



*Friedrich's*

Newsletter 2022



This year's Newsletter has been edited and co-authored by  
*Javier Gómez Rodríguez*

The paper for this Newsletter originates from responsibly managed forests  
and has been produced CO<sup>2</sup>-neutral:



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## DEAR FRIENDS

### *Dear Friends*

This has been the year – hopefully not for much longer – of war in Ukraine. What I find most appalling is the apparent personal nature of it. There are ingrained social, cultural and economic systems, people who follow blindly, and geopolitical aspects, but it appears to come down to one man – all this pain, sorrow and destruction.

As I am finding it increasingly difficult to travel, I cancelled my 2022 trip to Brockwood, and perhaps I will never return. I have less and less energy, cannot go for long walks and cannot follow conversations well even while wearing good hearing aids. I am okay but just feel weak. Thankfully I still enjoy life in the mountains very much and can be in touch with family and friends from a distance. People come to visit, which I appreciate, but I have to say that I am even more tired afterwards.

I've been working on a further edition of my memoir, those memories that fall outside the scope of *The Beauty of the Mountain – Memories of J. Krishnamurti*. Generally: family, childhood, working years and a decade of climbing and ski touring in high mountains. Meant mainly for my sons, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren (of the latter, there are currently a delightful two), it might also be of some interest to others. But also for me! I was asked recently by my friend Mark Ginsburg, "You write in your [earlier] short autobiography that you were 'conditioned mainly by World War II and by a continual change of residence.' If you embark on a more detailed autobiography, I would be keen to know how, in your view, that conditioning manifested and played itself out."

After working on this, I now think I was more conditioned by family and by work. For example, my father rarely praised people, or at least he rarely praised me, though I helped the family company to thrive. And sometimes

I, too, don't thank people despite their hard work. Later, as head of the company, I always had lots of people following my instructions. I think I got too used to giving people work and therefore brought this into even my non-business life. Also, because most of the time I've had the resources to change my mind at will, I've sometimes not been careful enough in making important decisions. I could afford to be spontaneous, and that didn't always work out.

### **K: The effort to protect oneself psychologically is the beginning of the 'me'**

The brain is the result of time; it is conditioned to protect itself physically, but when it tries to protect itself psychologically then the 'me' begins, and all our misery starts. It is this effort to protect itself psychologically that is the affirmation of the 'me'. The brain can learn, can acquire knowledge technologically, but when it acquires knowledge psychologically then that knowledge asserts itself in relationship as the 'me' with its experiences, its will and its violence. This is what brings division, conflict and sorrow to relationship.

... The danger in this is the dividing of the brain into the psychological and the technological. This again becomes a contradiction, a conditioning, a theory. The real question is whether the brain, the whole of it, can be still, quiet, and respond efficiently only when it has to in technology or in living. So we are not concerned with the psychological or the technological; we ask only, can this whole mind be completely still and function only when it has to? We say it can and this is the understanding of what meditation is.

*'Conditioning'*

*The Urgency of Change*, pp. 114–115

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I always find what Krishnamurti said about conditioning to be interesting. We all seem to be conditioned in one way or another and we seem to find it very difficult to free ourselves from it. Of course, we would like to get rid of what is painful while trying to keep the pleasurable. Little do we seem to realise that conditioning applies equally to both. For Krishnamurti pain and pleasure are, psychologically, the two sides of the same coin. Our normal consciousness seems to be governed by the pleasure principle. Its loss or frustration breed pain as well as fear. And they are all three, fear, pleasure and pain, the product of thought. And for Krishnamurti thought, being the response of memory, is inherently limited, conditioned, not free. So ultimately the question of freedom comes down to an understanding of the proper place of thought in life. This makes sense to me.

As we all grow older, most of us invariably meet an increasing number of health challenges. Our bodies begin to weaken and to show their fragility. First one thing goes, then another, until the poor thing gives up the ghost. I have shared with all of you in considerable detail my own medical saga over the past few years, a saga which is likely to continue for the rest of my days. But I was rather touched by a note that our old friend Mark Edwards, the great nature photographer and environmental activist, shared with us about his own experience. He first sent it to us in June and he kindly updated it for the Newsletter. It beautifully captures the pathos of those moments when the rewards of our labours coincide with the fragility of life. Fortunately, Mark, thanks to a quick and successful surgical intervention, has come safely through, for which we would all like to congratulate him most heartily. And for his OBE, of course!

## **Swings and roundabouts**

My phone rang just as I was starting to paint the banisters. It was my GP, sounding worried. My PSA test, a marker for prostate cancer, showed an elevated reading. She promised an urgent call from a specialist. "Right," I thought, "get on with the banisters".

As I got to the newel post in the hall, a heavy letter dropped on the floor behind me. I saw with alarm that it was on Her Majesty's Service. Even more worrying, it had "Cabinet Office" printed above my address. I'd been critical of Boris Johnson, but surely he couldn't write to everyone who's been on his case; the Post Office couldn't handle the volume. I tore open the letter and saw to my amazement that the Prime Minister had recommended me to "Her Majesty The Queen for the honour of the Officer of the Order of the British Empire".

It must have been the *Hard Rain* Project (HRP) that caught the eye of the OBE nominator. I stepped into the arena with the Hard Rain exhibition in 2006 to show a vision of a world unravelling. The exhibition was hard hitting, as it needed to be. Bob Dylan's poetic masterpiece *A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall*, illustrated with pictures of dead and dying life, could only be justified when there was still time to step back from the precipice.

The HRP outdoor exhibitions reached millions around the world and showed how our environmental problems are linked by cause and effect and need to be tackled together. Hard Rain was a thorn in the flesh of those who offer hope to gloss over the scale and complexity of our problems and the opportunities this crisis offers to people who are prepared to face facts. There is nothing wrong with hope that is contingent on us all working together to deal with the environmental crisis. But hope, offered as timid reassurance, does not cut through the inertia to bring about the depth of response this crisis demands.

In the early years of this century, we had that narrow window of opportunity to scale up solutions to deal with climate change and the inter-linked problems now threatening to overwhelm civilization. In just the last few years, real-life news has overtaken the horror of the imagined future offered in *Hard Rain*. We are sleepwalking through heatwaves, melting glaciers, droughts, floods, the destruction of habitats and species extinctions – and still we lack the resolve our problems demand. How stupid is that? Very.



Child in front of ironwood tree trunk, Nigeria

© Mark Edwards

There is a growing acknowledgement that it is too late to keep global warming under 1.5 degrees. In the face of this bleak assessment, a new generation of campaigners, school students, have found their voice. Will their uncompromising call for a fundamentally new world-wide approach jolt political and business leaders and the silent majority into action? Our failure to respond adequately to our environmental problems so far shows that we do not really care about the prospects for children alive now, let alone future generations. We have put at risk the gains so painstakingly developed throughout our history for short-term advantage.

I'm aware of being at the receiving end of many of those extraordinary developments. A few days after my GP's call, I was pushed gently into an MRI scanner. It brought to mind a sequence from a Woody Allen movie, and I started to laugh. I'm pulled out of the scanner and told off by a rather severe looking nurse. I quickly explain the joke. Allen's character gets a headache, fears he has a brain tumour and demands a brain scan.

He is rolled into a scanner, his face full of the crumpled despair he does so well. Next, the doctor greets him in the waiting room with the scan results: “There’s nothing wrong with you. Take an aspirin and have a lovely evening.” You see him running down the hospital steps, but as he reaches the pavement, he freezes. Cut to him with his girlfriend in his apartment, wringing his hands: “And I suddenly realised: I don’t have a tumour now, but I could have one at any moment.” Now we are all laughing at the uncertainty of life. It’s a lovely moment, then it’s back into the machine for a very special kind of portrait.

A couple of weeks later I meet the surgeon who gives me the news: “So, Mark, you have prostate cancer. But you’re an exceptionally fit 75-year-old man, you cycle to your hospital appointments, you’re gregarious (!) and I have absolute confidence I will be able to operate successfully.” And so he did. One day after the operation I was collected by friends and taken home. I was back on my bike and gardening after just a couple of weeks.

I’ve spent 30 extraordinary years with people at the sharp end of the environmental debate in a hundred countries. Krishnamurti’s teachings touch us in different ways. His sensitivity to nature, coupled to my first-hand experience of the human impacts on the environment bought home the urgent need for a radically new, world-wide approach. Such an approach, Krishnamurti maintains, can come about only through the freeing of the mind from a crippling servitude to self-centeredness, expressed collectively in a destructive adherence to nationalism and sectarian beliefs. David Bohm and I explored this theme in *Changing Consciousness*: the book we made in 1991.<sup>1</sup>

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1 David Bohm & Mark Edwards, *Changing Consciousness: Exploring the Hidden Source of the Social, Political and Environmental Crises Facing our World (A Dialogue of Words and Images)*, Harper Collins, NY, 1991. This work has not been reprinted due to the high cost of including the photos. However, Mark has scanned the pages and plans to upload the Word document to a website that will provide free access to the book.

I've never been in hospital so I'm discovering, late in life, the generosity and skill of NHS staff. It prompts a final note to the gentlemen reading this: may the PSA be with you. And if you don't know your PSA score, do book a blood test. Prostate cancer is cancer for beginners – if it's caught early. I was only just in time.

*Mark Edwards, June–October 2022*

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### **K: Be in communion with nature**

Be really in communion with nature, not verbally caught in the description of it, but be a part of it, be aware, feel that you belong to all that. Be able to have love for all that, to admire a deer, the lizard on the wall, a broken branch lying on the ground. Look at the evening star or the new moon, without the word, without merely saying how beautiful it is and turning your back on it, attracted by something else. Watch that single star and new delicate moon as though for the first time. If there is such communion between you and nature, then you can commune with man, with the student sitting next to you, with your educator, or with your parents. We have lost all sense of relationship in which there is not only a verbal statement of affection and concern but also this sense of communion which is not verbal. It is a sense that we are all together, that we are all human beings, not divided, not broken up, not belonging to any particular group or race, or to some idealistic concepts, but that we are all human beings and we are all living on this extraordinary, beautiful earth.

