing for a few minutes. I am confused. Not that there is a division between me and confusion; there is only confusion. And there is the realisation that whatever one does out of this confusion furthers, breeds, engenders—whatever word—more confusion. And I must act. I can't just say, 'I am confused', and just remain. Therefore, what am I to do?

[Pause]

What do you do when you are lost in a wood? Have you ever been lost in a wood? Probably you have never been—too bad! *[Laughter]* What do you do? You stop, don't you? You don't go round and round in circles—you stop and look, right? Now, you are confused, and knowing any action furthers confusion, what do you do? You stop. Right? Can you stop? Not say, 'Well, I must find an answer, I must look, I must understand it, I must...'

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Chatter, chatter, chatter... Can you just stop, knowing whatever you do furthers confusion? Therefore, the very problem makes you stop, doesn't it? No? If you have stopped, then you can look, can't you? That looking is different from the mind that looks at its own confusion. I wonder if you are getting this. I am confused, I don't know what to do, so I stop. Stopping means not asking anybody what to do, not chattering, not trying to escape, not trying to resolve it, because all those actions are part of the confusion. Therefore, as I can't do anything, there is stopping. When there is a stopping, the mind becomes quiet. Right? So, such a quiet mind is not a confused mind. Right?

Q: You mean by stopping, not thinking?

K: Not thinking—quite right, sir. I didn't want to use that word 'thinking' because that involves a great deal.

So, as we were saying yesterday, if you were here, the chattering that goes on when I am confused, anxious, is part of the old brain. The new brain is when it recognizes that the old brain can't do anything, and therefore the old brain becomes quiet, and the new brain then acts, which is entirely different from the action of confusion. I don't know if you are getting this.

Q: Where does the new brain come from?

K: Where does the new brain come from? The new brain is part of this whole cerebrum, part of the whole structure of the brain.

Q: Why won't it be as dualistic as the old brain?

K: No, it cannot be, because so far we have looked at everything with the old brain, which is always looking with duality. Forget the old brain/new brain—leave that for the moment. Can I stop searching, asking, looking, when I am confused? And when I am confused, my urge is to find out how to get out of this

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confusion. But knowing the urge is part of this confusion, that very understanding of this brings a stoppage—if I can use that word. The whole movement of thought comes to an end; I can look. That look is entirely different.

Now, I call this, this whole process, which involves much more in it, the way of meditation. I am angry, jealous, ambitious, greedy, violent, whatever it is—I am not different from violence. Therefore, there is no non-violence. I am violence. The invention of an ideology of non-violence is a dualistic process, and therefore, it has no validity at all. Therefore, I am violence, and whatever I do is violence. Even if I join a pacifist group, I am violent, because I want to be the leader, I want this or that, and I want prominence and all the rest of it. Therefore, I am violence.

So my mind says: As long as I work with violence, there must be duality. And therefore, can I look without violence? And it is only possible when thought comes to an end, which is to stop.

Right, sir? Are you doing it?

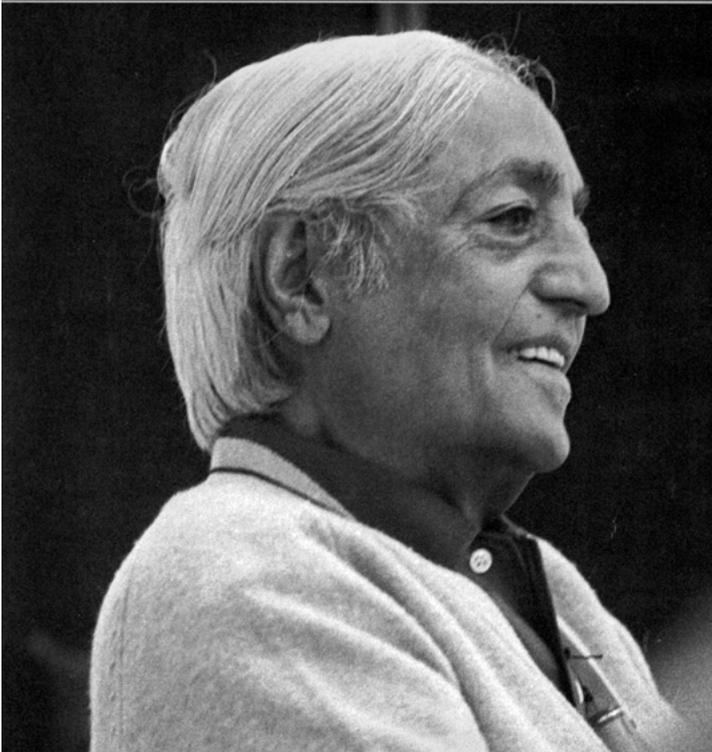
– J. Krishnamurti

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"Krishnamurti influenced me profoundly and helped me personally break through the confines of my own self-imposed restrictions to my freedom."—DEEPAK CHOPRA

J. Krishnamurti

Freedom from the Known



Available at the KFA Bookstore:
store.kfa.org/products/freedom-from-the-known

Dear Reader,

The Krishnamurti Foundation of America is a non-profit charitable trust whose mission is to preserve and disseminate the work of J. Krishnamurti. His mission, in his own words, was to “set men absolutely, unconditionally free.” For sixty-five years he offered, in his talks and writings, an exploration into the nature of the self and the nature of truth that was bound by no cultural, theological, or racial limitations. It remains the mission of the organization to make these teachings accessible.

Krishnamurti’s message is more important today than at any other time in history. Psychological time, manifested as separative belief, desire, and fear, are as prevalent in today’s world as it was throughout the whole of human history. And it may be that one feels isolated and ineffectual in one’s little corner of the world, ‘working on ourselves,’ while chaos and violence explodes around us and around the globe. Listening and pure observation, as taught by Krishnamurti, are not a retreat, but an advance into freedom. They are not the end, but the beginning of action.

“Self-knowledge is the beginning of wisdom.
Without self-knowledge, there can be no wisdom.”

— *J. Krishnamurti*

Thank you for your donation, it enables this work to go on.

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