

FRIEDRICH'S NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2012



Dear Friends,

As this is being written, in Rougemont in October, a mist is weaving through the mountains. The rain is bringing out the autumn colours rather than obscuring them: there is every kind of green touched by every shade of yellow, with some oranges and reds in between. The days are closing in and we will soon be off to Brockwood Park and then to Ojai for some of the winter months.

This newsletter is being sent to around 600 people: friends and family, teachers, students and parents of the K Schools, staff at the Centres and Foundations, or guests whom I have met at Brockwood Park, Haus Sonne in the Black Forest, or in Ojai, India and during the ‘Saanen’ gatherings in Mürren. There is of course a new Calendar of K quotes and my photos for 2013, but it is increasingly expensive to send it to everyone; if you would like a copy, please do purchase it from either the KFA (www.krishnamurtibookstore.com) or the KFT (www.kfoundation.org.uk) – this will also help them. The K quotes are great and the photos illustrate the various beautiful places I visit during the year, often with colleagues from KLI: Javier, Jürgen, Nick, Rabindra, Raman and Claudia, whom I like to call “the gang”.

During the winter of 2010–11, however, I travelled to India with Derek Hook, an old friend and KFT trustee who has restaurants and cinemas in the English Lake District. It was I who took him to India in 1991–92, his first time there, and since then he has gone every year. After arriving at Chennai Airport, we went straight to Mahabalipuram for three days, then to the Foundation headquarters at Vasanta Vihar in Chennai for two days. From there we went to Rishi Valley, where I stayed for a month, joined for a time by Jürgen and his wife, Anna. The school is generously supported by many of its former students, and there is now a big guest-house for parents and other visitors and a nice administration building. Jürgen later joined me for a week at the Valley School study centre, run by Sushma and Satish, where there are nice new bungalows for guests. Unfortunately, Bangalore has been creeping up on The Valley School: day and night one can hear the new highway nearby. At the end of the

Front Cover: At the entrance to Pine Cottage, Ojai, California

trip, on my way through Bangalore Airport, an emigration officer looking at my passport said, “You are 81?” After I said yes, he shook my hand and told all his colleagues. When I left, he shook my hand again and said, “Come back!” It was a nice end to my stay in India.

Last winter, 2011–12, Claudia and I went to Ojai and stayed in the old Bohm flat, which (as the Banyan Tree and Bodhi Tree rooms) is now part of Pepper Tree Retreat. These rooms are just in front of Pine Cottage, which is where, from 1922, K stayed whenever he was in Ojai, and it is where he died. It now serves as the Library, looked after by Michael Krohnen and several volunteers. In the morning I liked to go over and sit in the silent room there, K’s former living-room-study. Sometimes Michael would prepare a meal in the Pine Cottage kitchen so that we could invite staff members and trustees together for conversation, and now on working days the new KFA ‘intern students’ and Rabindra prepare lunch there for the staff. There were many interesting guests at the Retreat, which was always full. One was a woman from Beijing – the CEO of a big television animation company – who had been studying K for ten years and with whom we made friends. One day during her three-week stay at the Retreat, I took her to Oak Grove School for lunch. She felt it to be a paradise for children and teachers and said she would like to start a similar school in China.

This past spring Brockwood hosted the International Trustees Meeting, which takes place every eighteen months in either India, Ojai, Spain or Brockwood. K encouraged the scheduling of these meetings, saying that it’s much easier to work together when people know each other (though he also observed that trust doesn’t depend on knowledge). It’s also just nice to meet old friends from all these places, and it appears to me as though the Foundations are working together better than ever.

I always have lots of contact with the students, staff and Centre guests at Brockwood. When I mentioned to a young student that I wish I had been in such a school, she replied, “But you are here!”

This past summer was spent mostly in Switzerland. June I was at the Sulzhütte, the hut at 2,130 meters where I am looked after by one or

Why should there be deterioration inwardly, psychologically? Beyond all explanations which a good brain can give, why do we choose the worse and not the better, why hate rather than love, why greed and not generosity, why self-centred activity and not open total action? Why be mean when there are soaring mountains and flashing streams? Why jealousy and not love? Why? Seeing the fact leads to one thing, and opinions, explanations, to another. Seeing the fact that we decline, deteriorate is all important and not the why and wherefore of it. Explanation has very little significance in front of a fact, but to be satisfied with explanations, with words is one of the major factors of deterioration. Why war and not peace? The fact is we are violent; conflict, inside and outside the skin, is part of our daily life – ambition and success. Seeing this fact and not the cunning explanation and the subtle word, puts an end to deterioration. Choice, one of the major causes of decline, must wholly cease if it's to come to an end. The desire to fulfil and the satisfaction and sorrow that exist in its shadow, is also one of the factors of deterioration.

Krishnamurti's Notebook, 22 July 1961



Near the Sulzhütte, the mountain hut I've rented in eastern Switzerland for the past 37 years

more former Brockwood students. There was snow on the first day, 12 June, and a photo of the falling snow that I took while walking up to the hut came out so well that it will appear in next year's Calendar (and it's here on pg. 7). In July there was a KLI meeting in Rougemont. In August I went again to the international 'Saanen' gathering in Mürren. In September we had another KLI meeting, this time at Haus Sonne, where we meet many people. For example, we had invited a young woman to stay for a few days, so keen is she to start a K-inspired school in Berlin, starting first with a kindergarten. At the end of October we will have yet another KLI meeting, this time at Brockwood. And from there, at the beginning of December, Claudia and I will be in Arizona and Ojai for almost three months.