Letter 54: Harmony with Nature

*The Whole Movement of Life is Learning*, pp.195–196

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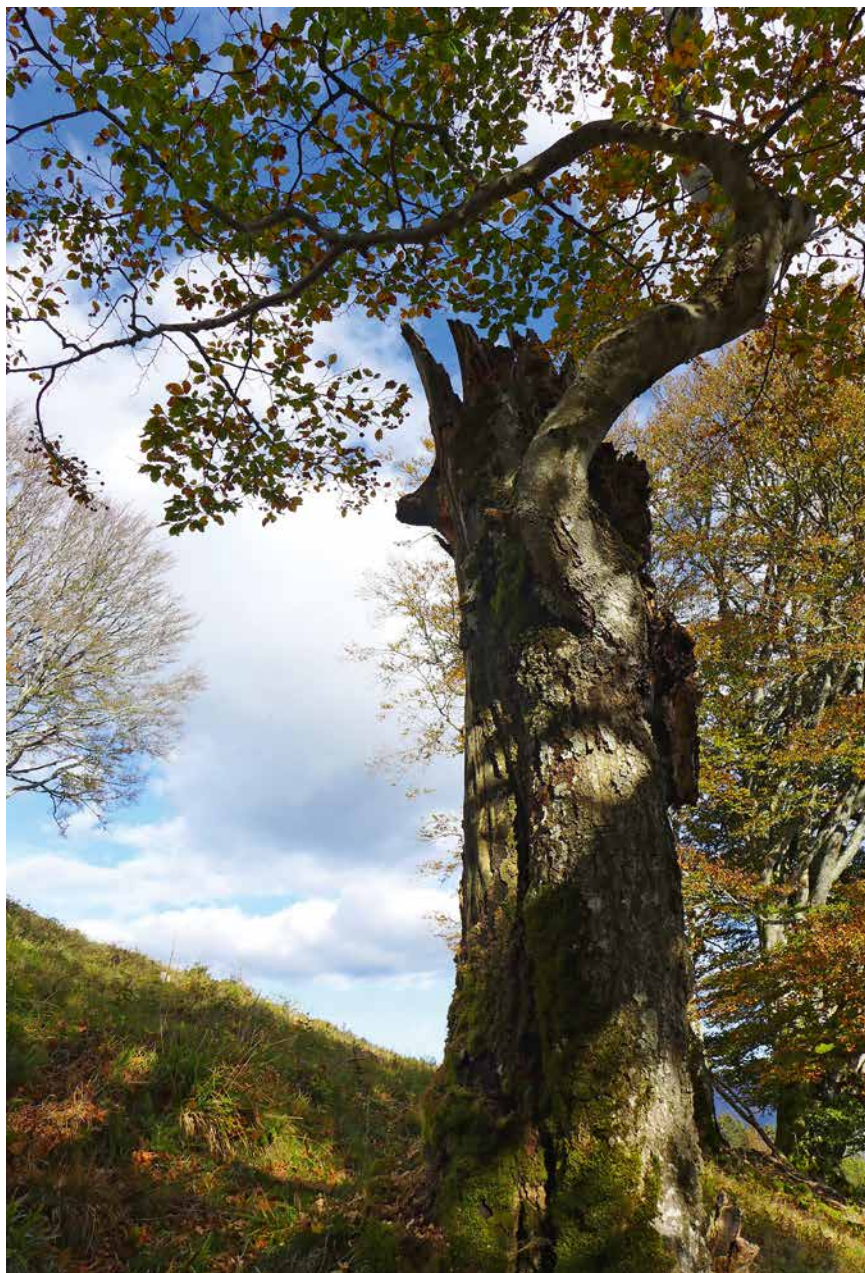
Mark's Hard Rain Project has been a major contribution to raising awareness of the perilous ecological situation facing the planet. His photography and that of his colleagues amply illustrate, sometimes most painfully, the stark realities of climate change, pollution and deforestation, with the poor of society and the indigenous peoples being generally the worst affected. This is undoubtedly one of the fundamental issues of our time and I've always felt for it. One cannot help it if one is at all sensitive to nature, to the trees, the birds, the rivers and the mountains – as well as the plight of humanity. And that's why I have supported and continue to support different ecological and conservationist projects. One of them is Gary Primrose's forest and biodiversity restoration in the Lake District. In a kind gesture, Gary named one of his reforested areas the Grohe Wood and he sent us **an update from Yewfield**. As you can see, such projects face all kinds of natural dangers, from violent storms to deer to tree diseases, so it takes a lot of skill and dedication to bring them to fruition.

Hello Raman, Claudia, Friedrich and the Link team

I wanted to thank you again for your support with our woodland project up here at Yewfield and it is time for an update on 'Grohe Wood'. You may remember we entered a competition with the Royal Forestry Society in 2016 and we won in our category 'Farm and Small Woodlands under 20 hectares' for the North of England. The RFS recently had an Excellence in Forestry 'Best of the Best' competition for the whole of England, Wales and Northern Ireland for winners over the last five years. For the fun of it, I decided to enter even though I didn't have a hope of doing well given all the damage we have had recently. I like entering these competitions as they help me to get to know the wood well and to understand how a forest works.

Since 2016 we have had larch disease in Grohe Wood which meant, sadly, we had a statutory requirement to fell and remove the lovely larch trees by law. Also this winter we had four violent storms which blew over many of our biggest remaining trees. Nevertheless, we carried





Near Haus Sonne in the Black Forest, Germany

on planting in Grohe Wood this winter, trying our best to regenerate a damaged woodland habitat.

The RFS 'Best of the Best' judges arrived a month ago and spent three hours having a good look around all of our woodland with me. They were commercially oriented foresters, which doesn't suit our forest because most of the regenerative planting that we have done in the last three years has been with native trees and a focus on biodiversity, habitat regeneration and carbon sequestration rather than with non-native conifers used in commercial forestry. Still, I was very pleased to hear the other day that we were awarded third in our category.

Apart from the damage the storms have had on local forests this winter, deer are becoming much more of a problem than they have been in the past. We have two species of deer up here: roe and red. Red deer are massive animals and in the past they have been few and far between. But this year we are seeing many more. Some of the new planting in Grohe Wood is being affected, as the tree tubes we have used there prevent roe deer damage but are not tall enough to stop red deer browsing, so we have had to bite the bullet and put up a pukka two metre tall deer fence around the whole of the wood. That should do the trick and will also make it easier for natural regeneration to take off in the gaps as well. Back in 2016 we netted in a small section against deer and you can see the difference when deer are excluded.

Anyway I wanted to give you the latest news from Grohe Wood and again thanks so much for your support.

Wishing you all well,  
*Gary, 25 June 2022*

One of the points that Krishnamurti always made is that to change the world we must change ourselves. Although that was said primarily in the context of society, I feel it applies to the world situation as a whole. His teachings stand for the needful journey of self-knowledge that is fundamental for such a trans-





Bluebells in the Grove at Brockwood Park

formation to take place. And that's why their study has always seemed so significant to me. This naturally goes on in the Krishnamurti schools and study centres, and in more private settings, of course. Some years ago, our friend and colleague Javier designed and, with the help of some friends, started offering an introduction to Krishnamurti's teachings in The Netherlands. This course of study was very well received but with the outbreak of the pandemic it was suggested that it should go online. Again, with the kind support of some friends, a website ([thebookofyourself.com](http://thebookofyourself.com)) was set up for this purpose and he is currently offering the course online for the second time this year. As part of his website, Javier publishes a monthly newsletter, which I highly recommend. When I subscribed to it, I got **a welcoming message** which I think reflects Javier's lifelong passion for this kind of work:

### **Welcome to *The Book of Yourself* Newsletter**

We have finally managed to put the website together and we have launched on the adventure of offering the course of the same title on J. Krishnamurti's life and teachings.

Ever since I came across them in my mid-teens, I have considered that these teachings represent one of the broadest and deepest diagnosis of the human condition ever made. As a result, I have always felt that they deserve the widest possible dissemination and study. After all these years, this general valuation of Krishnamurti and his work has not changed. If anything, my involvement with his legacy has done nothing but convince me that this is a deep reservoir of wisdom with a tremendous transformative potential. I have come to view it as an education for mankind, for it concerns our universal consciousness, its troubled history, endemic contradiction and needful transcendence, wholeness and freedom. Offering this course is my way of sharing this general appreciation for Krishnamurti's work, its relevance, significance and liberating intent.

The title *The Book of Yourself* comes from a metaphor that Krishnamurti himself used to describe his teachings, namely as a reading of the book of life, which he also called the book of oneself, the book of humanity or even the book of time. One of Krishnamurti's basic insights is that we are the world and the world is us, that each one of us is the whole of humanity. We obviously differ in all kinds of ways, but psychologically we are all essentially one and the same. That means that the book of humanity, which is the universal history of mankind written in the book of time that is human consciousness, is what each of us embodies. This metaphor is quite a challenge since, as it would seem, separateness and fragmentation predominate in the world. But it is a beautiful invitation to discover and explore the common ground of our existence and awaken to our joint and total responsibility for it.

This Newsletter, together with the Blog and the YouTube channel, will serve as a means of sharing in the exploration of this wide yet personal subject. In principle, the Newsletter will be published monthly, and it will provide an update on the activities connected with the website as well as a space for reflecting on current events and on the issues that we will encounter in our inquiry. We mean to establish a communication among us, so your questions and observations are an important part of this probing and friendly exchange.



Near Haus Sonne in the Black Forest, Germany

We are living through uncertain times. The pandemic has come to swell the sum of the already existing challenges and the current situation naturally calls for a greater depth of inwardness and self-reflection. The inner and the outer are now brought very close together, like the two sides of the same coin that they always were. We have much to explore and I can only hope that it will prove an inspiring learning experience for all.

Take good care,  
Javier

Apart from corresponding with my friends worldwide, I keep up with current events by listening once a day to the news. Krishnamurti did that practically to the last day of his life. He always wanted to know what was happening. That was part of his concern for humanity and the fate of the world. And I continue to enjoy music, especially jazz, but of late I have rediscovered a taste for Mozart. As I may have commented before, I like to sing a stanza from 'How High the Moon' every day, which I then share with

some of my friends and colleagues. I guess that without music, without the creative refinements of an esthetic culture our lives would be considerable poorer. That does not mean, of course, that creativity or culture are confined to music and the arts. Culture is not just a matter of refinement but of the flowering of total sensitivity and its inherent creativity, and creativity in its deepest sense may need no expression. And yet these artistic expressions do convey a great depth of order, beauty and meaning. So I would like to close this letter with some poems that I received from my friends.

The first is a poem by Michael Krohnen entitled *Inner landscape*:

### **Inner Landscape**

You have to climb the mountain  
Which is you yourself:  
Leave behind the habitations,  
The civilized arrangements of home and road.

Invade the hidden untamed wilderness  
Which has been there in silence  
From the beginning of time,  
Closer at hand than perhaps the hand itself,

Waiting patiently, beyond and without time,  
For time to run out;  
Or for the unexpected, unsought onslaught  
Of that innermost force:

The light which shone on the very first day,  
And is shining still  
On the mountain-range, yet unexplored,  
Which is you yourself.

*Michael Krohnen*  
*Ojai, California, September 2017*

Javier has written a whole series of poems in response to my crooning of 'How High the Moon'. For a while now they have taken the form of sonnets. Apparently, when he was a student at Brockwood, Montague Simmons, Dorothy's husband, as part of their English studies, had them write a classical Shakespearean sonnet. He never forgot that exercise and he has kept the form, with some modifications, as part of his own lyrical expression. One of the things I marvel at is how he finds inspiration in the ordinary and uninteresting environment in which he lives. Naturally, I had to make a selection, which I reduced to these **two sonnets**:

Night descends on the shores of the Lowlands great lakes.  
A slow fading of forms in the cosmic black shadows.  
Beyond measure and deep looms the velvet of space,  
now enfolding the town and the anchoring shallows.

