Question: How can we progress in this world?

Krishnamurti: Does progress in this world consist mainly in being somebody socially or climbing the ladder of success? Why do we want to progress in this world? Why do we want to become more clever, more learned, more powerful? More money, a bigger house, means to us progress; that is why we all want more. We all want to keep on climbing, don’t we, not only in this world but spiritually, inwardly. We have to see the truth of this thing, that this so-called progress, outward or inward, does not bring tranquillity and peace but only leads to wars, to destruction, to greater misery. We do not understand ourselves, the ways of our own existence, and so we are enamoured of this progress—the progress of the airplane, the very latest car, the astonishing things the inventors are producing. These things have their own uses, but unless we change ourselves, we use these things in a manner which causes destruction and misery.

Question: At every meeting, you tell us to have a discussion with the teachers for at least ten minutes in the morning, but many of our teachers do not come to the meetings. So what are we to do in order to have a discussion?

Krishnamurti: If most of them do not come to the meetings, ask the others who do come. When you attend the class, you must have a teacher there. Why don’t you ask him? Why don’t you say, ‘Please, before we start our classes, let us have the discussion with the teachers’?
talk about what was said at the morning meeting.’ But, I think the question is a little more difficult. Because, the teachers, when you ask them to discuss with you before the classes begin, get rather annoyed, don’t they? They do not want to be questioned about these matters because they do not quite understand. They do not want to feel that they do not understand. They are teachers, you know, they are superior people, and you are only the students. So they want to keep you in your place. You, being impudent, want to catch them out. So it works both ways, does it not?

I think it is important for the teachers as well as for the students to listen to these talks and to discuss them together. What I am talking about is life; this is not just a fancy, a belief, a religion, a sect. This is life, and if the teachers do not understand it, then naturally they cannot help the students to understand. If the students want to discuss with them, why should they get angry or annoyed or disturbed? If they begin to think, they also will see the problems; then they will find a way of talking about them. But unfortunately, most of our teachers are not interested in all this. They have their own problems, they have their jobs, they are well established, and they want you to leave them alone. The young mind, the mind of the student, wants to know, to find out, to inquire, to disturb the teacher. That is why you, the older people, should pay attention to what is being said because, in your hands, a new generation can come into being. If you are not interested in all these things, you are going to produce a
generation as cursed as your own. You are really producing a curse on the land if you insist on educating your children according to your own pattern. The pattern of the older generation is nothing to be proud of. It is really important that the older people, the teachers, should inquire into all this.

Question: What is self-confidence and how does it come into being in man?

Krishnamurti: Sir, you dig a hole in the garden, manure it, water it, and then put a plant in and watch it grow. You feel that you can at least do something, don’t you? So you dig another hole, plant another tree, and that gives you a sense that you can do things, that gives you a confidence, as when you pass examinations one after the other. The capacity to do anything, to plant, to drive a car, to write a book, to pass examinations, gives you a sense of confidence, does it not? When you write a poem without effort, often you say, ‘By Jove! I can do it very easily.’ It gives you a sense of confidence. But, what happens? That confidence becomes a way of self-importance, ‘I can do things.’ So, when you use your capacity, you begin to have self-importance. That is, if I am able to speak well on a platform, which may be my sole capacity, I use the platform for my importance, as a means of expanding myself. Or I may be able to perform some dance, and that gives me enormous self-importance because I show myself off. So, I use capacity as a means of giving strength to my subtle, inward forms of selfishness.
What is important is to have the capacity to do things without the strengthening of the self. You understand? When you write a poem, when you plant a tree, do not say, ‘I have written a poem, I have planted a tree.’ It requires a great deal of intelligence to see that and to stop using capacity—however great or little it may be—for self-expansion, for making oneself important.

Question: As a boy grows, he becomes curious about sex. Why is it so?

Krishnamurti: It is a natural thing. Are you not curious about how trees grow? Have you not seen that the cows have calves? Everything is curious. How a little plant grows, becomes a tree, and produces fruit—is that not astonishing? Please listen carefully.

We do not use this interest to find out in every direction. You understand? You never inquire why a tree grows, why a bird flies. You never see the beauty of the bird and the shades of the tree. You never dig in the garden, and you never plant a tree, a bush; you never smell a flower, you never breathe the air with enjoyment; you never create anything with your own hands. Because you are not interested in all these things creatively, you become interested in one thing which you call sex, but if you are interested in all these things, then that also is a part of your life, that also is a natural thing. It is nature’s way of producing babies, there is nothing wrong about it, but that should not become our occupation;
our mind should not be completely concentrated on that, as most of our minds are.

When we are young, if we have not taken interest in the flowers, in the rivers, in the fish, in creating something with our hands, then that thing, sex, becomes more important. If we can be creatively interested in everything—in painting, in music, to play an instrument, to write a poem, to play games, to eat right food, to put on the right clothes, to see the sky of an evening and early morning, see the beauty of the trees, our mind taking in all that, creatively enjoying, seeing the beauty of it all, which is, after all, education—then sex is not an ugly problem. But because we have not been encouraged to look at all these things creatively, this thing sex becomes a nightmare.

I do hope the elder people are listening. After all, that is education—to help the students to plant trees and care for them, to let them make things with their hands, milk the cows, go for walks—not always everlastingly playing games. To look at the trees, the birds, the skies, to widen the mind creatively, extensively—that is education, not the passing of some stupid and silly examinations.