Claude Gailloud – an old friend and former professor of ophthalmology whom I have quoted before – mentioned to me recently that K's philosophy is probably the only one that makes sense. When I told him that K had said: *The vast majority is not interested in what we are talking about*, he agreed that unfortunately this is so.

Two friends in Ojai have had interesting books published relatively recently. The first is David Moody's *The Unconditioned Mind – J. Krishnamurti and the Oak Grove School*. David was the first teacher hired at Oak Grove and later its educational director, then director of the school. He also wrote the textbook *Mapping Biology Knowledge*. Here is an extract from his new book:

The conversation was coming to a close, and I gazed rather deeply into Krishnamurti's eyes. He met my gaze completely, without any undue sense of modesty or confrontation. As I looked into his eyes, I had the uncanny sense that there was no one present, no structure of identity, on the other side. Whether this was a projection or a valid intuition I cannot say. I felt he was observing me as completely as I was observing him, and yet at the same time it was like looking through a clear window, with only open space on the other side.

*David Edmund Moody, The Unconditioned Mind –
J. Krishnamurti and the Oak Grove School, pg. 55
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On the 12 June hike to the Sulzhütte, near St. Antönien, Switzerland

The second is Paul Herder's *Revolutionary Minds – The Educational Vision of J. Krishnamurti and Its Practice*. Paul was a teacher at Brockwood and subsequently worked with us for a time on an idea (which we didn't pursue) to start a new school. He later taught a course at the Ethical Society in London, the primary aim of which was to expose the participants to K's approach to philosophical inquiry in a way that was relevant to their lives. He then worked in several California state schools as a teacher trainer in progressive educational classroom strategies. And for quite a few years now he has been teaching at Oak Grove.

Krishnamurti insisted that the observation of nature is the standard from which one observes the whole of life, that the motiveless simplicity involved in taking in the natural world is the source of all true relationship – whether that relationship exists on a forest path, at school or in the home. Observe the beauty of the sunset, he says, then be just as simple and direct when you observe yourself or another. Our relationship to nature is our most important mirror.

*Paul Herder, Revolutionary Minds –
The Educational Vision of J. Krishnamurti and Its Practice, pg. 220–221
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QUESTIONER: Can you explain to me how the mind overcomes the body so that it can levitate?

KRISHNAMURTI: Are you really interested in this? I do not know why you want to levitate. You know, sirs, the mind is always seeking something mysterious, something hidden, which nobody else will discover except yourself, and that gives you a tremendous sense of importance, vanity, prestige – you become the ‘Mystic’. But there is real mystery, something really sacred, when you understand the whole of this life, this whole existence. In that there is great beauty, great joy. There is a tremendous thing called the immeasurable. But you must understand the measurable. And the immeasurable is not the opposite of the measurable.

There have been photographs of people who have levitated. The speaker has seen it and other forms of unimportant things. If you are really interested in levitation – I do not know why you should be, but if you are – you have to have a highly sensitive body; you must not drink, nor smoke, nor take drugs, nor eat meat. You must have a body that is utterly pliable, healthy, that has its own intelligence, not the intelligence imposed by the mind on the body. And if you have gone through all that, then you may find that levitation has no worth in it!

London, 16 May 1970

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In the Grove at Brockwood Park

I also like the quotes from others that Paul includes on pp. 106 and 122. From Luis Buñuel, the Spanish filmmaker: “God and country are an unbeatable team, they break all records for oppression and bloodshed.” And something that Socrates reportedly said on encountering a famous philosopher renowned for his renunciation of worldly concerns: “I see your vanity through the holes in your shirt.”

I have just re-reread Stuart Holroyd’s book on Krishnamurti and the teachings titled *The Man, the Mystery & the Message*. Every time I read it, I rediscover how excellent it is. He pinpoints the essentials, or essence, in K’s biography, and his section on the teachings is amazingly clear and precise. The third section, in which among other things he looks at K’s dialogues with David Bohm, I can recommend to anyone interested in Bohm. The book is out of print but can still be found in second-hand shops, including online. It would be good if it could be republished.

I also recommend two books on food and health. The first is *The China Study* by Colin Campbell, about research conducted in partnership with Cornell University, Oxford University and the Chinese Academy of Preventive Medicine. It goes into connections between consumption of animal-protein and -fat and disease in humans. The second is *The Food Revolution* by John Robbins, which documents the terrible impact that eating animals is having on the environment. As you may well have noticed, there are more and more voices saying that we need to be vegetarian to help save the planet.

Two friends happened to send me two Einstein quotes this year, which I am rather fond of:

The only thing that interferes with my learning is my education.

A human being is a part of a whole, called by us “universe”, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest ... a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle

of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.

Albert Einstein

It has just begun to rain again, as for days now it has been doing more on than off. The little stream nearby is a torrent.

I will leave the last word to K and to our old friend and Brockwood piano teacher of more than thirty years, Alan Rowlands, who died at the beginning of the year (just a few weeks after we'd spoken with him at the Brockwood Centre). The day he died, in London, he told Bill Taylor, one of Brockwood Park School's directors, that K had told him when they started the school: *Join us; we need not-so-neurotic people*. To which Alan replied, "But I'm very neurotic." K then said: *If you know it yourself, it cannot be so bad*.

*Friedrich Grohe
Rougemont, October 2012*



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Zmut, above Zermatt, Switzerland

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