All the flags go to sleep on the masts of the vessels.  
We have dinner at home with the news of new battles.  
Waxing on, the young Moon shows its magical freckles.  
Craters fill up with rain in the wake of our struggles.

While the present is still in the shelter of silence,  
on the altar of peace that's its own benediction,  
where the heart is at ease, drinking deep from its chalice  
the compassionate wine of an infinite reason.

This is home, I suppose, where the hour is hallowed  
by a whisper of love in the wastelands of chaos.

Lelystad 11 April 2022

Here come the moody ways of springtime into bloom,  
the chasing and the loving and the building and the broom,  
out with the dust, in with the moon, won't you join the dance?  
out there, suddenly much lighter, barefoot on the sands ...

Here they come, the same old mob of hungry ghosts,  
the same that once were found and now are lost,  
seeking their secret or open fix, the usual flight  
from unendurable emptiness and the dark fear of light ...

And loves forgotten suddenly send a virtual note  
nostalgia hitting the good old longing on the spot,  
remember me? remember us that day, the stream?  
and the green surge that drives the flower drives my dream.

Such perfumed wafts intoxicate my senses, heart and mind  
that I'm in love with love, my hermitage, and life.

Lelystad 25 April 2022

We have much to share on this our journey through life. This continues to be one of the great joys of my life, the generous sharing among a wide network of relatives and friends. Perhaps that's a simple acknowledgement of the deeper truth that we are the world and the world is us, that we share a common consciousness, that in essence we are one and the same. And if we were whole in ourselves and in our relationships, we might also be one with the cosmos and its universal intelligence.

I will leave you with the news that, by the time you read this, *The Beauty of the Mountain* will have come out as a slightly corrected 10th edition in English and, for the first time, in Mandarin. – May the light of intelligence and compassion illumine all we think and do.

*Friedrich Grohe, Rougemont,  
in collaboration with Claudia G. Herr and Javier Gómez Rodríguez*

## EDITORIAL NOTE

Last year we renamed *Friedrich's Newsletter* as simply *The Newsletter*. That seemed to be appropriate, as it was becoming a more impersonal co-production. However, some readers found the change was not quite suitable and suggested we should revert to the old title. After a brief exchange about it, we decided that it was a good idea, since the newsletter owes its impetus and existence to Friedrich's untiring commitment to and support for this publication as a medium of communication across the K-world.

In the ON EDUCATION section we take an extensive look at a recent book authored by Meenakshi Thapan, current Director of the Rishi Valley Education Centre, where she looks at K as an educator for peace. We then include a report by Ivone Apolinário on the educational project she has been spearheading in northern Portugal. This initiative is very promising, as it opens the way for other similar projects to develop in continental Europe, where the hope of establishing K schools has thus far remained an impossible dream.

In THE TEACHER AND THE TEACHINGS, we take a retrospective look at K's early teachings through the lens of Rom Landau's *God Is My Adventure* (1935), where the author gives a rather sympathetic and comprehensive view of their development up to that point. While the teachings may not have changed in essence, it took a while before they could be adequately and fully expressed. Although, one suspects, such a thing might be well-nigh impossible, since we are talking about a truth that is inherently ineffable. The question of time is very central to the teachings, but it has not been probed into very much. So we include an article by our old friend Hanns-Peter Trautvetter on this subject as a first invitation to further exploration.

In BOHMIAN PSYCHOLOGY we include an extensive article by David Moody on this topic. This is the title of a much longer piece that Moody

kindly agreed to shorten for our publication. In it the author presents a succinct summary of some of the key aspects of Bohm's understanding of the current structure and functioning of consciousness and suggests that Bohm's insights, as recorded in the transcripts of his Ojai seminars, deserve a much more extensive and in-depth study.

CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE DIGITAL AGE was a section we introduced last year to accommodate several contributions looking into this area of general concern. This time around we only include a reference to Lyn Lesch's new book, *Toward a Holistic Intelligence*, where he proposes that the answer to the deleterious effects of digital technology may lie in the awakening of a deeper quality of intelligence that goes beyond memory and thought.

In the READERS' CORNER we include an update from Brazil by our good old friend Marcelo Fiorini, who has been deeply involved in conservation work in the Amazon. This great rain forest is increasingly under threat, as are its native species and inhabitants, with the consequent urgency to protect it, which is best left to the indigenous people who have been its custodians for generations. We also share Michael Krohnen's *Ode to Krishnaji*, in which he expresses his lifelong love for the teacher.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite all of you who are interested in K and the exploration of life in the light of the teachings to share your reflections, investigations and discoveries. This publication is an open forum for that kind of exchange, and it depends for its content on the worldwide network of all those who partake of this same interest. So do feel free to send us your contributions to the ongoing conversation.

May the action of intelligence light the way to harmony, cooperation and peace.

Javier Gómez Rodríguez  
Lelystad, October 2022



### **K: A revolution in the whole mind**

It seems to me that a totally different kind of morality and conduct, and an action that springs from the understanding of the whole process of living, have become an urgent necessity, in our world of mounting crises and problems. We try to deal with these issues through political and organizational methods, through economic readjustment and various reforms; but none of these things will ever resolve the complex difficulties of human existence, though they may offer temporary relief. All reforms, however extensive and seemingly lasting, are in themselves merely productive of further confusion and further need of reformation. Without understanding the whole complex being of man, mere reformation will bring about only the confusing demand for further reforms. There is no end to reform; and there is no fundamental solution along these lines.

Political, economic or social revolutions are not the answer either, for they have produced appalling tyrannies, or the mere transfer of power and authority into the hands of a different group. Such revolutions are not at any time the way out of our confusion and conflict.

But there is a revolution which is entirely different and which must take place if we are to emerge from the endless series of anxieties, conflicts and frustrations in which we are caught. This revolution has to begin, not with theory and ideation, which eventually prove worthless, but with a radical transformation in the mind itself. Such a transformation can be brought about only through right education and the total development of the human being. It is a revolution that must take place in the whole of the mind and not merely in thought. Thought, after all, is only a result and not the source. There must be radical transformation in the source and not mere modification of the result. At present we are tinkering with results, with symptoms. We are not bringing about a vital

change, uprooting the old ways of thought, freeing the mind from traditions and habits. It is with this vital change we are concerned and only right education can bring it into being.

Introduction  
*Life Ahead*, pp. 7–8

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## **A journey through J. Krishnamurti: Educator for Peace**

*J. Gómez Rodríguez*

K framed his educational vision within the broadest possible scope of human existence, or what he referred to as the whole of life. Finding that our life is fragmented, riddled with contradictions and conflict, i.e., not whole or even sane, his approach naturally lays emphasis on the need for a radical transformation or revolution. This revolution, as he sees it, is not going to come through political, social or economic reforms. As far as history is concerned, these instruments have failed to bring such a fundamental change about. K considers that the standard notion that changing the environment will change man – a basic premise of the communist ideology, but that is equally applicable to the materialist outlook prevalent in the world<sup>2</sup> – is a total fallacy, for the inner, the psychological always overcomes the outer. In fact, the inner is the source of the outer and without changing the source the outer revolution will be a mere cosmetic change. The fundamental revolution, therefore, must begin with a radical transformation in consciousness, and not on the surface of thought but at its core. This revolution

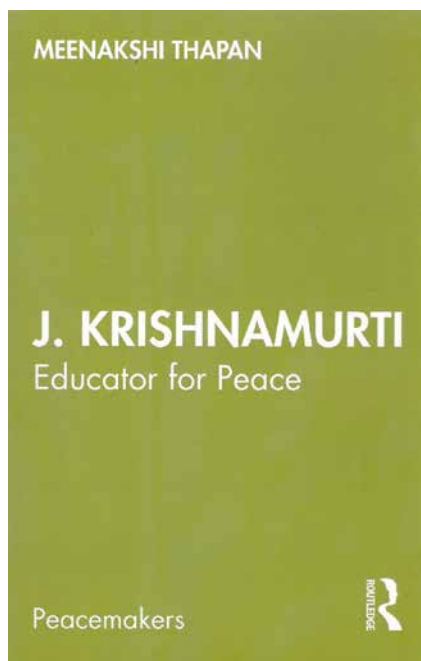
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2 Karl Marx: “The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness.” Quoted in *Ideas of History, Volume I*, pg. 114.

implies the freeing of the mind from its destructive conditioning. This is the central intent of K's teachings and of the holistic educational approach he envisioned as the only way to bring it about.

It would seem evident that such an education is deeply concerned with the existential dimension and the actual state of the world. While its emphasis on the inner and the spiritual would seem to endow it with an intimist and even mystical aura, the intent remains deeply grounded in the living concreteness of reality. As a holistic approach to human development, that could hardly be otherwise. One of the key aspects of this reality is its pervasive state of division and conflict. This universal phenomenon, which covers the field of relationship as well as the inner workings of consciousness, is the incontrovertible evidence of the absence of order and peace in the world. A responsible education concerned with the whole and wholeness of life, must address this issue of violence and peace. In her latest book, *J. Krishnamurti: Educator for Peace*<sup>3</sup>, Meenakshi Thapan, current Director of the Rishi Valley Education Centre, tries to elucidate the nature and implementation of K's educational vision from this particular optic.

The specificity of the topic is due to the book having been written for a collection entitled *Peacemakers*. It comes with a foreword by the Dalai



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3 Meenakshi Thapan, *J. Krishnamurti: Educator for Peace*, Routledge, London & NY, 2022.

Lama and another by the editor of the series, Ramin Jahanbegloo, executive director of the Mahatma Gandhi Center for Nonviolence and Peace Studies. In her own preface, Meenakshi Thapan states that the purpose of the book is to provide an understanding of K's views on the human predicament in a deteriorating world and to examine his educational thought and its potential for change. She sees K's concern with bringing about a good society as based on his faith that the potential for change lies in our capacity to understand ourselves in relation to others. So relationship is central to such an education, as it is the basis of self-knowledge. In Chapter I she briefly introduces K's biography and his general educational outlook. Chapter II explores K's educational vision in greater detail. The challenges of this vision are examined in Chapter III. Chapter IV surveys the implementation of this vision in the specific context of the Rishi Valley Education Centre. Chapter V concludes this work with an overview of the challenges and continuities involved.

The fact is that K is not well known as an educator. In any case, his educational vision is perhaps too radical to ever make it into the mainstream. He was concerned with changing the world by revolutionizing the psyche. While that might seem rather daunting, any serious educator will be concerned with the understanding and ending of violence and suffering in the world and the general failure of religions and governments to do so. For K, peace did not depend on ideology, legislation or religious injunctions but on self-understanding. So the responsibility does not lie with the system but with the individual. And for K education was the only way to free the mind from conditioning. This freedom was not only aimed at ending violence but at awakening a quality of intelligence that can discover whether there is something true and sacred.

