

Talk to Students Chapter 8 'On Image-Making' *'On Education'*

When we are very young it is a delight to be alive, to hear the birds of the morning, to see the hills after rain, to see those rocks shining in the sun, the leaves sparkling, to see the clouds go by and to rejoice on a clear morning with a full heart and a clear mind. We lose this feeling when we grow up, with worries, anxieties, quarrels, hatreds, fears and the everlasting struggle to earn a livelihood. We spend our days in battle with each other, disliking and liking, with a little pleasure now and then. We never hear the birds, see the trees as we once saw them, see the dew on the grass and the bird on the wing and the shiny rock on a mountainside glistening in the morning light. We never see all that when we are grown up. Why? I do not know if you have ever asked that question. I think it necessary to ask it. If you do not ask it now, you will soon be caught. You will go to college, get married, have children, husbands, wives, responsibilities, earn a livelihood, and then you will grow old and die. That is what happens to people. We have to ask now, why we have lost this extraordinary feeling for beauty, when we see flowers, when we hear birds? Why do we lose the sense of the beautiful? I think we lose it primarily because we are so concerned with ourselves. We have an image of ourselves.

Do you know what an image is? It is something carved by the hand, out of stone, out of marble, and this stone carved by the hand is put in a temple and worshipped. But it is still handmade, an image made by man. You also have an image about yourself, not made by the hand but made by the mind, by thought, by experience, by knowledge, by your struggle, by all the conflicts and miseries of your life. As you grow older, that image becomes stronger, larger, all-demanding and insistent. The more you listen, act, have your existence in that image, the less you see beauty, feel joy at something beyond the little promptings of that image.

The reason why you lose this quality of fullness is because you are so self-concerned. Do you know what that phrase "to be self-concerned" means? It is to be occupied with oneself, to be occupied with one's capacities whether they are good or bad, with what your neighbours think of you, whether you have a good job, whether you are going to become an important man, or be thrown aside by society. You are always struggling in the office, at home, in the fields; wherever you are, whatever you do, you are always in conflict, and you do not seem to be able to get out of conflict; not being able to get out of it, you create the image of a perfect state, of heaven, of God - again another image made by the mind. You have images not only inwardly but also deeper down, and they are always in conflict with each other. So the more you are in conflict - and conflict will always exist so long as you have images, opinions, concepts, ideas about yourself - the greater will be the struggle.

So the question is: Is it possible to live in this world without an image about yourself? You function as a doctor, a scientist, a teacher, a physicist. You use that function to create the image about yourself, and so, using function, you create conflict in functioning, in doing. I wonder if you understand this? You know, if you dance well, if you play an

instrument, a violin, a veena, you use the instrument or the dance to create the image about yourself to feel how marvellous you are, how wonderfully well you play or dance. You use the dancing, the playing of the instrument, in order to enrich your own image of yourself. And that is how you live, creating, strengthening that image of yourself. So there is more conflict; the mind gets dull and occupied with itself; and it loses the sense of beauty, of joy, of clear thinking.

I think it is part of education to function without creating images. You then function without the battle, the inward struggle that goes on within yourself.

There is no end to education. It is not that you read a book, pass an examination and finish with education. The whole of life, from the moment you are born till the moment you die is a process of learning. Learning has no end and that is the timeless quality of learning. And you cannot learn if you are in battle, if you are in conflict with yourself, with your neighbour, with society. You are always in conflict with society, with your neighbour as long as there is an image. But if you are learning about the mechanics of putting together that image, then you will see that you can look at the sky, then you can look at the river and the raindrops on the leaf, feel the cool air of a morning and the fresh breeze among the leaves. Then life has an extraordinary meaning. Life in itself, not the significance given by the image to life - life itself has an extraordinary meaning.

Student: When you are looking at a flower, what is your relationship with the flower?

Krishnamurti: You look at a flower, and what is your relationship to the flower? Do you look at the flower or do you think you are looking at the flower? You see the difference? Are you actually looking at the flower or you think you ought to look at the flower or are you looking at the flower with an image you have about the flower - the image being that it is a rose? The word is the image, the word is knowledge and therefore you are looking at that flower with the word, the symbol, with knowledge and therefore you are not looking at the flower. Or, are you looking at it with a mind that is thinking about something else?

When you look at a flower without the word, without the image, and with a mind that is completely attentive, then what is the relationship between you and the flower? Have you ever done it? Have you ever looked at a flower without saying that is a rose? Have you ever looked at a flower completely, with total attention in which there is no word, no symbol, no naming of the flower and, therefore, complete attention? Till you do that, you have no relationship with the flower. To have any relationship with another or with the rock or with the leaf, one has to watch and to observe with complete attention. Then your relationship to that which you see is entirely different. Then there is no observer at all. There is only that. If you so observe, then there is no opinion, no judgement. It is what it is. Have you understood? Will you do it? Look at a flower that way. Do it, Sir, don't talk about it, but do it.

