Question: Can you tell me how to get rid of fear?

Krishnamurti: You want to know how to get rid of fear? Do you know what you are afraid of? Go slowly with me. Fear is something which exists in relation to something else, it does not exist by itself. It exists in relation to a snake, to what my parents or teacher might say, to death; it is in connection with something. Do you understand? Fear is not a thing by itself, it exists in contact, in relation, in touch with something else. Are you conscious, aware that you are afraid in relation to something else? Are you not afraid of your parents, are you not afraid of your teachers? I hope not, but probably you are. Are you not afraid that you may not pass your examinations? Are you not afraid that people may not think of you nicely and decently and say what a great man you are? Don't you know your own fears? I am trying to show how you have fear, and you have lost interest already.

So, first you must know what you are afraid of. I will explain to you very slowly. Then you must know also, the mind must know why it is afraid. Is fear something apart from the mind? Does not the mind itself create fear, either because it remembers the past or it
projects itself into the future? You had better pester your teachers until they explain to you all these things. You spend an hour every day over mathematics or geography, but you do not spend even two minutes over the most important problems of life. Should you not spend much more time with your teachers over this—how to be free from fear—instead of merely discussing mathematics or reading a textbook? You have asked this question, how to get rid of fear, but your mind is not capable of following it. The older people perhaps can. So, we are going to discuss this later with the teachers.

A school based on fear of any kind is a rotten school, it should not exist. It requires a great deal of intelligence on the part of the teachers and of the boys to understand this problem. Fear corrupts, and to be free from fear, one has to understand how the mind creates fear. There is no such thing as fear except what the mind itself creates. The mind wants shelter, the mind wants security, the mind has various forms of self-protective ambition; and as long as all that exists, you will have fear. It is very important to understand ambition, to understand authority; both are indications of this fear which is so destructive.

Comment+: It is true, as you said, that fear corrupts the mind, especially with old people. It is also true that corrupt minds, especially of the older people,
create fear. The problem appears to be how to eliminate such minds.

Krishnamurti: You have understood the question? The gentleman says, ‘Should we not eliminate the older minds which are corrupted by fear?’ This means what? Destroy the older people, put them into concentration camps? All minds, whether old or young, are corrupted by fear, either imposed from outside or self-created. It is not a question of getting rid of somebody. That is what they are doing all over the world—if I do not agree with you; you liquidate me, you put me in a concentration camp. That is not going to solve the problem. What is going to solve the problem is the right kind of education which will help me to understand the problem of fear—how fear comes into being, how it comes from the past and is also created in the present and projected into the future.

Sirs, do think about this; this is far more important than all your examinations, your textbooks, your degrees; B.A. or M.A. after your name means absolutely nothing, though it may get you a job. The problem is not how to liquidate the old people or the young people with corrupt minds. What is wanted now is an inward revolution, a mind capable of thinking of all these problems differently and creating a new world.

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