Thapan contrasts K's approach with what is called peace education. The latter sees peace as an ethical imperative and a fundamental human right and is concerned with such issues as conflict resolution, the abolition of war and the establishment of social justice. K's work, on the other hand, seeks to bring about an awareness of our individual responsibility for the divisiveness and conflict that define current human relations. This separateness is

destroying us, whereas psychologically we are the world and the world is us. The awareness of this fact is for K the basis of our total responsibility. The outward conflict is the outcome of our inner struggles, so that there can only be peace in the world when we have no conflict in ourselves. His is an integrated, holistic approach, in which the inner and the outer are like the ebb and flow of the tide. In such an education, the teacher and the student are equally involved in the process of self-inquiry, as they share the same human predicament. Its purpose is to bring about a new generation of integrated human beings free from conditioning.

K's educational vision is not utopian or idealistic. It is also not a process of conformity to the existing social structure. Because society is the outcome of our relationships, relationship is of primary importance, not the adjustment to society. Since we are the world and the world is us, we are totally responsible for it. The K schools are places where one can learn and flower as a human being without fear and confusion, with great integrity. These schools are meant to combine academic excellence and self-knowledge. They are meant to develop a global outlook, binding the individual and the collective, humanity and the earth. The school culture must enable the development of a humanistic morality of empathy and compassion. This is meant to lead to a just and equitable society enshrining the values of harmony and peace. However, for K the outer change has little meaning without the corresponding inner transformation. The responsibility for change is shared by all but it can only happen in the individual.

Thapan finds similarities between K's vision and such Indian educators as Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and Mahatma Gandhi. They have many points in common, such as the promotion of humanistic values in an atmosphere of freedom, a concern for others and for the earth, a holistic outlook based on self-knowledge, and the emphasis on the need for a strong ethical foundation. K, however, did not envision an education framed within the confines of a particular nation or culture. He did not identify with any religious tradition and was not a nationalist. These other educators had struggled against the colonial power which was subverting the native cultural traditions through the importation and imposition of an

alien language and set of values. Contemporary India, Thapan suggests, is still laboring under the legacy of colonialism, which alienated people from their culture and destroyed the social balance.

K understood the danger of identification. Identification is for K a process of thought through which it protects and expands itself by becoming something. Identification is the nature of the self as a separate entity. The self is the fundamental problem, for it is the primary source of division and conflict. Where the self is, he would say, there is no love. The standard educational model, however, emphasizes socialization, which seeks to generate an identity in the child through the reproduction of social conditioning. There is also an inner motivation for wanting to belong to something greater, namely our search for security and our fear of emptiness. Identity means that we consider ourselves the same as something else, that we are that. The ambient pressure to conform and the inner urge to belong and to become end up generating a particular self-image. This leads to the splitting of the collective into conflicting groups, which results in communal violence. So a key purpose of an education that aims at peace is to dissolve such divisive identities, as they are the primary source of violence.<sup>4</sup>

K takes it that human beings are violent, and that violence cannot be resolved by cultivating non-violence. For him non-violence is a non-fact and only by facing facts can we ever hope to resolve them. The essential thing is therefore to understand violence, not to pursue its opposite. There are different levels of causation behind violence, from the natural aggression inherited from the animal to our sectarian mentalities. All these causes are part of our conditioning. This conditioning is the past that has become rooted in memory. With this memory we meet the challenge of living, which

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4 Thapan's treatment of the question of identity is somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand she spells out clearly its danger and on the other she says that the problem is not identity but identification, and that K had not said that we need to do away with identity altogether. This is confusing and would need some further clarification.

is always new. That response of memory, independently of its content, is necessarily limited and inadequate. This is a subtler factor in the generation of misery and violence in our lives. So a holistic education naturally lays emphasis on observation without the past, without the observer, for only so can we perceive and respond creatively to the whole movement of life.

## **K: The religious mind**

So, as we were saying at our last meeting, a religious mind is necessary. And we can see, can we not?, that a religious mind is a mind that has purged itself of all beliefs, of all dogmas; it is capable of an inward awareness, a comprehension which brings about a certain stillness, quietude. And being inwardly quiet, there is an intense awareness of everything outside itself. That is, because it has understood all the conflicts, frustrations, troubles, turmoils, suffering within itself, and is therefore still, outwardly it becomes intensely active in the sense that all the senses are vitally awake, capable of observing without any distortion, of following every fact without giving it a bias.

So the religious mind is not only capable of observing outward things clearly, logically, precisely, but through self-knowing it has become inwardly still, with a stillness that has a movement of its own. And we said that such a religious mind is therefore in a state of constant revolution. We are not talking about any form of partial revolution, not a Communist, Socialist or Capitalist revolution. The capitalists do not generally want a revolution anyhow, but the others do; and their kind of revolution is always partial – economic and so on. Whereas a religious mind brings about a total revolution, not only within but without; and I feel that it is the religious revolution, and no other, that can solve the many problems of human existence.

Twelfth Talk in London, 28 May 1961

*The Collected Works*, Vol. 12, pp. 174–175

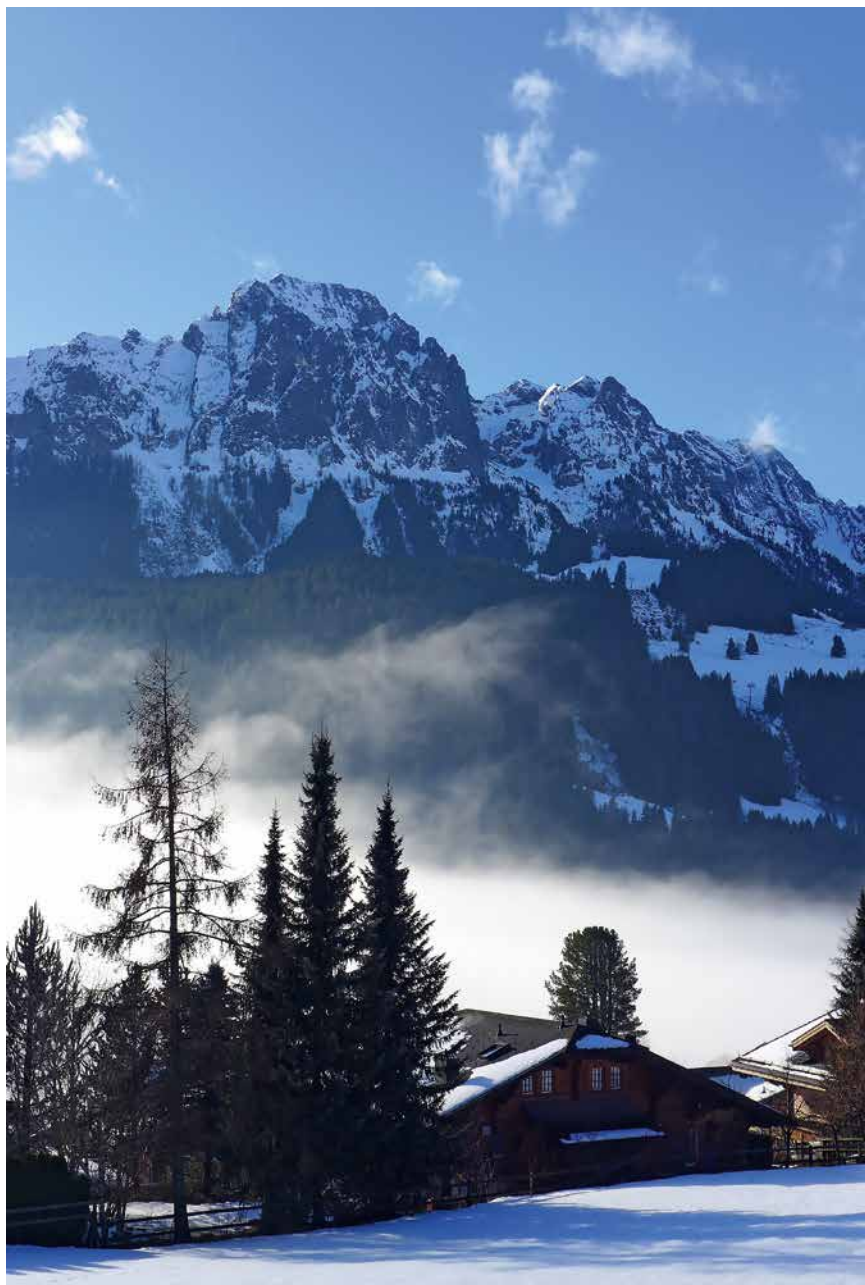
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K emphasized the need for right relationship with nature, things, people and ideas. As the deepening ecological crisis amply demonstrates, our relationship with nature is destructive. K schools tend to be in natural settings so that a wholesome relationship with nature can be developed. Social relations are characterized by inequality and injustice. In the specific context of Rishi Valley, K's compassionate concern expresses itself in the creation of satellite schools and other forms of support for the local rural community. K was aware, however, that equality does not come about through social work but through the full development of the individual. The individual K had in mind was not the separate entity of either traditional sectarianism or the modern consumerist society. The word itself means undivided. When all of us are truly whole and integrated human beings, there is no question of inequality or separateness. It is this wholeness that constitutes the ethical ground of a new society and way of living.

This emphasis on wholeness lies at the core of K's religious or holistic educational intent. Wholeness means goodness and goodness is not a matter of institutional organization and belonging but a state of mind. Bringing this religious quality of mind about was K's central concern for his schools – to the point of saying that without it they had no meaning. The ground of such a quality is the choiceless awareness of the stream of thought-feeling, of consciousness. This is the factor of transformation freeing the mind from self-centeredness, from greed and envy. Such a mind is simple, humble and affectionate. It has the quality of instant perception and action. This religious mind works in tandem with the scientific mind, so that knowledge and intelligence, skill and compassion go creatively together.

After this general overview, Thapan spells out the central purpose of K education as bringing about a new generation of human beings who are free from self-centeredness and conditioning, capable of looking at life anew and as a whole, and who have a right relationship with nature, people and ideas. This educative process takes place in an environment free from fear and authority, competition and comparison, where there is an ethos of trust, affection and openness, freedom and responsibility,





Behind Chalet Solitude in Rougemont, with a view of Videmanette

and where the inquiry into the psychological goes together with academic knowledge. Self-inquiry and dialogue are at the core of this approach in an egalitarian atmosphere where both teacher and student are learning about themselves and the world.

Freedom is fundamental but it is easily misunderstood. It is taken to mean doing what one wants, whereas it cannot exist without order and responsibility. Normally order is enforced with so-called discipline, but for K this word, following its etymological meaning, means learning rather than the imposition of a set of rules, with their rewards and punishments. Learning is to observe what is without interpreting it according to one's own desires, fears and biases. Freedom is to be free from these things, from belief and prejudice, from habit and conditioning. Such a free mind is non-fragmented, without conflict, whole. Such freedom, as K used to say, is love.