Student: If you have lots of time, how would you spend it, Sir? Krishnamurti: I would do what I am doing. You see, if you love what you are doing, then you have all the leisure that you need in your life. Do you understand what I have said? You asked me what I would do if I had leisure. I said, I would do what I am doing; which is to go around

different parts of the world, to talk, to see people and so on. I do it because I love to do it; not because I talk to a great many people and feel that I am very important. When you feel very important, you do not love what you are doing; you love yourself and not what you are doing. So, your concern should be not with what I am doing, but with what you are going to do. Right? I have told you what I am doing. Now you tell me what you will do, when you have plenty of leisure.

Student: I would get bored, sir. Krishnamurti: You would get bored. Quite right. That is what most people are.

Student: How do I get rid of this boredom, sir? Krishnamurti: Wait, listen. Most people are bored. Why? You asked how to get rid of boredom. Now find out. When you are by yourself for half an hour, you are bored. So you pick up a book, chatter, look at a magazine, go to a cinema, talk, do something. You occupy your mind with something. This is an escape from yourself. You have asked a question, Now, pay attention to what is being said. You get bored because you find yourself with yourself; and you have never found yourself with yourself. Therefore, you get bored. You say: Is that all I am? I am so small, I am so worried; I want to escape from all that. What you are is very boring, so you run away. But if you say, I am not going to be bored; I am going to find out why I am like this; I want to see what I am like actually then it is like looking at yourself in a mirror. There, you see very clearly what you are, what your face looks like. Then you say that you do not like your face; that you must be beautiful, you must look like a cinema actress. But if you were to look at yourself and say, "Yes, that is what I am; my nose is not very straight, my eyes are rather small, my hair is straight." You accept it. When you see what you are, there is no boredom. Boredom comes in only when you reject what you see and want to be something else. In the same way, when you can look at yourself inside and see exactly what you are, the seeing of it is not boring. it is extraordinarily interesting, because the more you see of it, the more there is to see. You can go deeper and deeper and wider and there is no end to it. In that, there is no boredom. If you can do that, then what you do is what you love to do, and when you love to do a thing, time does not exist. When you love to plant trees, you water them, look after them, protect them; when you know what you really love to do, you will see the days are too short So you have to find out for yourself from now on, what you love to do; what you really want to do, not just be concerned with a career.

Student: How do you find out what you love to do, sir? Krishnamurti: How do you find out what you love to do? You have to understand that it may be different from what you want to do. You may want to become a lawyer, because your father is a lawyer or because you see that by becoming a lawyer you can earn more money. Then you do not love what you do because you have a motive for doing something which will give you profit, which will make you famous. But if you love something, there is no motive. You do not use what you are doing for your own self-importance.

To find out what you love to do is one of the most difficult things. That is part of education. To find that out, you have to go into yourself very deeply. It is not very easy. You may say: "I want to be a lawyer" and you struggle to be a lawyer, and then suddenly you find you do not want to be a lawyer. You would like to paint. But it is too

late. You are already married. You already have a wife and children. You cannot give up your career, your responsibilities. So you feel frustrated, unhappy. Or you may say, "I really would like to paint, and you devote all your life to it, and suddenly find you are not a good painter and that what you really want to do is to be a pilot.

Right education is not to help you to find careers; for god's sake, throw that out of the window. Education is not merely gathering information from a teacher or learning mathematics from a book or learning historical dates of kings and customs, but education is to help you to understand the problems as they arise, and that requires a good mind - a mind that reasons, a mind that is sharp, a mind that has no belief. For belief is not fact. A man who believes in god is as superstitious as a man who does not believe in God. To find out you have to reason and you cannot reason if you already have an opinion, if you are prejudiced, if your mind has already come to a conclusion. So you need a good mind, a sharp, clear, definite, precise, healthy mind - not a believing mind, not a mind that follows authority. Right education is to help you to find out for yourself what you really, with all your heart, love to do. It does not matter what it is, whether it is to cook or to be a gardener, but it is something in which you have put your mind, your heart. Then you are really efficient, without becoming brutal. And this school should be a place where you are helped to find out for yourself through discussion, through listening, through silence, to find out, right through your life, what you really love to do.

Student: Sir, how can we know ourselves? Krishnamurti: That is a very good question. Listen to me carefully. How do you know what you are? You understand my question? You look into the mirror for the first time and after a few days or few weeks, you look again and say, "That is me again." Right? So, by looking at the mirror every day, you begin to know your own face, and you say: "That is me." Now can you in the same way know what you are by watching yourself? Can you watch your gestures, the way you walk, the way you talk, the way you behave, whether you are hard, cruel, rough, patient? Then you begin to know yourself. You know yourself by watching yourself in the mirror of what you doing, what you are thinking, what you are feeling. That is the mirror - the feeling, the doing, the thinking. And in that mirror you begin to watch yourself. The mirror says, this is the fact; but you do not like the fact. So, you want to alter it. You start distorting it. You do not see it as it is.

Now, as I said the other day, you learn when there is attention and silence. Learning is when you have silence and give complete attention. In that state, you begin to learn. Now, sit very quietly; not because I am asking you to sit quietly, but because that is the way to learn. Sit very quietly and be still not only physically, not only in your body, but also in your mind. Be very still and then in that stillness, attend. Attend to the sounds outside this building, the cock crowing, the birds, somebody coughing, somebody leaving; listen first to the things outside you, then listen to what is going on in your mind. And you will then see, if you listen very very attentively, in that silence, that the outside sound and the inside sound are the same.