Question: When we see girls we try to show ourselves off. Why is it?

Krishnamurti: I have answered that question. We are attracted to what we call the opposite sex, the opposite person, the girl; that is a normal thing, not to be ashamed of, not to be condemned. When you

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**Chapter 14**

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**Question:** When we see girls we try to show ourselves off. Why is it?

**Krishnamurti:** I have answered that question. We are attracted to what we call the opposite sex, the opposite person, the girl; that is a normal thing, not to be ashamed of, not to be condemned. When you
see a tree, are you not attracted by the tree? When you see a lovely bird—that kingfisher, blue and marvellous in flight—are you not delighted by it? Perhaps you are not because you never look. Last night, there was thunder, lightning, rain. You never looked, did you? You never felt the rain on your face. To see everybody running for shelter, to see how the roads are washed clean and how the leaves are brighter—this also is an attraction.

Unfortunately, we are all girls or boys or grown-ups, insensitive to everything in life except to that one thing, and that becomes an enormous problem afterwards in our life, a problem with which we struggle. We have to be sensitive to everything about us, to those wretched bullocks that are drawing the heavy carts day after day—how thin they are, and how tired the drivers look!—the poor villagers, the disease, the empty stomachs. To be aware of all this is part of education. If you are sensitive to all these things, then you will not want to show off.

Beauty is something only sensitive minds and hearts can find. Mere attraction, mere sensation, though it may be pleasurable at the beginning, does not completely satisfy, so there is pain in it. But if the mind can look at all the things of life, all the depths and heights and qualities of it, if the mind can be sensitive to them, then the attraction of boy and girl has its right place, but without the other, this becomes a very shallow petty affair.
Question: How can we create the feeling of the necessity of manual work?

Krishnamurti: How can we feel that manual work is important? Sir, when you have to do things yourself, the question does not arise. The question arises when somebody else sweeps the floor instead of you. When you have your own physical work to do, day after day, you do not put that question. The villager digging, plowing, does not say, ‘How can I make manual labour important?’

He has to do it. But we are thankful that we have not got to do manual labour. We, the upper middle class, have withdrawn from all manual labour because we have a little money; and we have the tradition of centuries that the educated men, the Brahmins, the upper class people, have nothing to do with the squalid affair of manual labour. If you live in America, you have to do everything yourself—wash the floors, do the laundry, cook, wash dishes—because there are no servants. There, only the very, very rich can afford servants. They are not called servants, they are called helpers, and they are treated like human beings. But, in this country you have overpopulation and there are thousands for one job. If you have a little money, you employ somebody to do the dirty job, and you gradually withdraw from doing anything with your hands. If you see that, and if you see the importance of doing something with your hands, then you will naturally do it. The mentality of the so-called educated people, whether they are clerks or high officials, is the same—mediocre, petty, small.
Those people who refuse to touch the earth, to tend the flowers, do not know what they miss. If you really dig into the garden and plant, see things grow, milk a cow, look after chickens, then something happens to you; there is an astonishing richness in it. Those who have no touch with the earth miss a great deal. Try to have a garden of your own; plant a tree of your own, do it, organize it; then you will see what will happen to you inwardly. It gives you a sense of release, beauty, the love of the earth, of the little worms inside the earth. But unfortunately, we do not know that feeling, nor do we know the feeling of sitting still and actually looking at something. We know none of these inward riches, and not knowing, we acquire superficial, transient riches.

Question: What is the sun?

Krishnamurti: Have you asked your teacher? The sun is, according to scientists, a ball of fire, and it gives you heat, light, strength, everything. Why don’t you ask your teachers about it?

Question: How can one be satisfied with what one is?

Krishnamurti: The thing is very simple if you listen to what I am saying. Please listen carefully. Dissatisfaction comes when there is comparison. When you see somebody else having more and you having less, and you compare yourself with that other person, then dissatisfaction comes, but if you live as you understand, the dissatisfaction disappears. You have a sense of release, beauty, of the earth, of the little worms inside the earth. But unfortunately, we do not know that feeling, nor do we know the feeling of sitting still and actually looking at something. We know none of these inward riches, and not knowing, we acquire superficial, transient riches.
if you do not compare, then there is no problem. But not to compare requires a great deal of interest and understanding because all our education, all our training is based on comparison—‘That boy is not as good as you;’ ‘You are not so clever as that boy,’ and so on. Then you struggle, and the other boy struggles also. So we keep up this game of constant comparison and struggle. But if you love the thing which you are doing, you do it because you love it, and not because somebody else is doing it better than you; or you are doing it better than somebody else. When you make no comparison of any kind, then the thing that you are doing, that itself, begins to produce its own depths, its own heights.

Question: Why can’t we see the sun?

Krishnamurti: Because it is too bright. You cannot look at an electric lamp if it is a powerful lamp. The eyes are too sensitive.

January 21, 1954

प्रश्न : हम सूर्य को कैसे नहीं देख पाते?

कृष्णमुर्ति : क्योंकि यह बहुत तेज चमकता है। बिना लाइट का कोई बल्ब यदि बहुत तेज रोशनी देता है, तो उसे भी देख पाया आपके लिए मुमकिन नहीं होता। आँखें बहुत सवीदनशील होती हैं।

21 जनवरी, 1954