But how is such a broad and essentialist vision implemented? Thapan illustrates this practice in relation to the Rishi Valley School, on which she has done a sociological study.<sup>5</sup> Due to the limitations of space, she focuses on three key aspects: relationship, school culture, and equity and social justice. We have already remarked considerably on the central importance given to relationship in K's holistic outlook. For him life is relationship and relationship is the mirror in which we can see ourselves. Relationship is the real school of life. This is also what it means to be the world, for we do not exist in isolation and therefore we bear a total responsibility for it. Such factors as authority and fear prevent relationship and have no place in such a school.

In her ethnographic study, however, Thapan had felt that the harmony between educational practice and the intentions of the school was not always evident. Issues such as having a dress code or the food being vegetarian, for example, could be seen as denying freedom. It requires some

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5 *Life at School: An Ethnographic Study* (1991, 2006, 2nd ed.).

discussion to understand that freedom is not curtailed by such things. On the contrary. Another issue is that not all teachers at RVS know about or are interested in K's work when they join the staff, so the school has to educate them. Similarly, students tend to come from privileged backgrounds and apply to RVS not because of an interest in K but because it is one of the top boarding co-educational schools in the country. These factors naturally make for difficulties in the implementation of the educational vision on which the school is founded.

The school culture is the atmosphere created by teachers and students in their daily interactions. The intent is that they all feel at home, safe and cared for so they can develop in a wholesome manner. The natural environment of Rishi Valley, which is one of the most ancient geological formations on earth, is itself imbued with a great depth of silence. The silent periods in the morning and evening have become an integral part of the educational process and one of the most memorable aspects of life at school. This helps to deepen the quality of observation, which goes together with the culture of dialogue and inquiry.

The very rural environment in which the school is set faces it directly with the issues of equity and social justice. The culture classes seek to provide a larger perspective beyond the confines of one's own background experience. Social issues such as caste, class, gender, religious affiliation, linguistic and territorial divisions, are constantly discussed. The so-called Saturday clubs address contemporary cultural and social challenges. The students are also made to interact with the local kids in the rural schools set up for them by the Rishi Valley Education Center. The rural school program, with its 'school in a box' pedagogical approach, is a major expression of the compassionate commitment of RVS educators to the welfare of humanity.

To hold this whole endeavour together, the K schools have a core group of resource people who help them keep to the intent and maintain the practices and atmosphere conducive to its fruition. This is an ongoing process requiring constant discussion and dialogue, exchange of ideas and practices between the different institutions. One of the ways this is done is

through the annual teachers' conference. There is also a teacher education program to train teachers in K's educational vision, including immersion in one of his schools.

The RVS educational community, in spite of its remote setting, is not a bubble and it has been experiencing the common challenges of the world, such as the impingement of social media on young minds, the effects of the pandemic and the ongoing socioeconomic crisis. The Indian subcontinent is a vast territory with stark differences in the availability of material and educational means. It is a mosaic of diverse landscapes, languages, traditions, beliefs and social practices. The challenges it faces as a society are immense and finding a peaceful and harmonious solution is a veritable Herculean task. One would hope, therefore, that K's holistic vision would prosper and even inform the educational mainstream. There are currently six main educational centers under the aegis of KFI, to which we should add such K-inspired schools as Center for Learning, Shibumi and Sholai. None of the K schools claim to have successfully implemented K's vision. It is a profoundly creative challenge and a work in progress.

This book, though thematically limited in scope, manages to cover most of the key points of K's educational vision. At times one misses a clearer or more differentiated outline of the various aspects involved. Some of the basic elements, such as our being the world and the central importance of relationship, are constantly reiterated, which makes for a degree of repetitiveness. But this is compensated by the jewels of insight that are scattered throughout the text. Having lived in India for a time and being somewhat acquainted with the sociopolitical and educational situation in the country, I can only marvel at and admire the tremendous dedication of educators like Meenakshi Thapan to such a beautiful endeavor, especially when the odds are so heavily stacked against them. It is this core of educators who keep the flame alive and hold these places together. What is clear, though, is the need to continue to deepen our understanding of K's vision and of ourselves if these schools, not only in India, are to embody their deepest intent.

*Javier Gómez Rodríguez, September 2022*

## K: How can you live a totally different life?

You might ask, “What can one individual, one human being do, confronted with this immense problem of life with its confusion, wars, hatred, agony, suffering?” What can one human being do to bring about a change, a revolution, a radical state, a new way of looking, living? I think that is a wrong question, to say, “What can I do to affect this total confusion and disorder.” If you put that question, “What can I do, confronted with this disorder,” then you have already answered it; you can’t do anything. Therefore it is a wrong question. But if you are concerned, not with what you can do confronted with this enormity of misery, but with how you can live a totally different life, then you will find that your relationship with man, with the whole community, with the world, undergoes a change. Because after all, you and I as human beings, we are the entire world – I’m not saying this rhetorically but actually: I and you are the entire world. What one thinks, what one feels, the agony, the suffering, the ambition, the envy, the extraordinary confusion one is in, that is the world. There must be a change in the world, a radical revolution, one can’t live as one is living, a bourgeois life, a life of superficiality, a life of shoddy existence from day to day, indifferent to what is happening. If you and I, as human beings, can change totally, then whatever we do will be righteous. Then we will not bring about a conflict within ourselves and therefore outwardly. So that is the problem. That is what the speaker wants to talk over with you this evening. Because, as we said, how one conducts one’s life, what one does in daily life – not at a moment of great crisis but actually every day – is of the highest importance. Relationship is life, and this relationship is a constant movement, a constant change.

Second Talk at UC Berkeley, 4 February 1969

*You Are the World*, pg. 48

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When people come across K's approach to education, they tend to recognize its holistic quality and they naturally ask why there are not more schools inspired in his work in their own countries and all over the world. To begin with, schools don't materialize out of thin air by waving the magic wand of wishful thinking. Such undertakings are no easy matter. They require a solid grasp of the education being proposed, the needful financial resources and a group of committed people willing and able to work together to make it a reality. It took years of discussions between K and those interested before such schools as Brockwood Park in England and the Oak Grove in the US could get started. Several such initiatives failed. Here in the Netherlands a group of people tried for years to bring such a school about. They had the financial resources and a place to house the school but when decision time came, they were unwilling to commit and the project fell through. The Wolf Lake School in Vancouver, Canada, did not manage to sustain itself and had to be closed down a few years after its opening. And much before that, the Happy Valley School in Ojai, founded by K and Huxley, ended up going its own way.

K, however, was keen that such schools should be started. He encouraged those who saw the necessity of this kind of education to get together and work for it. While in this kind of endeavour there is a natural democratic expectation, the fact is that such projects won't get off the ground without the right leadership. This word, leadership, is often frowned upon in such egalitarian contexts, as it is associated with authority, which is contrary to the very spirit of the thing. What it means is that without the right person or persons able to hold the vision and to act as the catalyst bringing all the people together, such initiatives are not likely to get off the ground. Such leadership not only requires energy and expertise but, above all, a quality of clarity and skill in communication to establish a common purpose and to facilitate the cooperation needed among all those involved. It is, after all, a creative project and one must be daring enough to venture out into uncharted seas.

Given this general perspective, it has been a great joy to receive the news that a K-inspired school has been started in Portugal. After hesitant and

humble beginnings, it now has the needful momentum to become a fully-fledged educational center. Ivone Apolinário, who currently runs the Núcleo Cultural Krishnamurti, the Portuguese K Committee, is the person responsible for this educational project in northern Portugal, which they named **O Mundo Somos Nós**, meaning ‘we are the world’. Together with other educators and collaborators, they set up a nonprofit association so they can receive donations to support this school community project. Friedrich invited her to report on what she and her group have been doing for the last nine years and she was grateful for the opportunity to share their beautiful and promising work with the Newsletter’s global readership.

## O Mundo Somos Nós – We Are the World

*I. Apolinário*

O Mundo Somos Nós is an educational project founded in northern Portugal in 2013 that promotes the education of the whole human being, mind, heart and body. We have created a welcoming and cheerful Learning Centre where children feel safe and respected and where they are allowed to be more independent and responsible in their processing of learning and life. Besides academic excellence, we aim to develop the spirit of questioning and self-knowledge, so the children can unfold their full potential. This is facilitated through the cultivation of artistic, social and academic skills, environmental awareness, interpersonal relationships, emotional intelligence and a healthy lifestyle.

The name derives from Krishnamurti’s statement “We are the world and the world is us” and is inspired in his philosophy. We use Montessori materials as basic pedagogic tools and have drawn on multiple educational approaches such as Reggio Emilia, Forest Schools, Project-based Learning, and Play Pedagogy. Jesper Juul and Family-Lab International have also been a great inspiration because children’s education begins at home, with the parents.

We started by organizing some events, including a fundraising festival, and after my second visit to Brockwood Park representing the Núcleo Cultural at the International Committee Meetings in the summer of 2013, I realized that the core of the project was to learn together in freedom about the art of living in a place where new educational approaches could be explored.

We set out with three families looking for an alternative and holistic education for their children. We gradually grew in size and founded a non-profit association with facilities in Goães (Ribeira do Neiva, Vila Verde, Braga), where currently 30 children aged 2 to 12 and a team of passionate teachers are creating the education of the future here in northern Portugal. The plan is to grow to a maximum of 40, because size affects the quality of relationship, and because we also believe in the uniqueness of each particular project.

It was quite a journey to get to this point. In the first year, we had the use of a room in a theatre school in Braga. We noticed that the children were very eager to learn, which made the work of the parents/educators much easier and more motivating. In May 2014 we were granted the use of the old primary school of Santa Lucrécia de Algeriz, on the outskirts of Braga. By then we had 4 children aged 6 to 9. In September we created a non-profit association – O.M.S.N. – O Mundo Somo Nós, which is supported by membership fees, the children's families, donations, fundraising events, and other activities. The founding members, together with a group of dynamic young people, then decided to create a space offering something different from the conventional schools and activity centres: a safe, non-competitive environment of mutual respect and freedom where children could imagine, explore ideas, develop skills and grow intellectually, socially and emotionally.

In December 2016 we moved to the Monastery of Tibães (Mosteiro de Tibães), an incredible and sumptuous national monument and museum with a wonderful grove of about 40 hectares. We had 10 children that year. Before occupying the current space in Goães, we were temporarily





At Brockwood Park

housed at a farm in Oleiros, Vila Verde, where some graduate students from Oporto University made a documentary about it. All these changes of location made us realize that a school is not the buildings but the people.

We believe in an education based on love that values integrity, authenticity, responsibility, equality, honesty, kindness and generosity. We discourage egocentric, aggressive and competitive behaviors by raising awareness. The key is the quality of relationship between children and adults, for relationship is indeed the mirror in which we are reflected and can learn about ourselves. Nevertheless, the most important thing for us are not the results but the process. What's transforming our group is the fact that we are questioning and learning together about the outer and inner worlds.

Our work has been spreading and has inspired many people in the creation of other similar small centres in Portugal, where family education is considered the key to transforming the world. We believe that today's children, with their love, intelligence and technical ability, can transform the world of tomorrow. The future of the planet depends on the conscious education that we are providing and promoting.

Within the association we have developed two important projects for children:

**Mundo da Floresta (Forest World)** – Activities for children from 2 to 6 years old, inspired by the forest school. Children go out every day, rain or shine, to the forest, to explore the world and develop a healthy body and mind in close contact with nature.

**Escola do Mundo (World School)** – Innovative education project for children over 6 years of age, where they learn individually, allowing them to gain academic knowledge, discover and develop their talents while they learn the values essential to the art of living. These children might be officially enrolled in home schooling, a legal option in Portugal, or in other online or international schools for certification purposes.

The holistic education we offer is not only intended for the children but for all of us as human beings. The professional team at our Learning Centre includes educators and tutors, parents and volunteers. They have different qualifications and backgrounds but share the common intention of creating a healthy environment for children and young people to flourish in freedom and with respect for their surroundings. This team has frequent meetings and training. Through dialogue and sharing their knowledge they strengthen their cohesion and, above all, continue to grow as persons as much as the children they support.

The initiatives for the adults and educators include the following:

**Escola de Educadores (School of Educators)** – Courses and workshops for parents and teachers on parenting and the new education children require of us. If we educate parents and teachers to learn more about themselves and help them to inquire into what they want for their children and students, we will be contributing to the transformation of society.

**Escola da Saúde (Health School)** – Courses and workshops on yoga, natural health, ecology and well-being. We believe that one has to look after oneself before taking care of others. This way we care for the world and we create a brighter future for our children.

**Cozinha do Mundo (World Kitchen)** – Catering and training in healthy plant-based cooking, as nutrition is one of the most important factors of physical, emotional and mental health.

**Festival** – Annual fundraising event featuring talks on education, activities for children, various family workshops, art exhibitions, concerts, etc.

**Banda do Mundo (World Band)** – World music project for the educational community.

**Mundo dos Graúdos** – Intergenerational project bringing children and elderly people together.

The association's core team now wants to expand the project of holistic education for children and adults within an international context. To that end, and with the invaluable help of some friends in the Krishnamurti community, in 2020 we bought a wonderful three-and-a-half-hectare piece of land, the Quinta de Sandelhas. There we will establish the headquarters of our new Learning Community. It will include the Learning Centre and integrate other projects, such as a Retreat, Krishnamurti Centre and Organic Agriculture. This space will bring together the existing community and those who want to learn about education and other subjects connected with self-development, sustainability, natural life-

style and Art in the common endeavour of creating a happier, more aware and responsible society.

While we love to create all sorts of projects, for us the greatest creation of all is a paradise called Earth. We are meant to live on it cooperating with each other and in harmony with nature. But somehow, we lost our way and have been endangering all life on this planet and producing tremendous psychological suffering for ourselves. The new education begins with a new perspective on the world and life, with a different way of relating to each other and to all things.

Right now, we have a group of four architects working pro bono on the design to be submitted to the Town Council for approval. The local authorities are very sympathetic, so there is a very good chance we might be allowed to build quite extensively on the property. We hope to draw on EU funds and crowdfunding to start building the new Learning Centre, the Retreat, K Centre, staff accommodation and agricultural section.

Over these last nine years, we have been through the greatest adventure of our lives, the adventure of self-discovery, of working together, of moving forward in the face of disagreements and countless difficulties. I considered giving up many times, especially in the first five years, but there was always something inside urging me to keep going. I thought about leaving Portugal, maybe work at Brockwood, but something told me that was too easy, that this was the place that needed it the most and that this was my 'task'. It was not a choice.

My job has been to set the whole thing in motion, bring people together, create projects and manage them, while working fulltime for the Civil Service in International Judicial Cooperation. I always had with me a group of committed people willing to work for a while without pay. They have felt fulfilled in the process of developing deep friendships among people from very different backgrounds coming together for something that transcends them. I get emotional thinking about the

pains and joys of the past, but I wouldn't trade any of those pains for comfort, because it was these difficulties and struggles in relationship that made us learn about ourselves.

The hiatus of the quarantine has helped us to reflect on the present and future of the organization. We have more families joining us and we are creating more projects relevant to a healthier life. We question ourselves about growth, about not letting the outer outweigh the inner. We feel the need to halt everything from time to time to see if we are moving deeper towards the root of education. We still have many doubts about what we are doing, but deep down we feel an impersonal sense of purpose that lights our way.

If you would like to visit, just contact us and we will be delighted to welcome you in our community of learning.

*Ivone Apolinário*

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# THE TEACHER AND THE TEACHINGS

## **K: I am one with the Beloved, I am the Teacher**

When I began to think for myself, which has been now for some years past, I found myself in revolt. I was not satisfied by any teachings, by any authority; I wanted to find out for myself what the World-Teacher meant to me and what the Truth was behind the form of the World-Teacher. Before I began to think for myself, I took it for granted that I, Krishnamurti, was the vehicle of the World-Teacher because many people maintained that it was so. But when I began to think, I wanted to find out what was meant by the World-Teacher, what was meant by the taking of a vehicle by the World-Teacher, and what was meant by His manifestation in the world. I am going to be purposely vague, because although I could quite easily make it definite, it is not my intention to do so, because once you define a thing it becomes dead; if you make a thing definite – at least that is what I maintain – you are trying to give an interpretation which in the minds of others will take a definite form and hence they will be bound by that form from which they will have to liberate themselves. ...

I said to myself: until I become one with all the Teachers, whether They are the same is not of great importance; whether Shri Krishna, Christ, the Lord Maitreya, are one is again a matter of no great consequence. I said to myself: as long as I see Them outside as in a picture, an objective thing, I am separate, I am away from the centre; but when I have the capacity, when I have the strength, when I have the determination, when I am purified and ennobled, then that barrier, that separation, will disappear. I was not satisfied till that barrier was broken down, till that separateness was destroyed. Till I was able to say with certainty, without any undue excitement, or exaggeration in order to convince others, till I was one with my Beloved, I never spoke. I talked of vague generalities which everybody wanted. I never said: I am the World-

Teacher; but now that I feel I am one with the Beloved, I say it – not in order to impress my authority on you, nor to convince you of my greatness, nor of the greatness of the World-Teacher, nor even of the beauty of life, the simplicity of life – but merely to awaken the desire in your own hearts and in your own minds to seek out the Truth. If I say, and I will say, that I am one with the Beloved, it is because I feel and know it. I have found what I longed for, I have become united, so that henceforth there will be no separation, because my thoughts, my desires, my longings – those of the individual self – have been destroyed. ...

I could not have said last year, as I can say now, that I am the Teacher; for had I said it then it would have been insincere, it would have been untrue. Because I had not then united the Source and the Goal, I was not able to say that I was the Teacher. But now I can say it. I have become one with the Beloved, I have been made simple, I have become glorified because of Him, and because of Him I can help. My purpose is not to create discussions on authority, on manifestations in the personality of Krishnamurti, but to give the waters that shall wash away your sorrows, your petty tyrannies, your limitations, so that you will be free, so that you will eventually join that ocean where there is no limitation, where there is the Beloved. ...

So friends, the only thing that matters is that you should give the waters that will quench the thirst of the people – the people who are not here, who are in the world. And the water that will give satisfaction, that will purify their hearts, ennoble their minds, is this: the finding of the Truth, and the establishment in their own minds and in their own hearts of Liberation and Happiness.

Talk in Eerde, Holland, 2 August 1927  
Extracts from the booklet *Who Brings the Truth?*  
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## K's early teachings in *God Is My Adventure*

J. Gómez Rodríguez

When some years ago the K foundations came up with the idea of producing what they called The Complete Works, there was a great deal of debate about whether to include the early works. The argument was between, on the one hand, the view that these early works were patchy and written under the influence of theosophical doctrine and language, and, on the other, the more academic standpoint that whatever their nature, they had to be considered part and parcel of the total oeuvre. The proponents of the first position drew attention to the lingering controversy concerning the authorship of *At the Feet of the Master* (1910), the first book to be published under K's name and an enduring spiritual classic of theosophical literature. That he wrote the others did not seem to be in question, but then there was the feeling that they were part of K's juvenilia and did not represent his mature teachings. It was alleged that K himself had considered them unsuitable for publication, except perhaps for *The Path* (1924), which narrated, in a poetic form, K's inward journey during the process. In any case, the foundations invariably referred to K's speech on August 3, 1929, dissolving the Order of the Star as a defining moment. His statement that "Truth is a pathless land" became, in fact, the cornerstone of his teachings. Otherwise, the foundations took 1933, the year of Annie Besant's death and the severing of K's last link with the Theosophical Society, as the point of departure of K's authentic work. They would keep the early works in the archives and make them available for scholarly study, but they would not republish them or include them in The Complete Works project. This project, however, never got off the ground and, as far as I know, has been put on the back burner.

I happened to be, perhaps unsurprisingly, on the side of inclusion. I felt that while the early works might not be considered part of his mature production or worth republishing, they were nonetheless an object of historical interest in the development of any author. I considered that this was all the more relevant in the case of someone who was viewed as the embodiment and speaker of truth in our time. At a minimum, such early





At Brockwood Park

works were likely to reveal the unfolding of the inner process of liberation as well as the deepening insight into the human condition and its more accurate expression over time. But my reasoning was not based merely on such academic considerations but on the felt reality that these early works represented perhaps the more purely spiritual expression of K's genuine greatness. They were vague, indeed, and general but they had an aura of transcendence, an unmistakable perfume of the sacred. When in the mid-nineties, in an attempt to clarify for myself the nature of the teachings, I conceived the project of writing a book about them, my immersion in his early works produced a number of significant inner experiences. It was this aspect above all that led me to value these early works as much as I valued the later, more mature teachings. You could say that these early works represented the empty form of pure wisdom which the later works complemented with their more clinical understanding of human consciousness. You could see them also as the more positive expression of truth in contrast with the later negative approach to freedom and wholeness.

In any case, there was something fascinating in the whole story. The biography read like the contemporary fulfilment of the millennial expectation of the messiah. That the boy K had been identified as the vehicle of such a figure on account of his selfless nature was itself a unique event. The outbreak of the process in Ojai in 1922 that saw him profoundly transformed and gave birth to the teacher was an extraordinary phenomenon which has hardly begun to be understood. The record of his subsequent development from that date to the dissolution of the Order of the Star seven years later might hold some of the keys to his approach to truth and organizations and, as such, would make for a fascinating study. And then there would be the early expression of his teachings and his setting out on his own after 1933. All in all, I thought, and still think, that K's early works should be regarded as an integral part of his unfolding as the great teacher that he undoubtedly became.

Recently, Friedrich dug up the two chapters in *God Is My Adventure* (1935) where the author, Rom Landau (1899–1974), offers an eloquent

and fascinating portrait of the early K. He thought it would be good to include these chapters in the Newsletter. Unfortunately, these texts are too long for our purposes. However, they do offer a sensitive glimpse into that period of K's life and work and as such they might be worth sharing, albeit in the form of excerpts and with some abridgement and contextual commentary.

According to his entry in Wikipedia, Landau was born in Poland of Polish-German parents. He studied philosophy, art, and religion at various European schools and universities, notably in Germany, and spent his early years travelling and working as a sculptor. In 1922, living in Berlin, he became the pupil of Georg Kolbe, then Germany's leading sculptor. During the late 1920s and the early 1930s, Landau established a minor reputation in Europe as a writer. His themes were art history, Polish biography, and comparative religion. Landau's best known book from those years was his bestselling *God Is My Adventure* (1935)<sup>6</sup>, in which he recounted his various encounters with leading philosophical, religious, and mystical figures, such as Hermann Graf Keyserling, Frank Buchman, Rudolf Steiner, GI Gurdjieff, PD Ouspensky, Meher Baba, and J. Krishnamurti. Landau became a British citizen when he served as a volunteer in the Royal Air Force during the Second World War. He was a Foreign Service officer and specialist on Arab and Islamic culture. His particular area of interest was Morocco.

Landau first met K at the house where he was staying in Westminster in 1927. Landau was aware of a good deal of K's personal background, though he seemed to know nothing of the 1922 events in Ojai. Even so, he was rather skeptical about K on account of the reports he had read of the esoteric happenings around him. This made him feel supercilious and even more so on hearing that K's followers in Holland had proclaimed him the World Teacher, title which K himself acknowledged by saying he had become one with his Beloved. This skepticism, however, was counterbal-

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6 *God Is My Adventure: A Book on Modern Mystics, Masters and Teachers*, Ivor Nicholson & Watson Ltd, London 1935.

anced by the fact that serious and intelligent people like Annie Besant and the labor leader George Lansbury were behind him. When he actually met K, Landau was instantly struck by his handsome face and charmed by his attractive personality and after half an hour of conversation felt like he had known him all his life. His whole knowledge of K's picturesque biography seemed suddenly unimportant. They parted as friends and Landau accepted an invitation to stay with K that summer in Eerde.

Landau seemed to be rather bemused by the setting and the cast of characters, which he imagined would be inspiring material for a fiction writer. He was again skeptical of the pink cloud of saintliness hanging over the place and the devotional attitude of the people. Landau described in detail the daily routine at Eerde and the program of activities at the camp. K spoke every day in the big tent in the woods, as did other speakers. K's talks that year were of an autobiographical nature. In them he tried to explain how he had found the truth by giving up all conventional conceptions of life. His main tenet was that the kingdom of happiness lies within us.<sup>7</sup>

What irritated Landau was his inability to find the true meaning of K's teaching, which made him fear that his visit might be a total failure. He found K's lectures too vague to answer any of his questions. He expected the theosophists and Star members to be more enlightened about the real problems in the world at large, but he felt that none of the current world events penetrated the Ommen woods. His intellectual upbringing led him to expect a clearer message than K was offering. He understood that everyone should find the truth for himself, but he received no clear answers as to how this was to be achieved. He had several talks with K as they walked through the woods and across the fields, but found that K's answers to personal troubles, intellectual doubts and existential difficulties were vague. He found no intellectual satisfaction in K's books, either. Landau felt he had a right to expect answers in a language that he could understand. He felt entitled to expect perfection in everything K said or did. While at times

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7 These talks were published under the title *By What Authority* (1927).

he could find glimpses of K's philosophy, he felt that the same truth could have been expressed less pretentiously. Besides, he understood that K's essential message was the same as that of Buddha and Christ: that liberation and happiness is achieved by a feeling of love that is complete in itself, detached, without subject and object. But if his message was the same as that of those great teachers, why the whole theosophical background, the grand organization of the OSE, the path, the camps, the followers? Why not remain within the established churches that expressed such messages in clearer language? Landau was tempted to leave Eerde after a few days but didn't out of his fondness for K. Yet he wanted to convince the cynic in him that K was right and capable of helping. He felt happier every day through his contact with K and felt that only intellectual barriers prevented him from accepting him wholeheartedly.

What impressed him the most were the evenings round the campfire. K would light the pyre in the center of the amphitheater and there would be an atmosphere of human fellowship and spiritual contentment. Landau felt that K never spoke so well as in these evening talks. Generally, he found him an ineffective speaker, repeating himself, halting, using sentences that were too long. He could not help but think that English was not his native language. But in the evenings words seemed to come more easily to him. Occasionally he would intone an Indian chant at the end of the fireside talks, which Landau found even more impressive than his speech.

All this would give the impression that Landau, with his intellectual expectations, might have been missing out on the spiritual significance of his encounter with K. But he had a couple of experiences that indicated that he was sensitive at a more implicit level, experiences that, in spite of his intellectual frustration, hinted at the inward way of liberation and happiness. Here is the section in which he describes two such experiences that demonstrated to him the authenticity of K's own being, even if his expression might leave much to be desired:

“One or two experiences may help to show what a real influence Krishnamurti had on my life. It may be considered a mere coincidence

that when I met Krishnamurti for the first time, on that rainy Sunday morning in Westminster, I gave up smoking. I had smoked since I was seventeen, usually thirty cigarettes a day, and I had become something of a slave to the habit. Nevertheless I had never tried to give up smoking, because I had never seen any convincing reason for so doing. Even today I cannot explain clearly why I should have given it up the day I met Krishnamurti. We did not discuss this subject; I did not know that he himself did not smoke. And yet to give up smoking at once seemed the most natural thing. Though I carried a cigarette case in my pocket for many days I never felt tempted to light another cigarette. Nor have I smoked since.

The other incident is more difficult to describe. I had been trying for a long time to meditate in the evenings on a particular subject. I used to do it in bed before going to sleep. For months on end I would reach a certain point in my meditation after which it would break up. Either my attention would falter or else I fell asleep before getting beyond the particular point. A few days after I had met Krishnamurti I succeeded for the first time. I experienced the feeling of sinking into a deep well. Though the well seemed bottomless I had simultaneously the two opposed sensations of going on sinking and yet of having reached the bottom. This was accompanied by a very vivid impression of light. The strongest impression, however, was of receiving at once an emotional shock and a mathematical revelation. It is difficult to describe this last sensation: no metaphor or comparison represents it correctly. Though I do not claim any mystical significance for my experience, I can best translate it into words by quoting an abler pen than my own. When Dean Inge once described mystical experiences he said: "What can be described and handed on is not the vision itself but the inadequate symbols in which the seer tries to preserve it in his memory ... But such experiences, which rather possess a man than are possessed by him, are in their nature as transient as the glories of a sunset ... Language, which was not made for such purposes, fails lamentably to reproduce even their pale reflection". What, however, can be said is the fact that the culminating point of my experience made me unspeakably happy. It

was such an acute happiness that it was almost like a feeling of physical delight or physical pain. The division between delight and pain seemed lifted. How long the moment lasted I could not tell; but I imagine it to have been no more than a fraction of a second. When it was all over, I was awake and fully conscious, and I recorded my experience to myself with a feeling of deep gratitude.

The above experiences showed me that Krishnamurti's effect upon me was vital enough to act even against my intellectual resistance."

‘The Throne that was Christ’s – VII’  
*God Is My Adventure*, pp. 125–127

Landau did not meet up with K again for several years. In the meantime, he read in the papers about K's dissolution of the Order of the Star in 1929 and his breaking with the expectations and claims the theosophists had placed on him. He felt that K was then speaking for himself and not as a mouthpiece. He had given up the vast estate and severed his connections with all organizations, declaring that he did not want followers. Landau felt that it must have taken enormous courage to renounce so much – a whole institutional machine for the transmission of his message. For Landau this was a demonstration of K's moral purity and spiritual conviction.

### **K: Organization, authority and spirituality**

In order to attain liberation, it is not necessary to join any organization, any religion, because they are binding, they are limiting, they hold you to a particular form of worship and belief. If you long for freedom you will fight, as I have fought, against authority of any kind, for authority is the antithesis of spirituality. If I were to use authority today and you accepted my authority, it would not make you free, you would be merely following the freedom of another. In following the freedom of

another, you are binding yourself more strongly to the wheel of limitation. Do not allow your mind or your heart to be bound by anything or by anyone. If you do, you will establish another religion, another temple. While destroying one set of beliefs you will establish another set of beliefs. I am fighting against all traditions that bind, all worship that narrows, all following that corrupts the heart. If you would find that freedom to which I would point the way, you will begin, as I began, by being discontented, by being in revolt, in inner dissent with everything about you. You frequently use the phrase, “We will obey our leaders.” Who are your leaders? I never want to be a leader. I never want to have authority. I want you to become your own leaders.

‘The Search’

*Life in Freedom*, pp. 60–61

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In 1934, Landau decided to seek K out. When he inquired, he was told that he was returning from New Zealand to California and would not be back in Europe for another 18 months. So Landau traveled to the US to find out how K might have changed since those earlier days and to take the spiritual pulse of the land, where the most blatant materialism coexisted with a desire for spirituality, desire that had been amplified by the Great Depression. Since Vivekananda’s participation in the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, the American public had been aware of Eastern religious ideas. Landau felt that K’s message came at a critical and propitious time for the evolution of that civilization.

K was not staying in Ojai but in Carmel, a town on the Monterey Bay, south of San Francisco. Landau found that K had the same graceful and slender appearance but no longer the boyish looks. His cheeks seemed hollow and there were shadows under his eyes. Silver threads ran through his thick black hair and the lines of his face seemed to Landau to reflect either an increased maturity or some hidden worry. When K asked him what he





In Ojai, California

expected of him and how he proposed to proceed, Landau explained he had come to pick his brains and suggested they should spend as much time as possible talking together. They met that same afternoon.

Since K had been attacked in many books and articles, Landau wanted to clear the air and establish K's absolute honesty. These questions related to his being the Christ, his finances and private life. K told him he could ask him anything, as there was no privacy in his life.

Landau began by asking him about the authorship of *At the Feet of the Master*. K prefaced his reply by saying that he had a very bad memory for physical realities. Facts failed to impress themselves on his memory. However, he remembered vaguely sitting at a table writing something that did not come easily to him all those years ago, but he could not say whether it was a few pages or a book. He did not recall whether he wrote of his own accord or influenced by some external power. He also did not know what Leadbeater had done with those pages. So he too would have liked to know the facts. He added that all those years ago, like a sleep-walker, he was not conscious of what he was doing and that only recently he had become fully aware. He felt that people with a good memory must find him exasperating, but he could not help it.

Next Landau broached the subject of the World Teacher. K replied that he had never affirmed or denied that he was. If he had said he was the WT, people would have expected him to perform miracles. Had he said he wasn't, they would also have taken it as an authoritative statement. K was against all authority in spiritual matters, against all standards created by one person for others. What mattered was not the label but whether what he said was helpful or not. One reason not to deny that he was the WT had been his high regard for Annie Besant. If he had denied it, she would have been seen as a liar. This way he spared her without harming anybody else.

Why had he dissolved the OSE? K indicated he had been thinking about it for two years. He gave up the OSE in 1929 because he realized that any such organization was a stumbling block to truth. Why did he go on lectur-

ing after he dissolved it? Because, while he knew he could not give people truth or happiness, he could help them discover them.

Landau then questioned him about his finances. K was being accused of having accepted large fortunes and of making lots of money on his lecture tours, making him a millionaire. K laughed. He said he owned a couple of suits, some books, and a few personal belongings, but no money. He acknowledged that a few kind friends helped to keep him alive and paid his travel expenses. Had he had money, he would have given it away. His needs were few and he had enough with what he received. If they did not give him anything, he would work for a living.

On the following day, Landau asked him what his current message was. K said he had no message. One thing he told people, however, was that experience is not the way to spiritual truth. Learning from experience meant applying to life a dead method from the past, whereas life never repeated itself and therefore it must be dealt with in its unique way. Life wanted us to act spontaneously, not according to old habits. This negative approach to truth through the elimination of experience was for K the root of the positive. Truth was constant inner and outer awareness in daily life. The only real liberation was to live completely every moment. Truth was not an abstraction but perceiving the meaning of life around us. But to understand every moment of life we must liberate the mind from the past. This was real awareness.

When asked if he had read Steiner, he said he read Huxley, Lawrence, Joyce, Gide but never philosophy books. When Landau asked him if he was writing something, K said he was preparing a book of thoughts. Just then he could not write poetry. He felt that one can read for entertainment and to gather knowledge but that such essential things as truth and happiness can only be learned from life. The knowledge of others, be they philosophers, psychologists or religious people, built up inner barriers to the spontaneous response to life.

Religion offered authority instead of truth and drugged people instead of encouraging them along their own path. K saw prayer as asking for a

reward, which was not spirituality. In spirituality things just were. Reward was fixed and the spiritual life was always moving. That was also why there was no method to arrive at truth because the method was static, and truth was not. When it came to meditation, K considered it wiser to attend to every thought with full inner awareness rather than practice concentration, which made for conflict. What mattered was not the subject but the quality of thinking. As thought was completed, the mind became creative rather than a battlefield. Truth could only be found by constant awareness of life. This was meditation.

K was for the absolute equality of human beings, but he was not a communist. He could not, for one thing, approve of their methods. Equality could be achieved by greater knowledge, deeper understanding, better education, making people understand what life means. Equality was not achieved by taking possessions away from people but by taking away their instinct to possess. This attitude needed to be changed before anything could be done.

Landau then asked K about sex. K considered that following the natural urge, not the artificially created stimulation, would not create a problem. The problem arose when something real in us was opposed by abstract considerations. Suppression could never solve the problem, nor self-discipline. That meant substituting one problem for another. For K sex was not a problem but an expression of love. He attributed the modern problem of sex in great part to the artificial stimulation coming from the social environment:

“It is not sex as a vital inner urge that dominates people nowadays so much as the images and thoughts of sex. Our whole modern life is propitious to them. Look around you. You can hardly open a newspaper, travel by the underground or walk along a street without coming across advertisements and posters that appeal to your sex instincts in order to sing the praises of a pair of stockings, a new toothpaste or a particular brand of cigarette. I cannot imagine that so many semi-naked girls have ever before walked through the pages of newspapers and magazines. In every shop, cinema and café the lift attendants, waitresses

and shopgirls are made to look like harlots so that they may appeal to your sex instincts. They themselves are not conscious of this, but their short skirts, their exposed legs, their painted faces, their girlish coiffures, the constant physical appeal which they are made to exercise over the customer do nothing but stimulate your sex instincts. Oh, it is beastly, simply beastly! Sex has been degraded to become the servant of unimaginative salesmanship. Someone will start a new magazine and, instead of racking his brains for an interesting and alluring titlepage, all he does is to publish a colored picture of a girl with half-opened lips, suggestively hiding her breasts and looking altogether like a whore. You are being constantly attacked, and you no longer know whether it is your own sex urge or the sex vibration produced artificially by life around you. This degrading, emphatic appeal to our sex instinct is one of the most beastly signs of our civilization. Take it away, and most of the so-called sex urge is gone.”

‘Krishnamurti in Carmel – V’  
*God Is My Adventure*, pp. 365–367

K was not against sex, but he did not want it cheapened and introduced where it did not belong. If love became an omnipresent feeling in which sex was an expression of affection, then there was no problem. Love for K was no longer personal. It was a constant inner state. His love simply went out to everyone, and he was not affected by personal loss. Grief could not take over when love was the basis of one’s whole being. For him, love was something as natural as the color of his skin. He felt a total unity with human beings, nature, the whole world.

Reading through the verbatim reports of the talks in Ojai and Australia, Landau came across a statement where K told his audience that the ego could not find truth because it was but the result of environment. Landau wondered whether it would not be better for K to teach that inner awareness could only be gradually achieved. K replied that doing so was giving people crutches and that he could not do that, as there was no way to truth.

Preparing people for the truth would be a compromise, something he could not do. People who needed crutches, a sanatorium, need not come to him. He could only talk to those willing to revolutionize themselves in order to find truth. He felt that he could only help people by discussing truth with them. And it made him a bit sad that he could not help as many people as he would have liked to.

Wanting to learn the reactions of others to K's message, Landau met up with the poet Robinson Jeffers. Jeffers found nothing wrong with K's message but felt that it would not be intelligible for most people and therefore not popular. He was struck by K's luminous personality. He found that K was the most convincing illustration of his own message. It was not a matter of words. K's message, he felt, was not quite mature yet. It would be mature when his words would be intelligible to everyone. Just then they had a certain 'thinness'. Landau himself felt that K's personality was more convincing than his arguments and his logic. This might be because K's intellectual faculties were not as developed as his spiritual side.

On Sunday afternoons there was a discussion with K in the lounge of the hotel he was staying at. Twenty to two hundred people attended these discussions. Landau was more amused than impressed on account of the personal concerns of the participants. K, however, felt that he could help people to find truth by unfolding the answers together. The people were inspired by K, whom they felt lived the teachings more convincingly than he preached them.

After a week with K, Landau felt he could formulate his own opinion about the teachings:

1. Truth can only be the result of inner illumination.
2. Inner illumination can only come to one who embraces the many-sidedness of life.
3. Truth is found through permanent inner awareness of thought, feeling and action.

4. Only such awareness can free us from our shortcomings and solve our problems.
5. Life becomes a reality through the loving identification with each of its moments.
6. No sacrifice or ascetic is necessary as our limitations are eliminated by full living.

He still felt that K's message was the same as that of Buddha and Christ, namely, to live a life of inner awareness which, through love and thought, opened the door to truth. In such a life, none of our self-created shortcomings – envy, jealousy, possessiveness, hatred, etc. – could exist.

When Landau raised the issue of how K's message could be better understood, he got an unexpected answer. K felt that people found it difficult to understand the truth because of free choice. By free choice we begin to build complications which we are forced to eliminate if we are to find the truth. An intelligent mind has no choice, no free will because it is spontaneously aware of what is true and can only act accordingly. Then K shared something of his own inner experience with Landau and explained the nature of his realization:

“Suddenly Krishnamurti stopped: “Many things became clearer for me since we started our daily conversations. I meant to tell you the other day that after one of our first talks I had a particularly vivid experience of inner awareness of life. I was walking home along the beach when I became so deeply aware of the beauty of the sky, the sea and the trees around me that it was almost a sensation of physical joy. All separation between me and the things around me ceased to exist, and I walked home fully conscious of that wonderful unity. When I got home and joined the others at dinner, it almost seemed as though I had to push my inner state behind a screen and step out of it; but though I was sitting among people and talking of all sorts of things, that inner awareness of a unity with everything never left me for a second.”

“How did you come to that state of unity with everything?”



“People have asked me about it before, and I always feel that they expect to hear the dramatic account of some sudden miracle through which I suddenly became one with the universe. Of course, nothing of the sort happened. My inner awareness was always there; though it took me time to feel it more and more clearly; and equally it took time to find words that would at all describe it. It was not a sudden flash, but a slow yet constant clarification of something that was always there. It did not grow, as people often think. Nothing can grow in us that is of spiritual importance. It has to be there in all its fullness, and the only thing that happens is that we become more and more aware of it. It is our intellectual reaction and nothing else that needs time to become more articulate, more definite.”

‘Krishnamurti in Carmel – IX’  
*God Is My Adventure*, pp. 381–382

Landau felt there was no life in modern times comparable with K’s. He felt that it was unique that after twenty-five years of preparation for a destiny as a teacher, at the moment of awakening he should renounce his religious claims, give up his worldly goods and decide to become an ordinary human being. He felt that even the years in which K’s spirit had lingered in the vagueness of dreams had been full of a truth too mysterious as yet for us to understand.

Although expressed in his own language, Landau manages to paint a vivid and sympathetic portrait of the early K and the gradual maturation of his teachings, from the near-total vagueness of his mystical beginnings to the increasingly sharper delineation of some of his key themes, such as learning from experience, choice, the place of knowledge and time in transformation, the nature of awareness, meditation and love. Given his sensitive appreciation of K’s message, it is something of a mystery as to why Landau did not continue to seek him out in subsequent years – at least, not that we know of.

*Javier Gómez Rodríguez*





Ojai, California, nested among hills and mountains

## K: Time is an illusion

Time is an illusion. There is tomorrow and there have been many yesterdays; this time is not an illusion. Thought which uses time as a means to bring about an inward change, a psychological change is pursuing a non-change, for such thought is sluggish, postpones, takes shelter in the illusion of gradualness, in ideals, in time. Through time mutation is not possible. The very denial of time is mutation; mutation takes place when the things which time has brought into being, habit, tradition, reform, the ideals, are denied. Deny time and mutation has taken place, a total mutation, not the alteration in patterns nor the substitution of one pattern for another. But acquiring knowledge, learning a technique, require time which cannot and must not be denied; they are essential for existence. Time to go from here to there is not an illusion but every other form of time is illusion. In this mutation there is attention and from this attention there is a totally different kind of action. Such action does not become a habit, a repetition of a sensation, of an experience, of knowledge which dulls the brain, insensitive to a mutation. Virtue then is not the better habit, the better conduct; it has no pattern, no limitation; it has not the stamp of respectability; it is not then an ideal to be pursued, put together by time. Virtue then is a danger, not a tame thing of society. To love then is destruction; a revolution, not economic and social but of total consciousness.

*Krishnamurti's Notebook: Full Text Edition*, pp. 197–198

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The inquiry into the nature of time has been essential in science, philosophy and religion. In the religious field, St. Augustine dedicated a whole chapter of his *Confessions* to it. He observed that while in normal speech everyone seemed to know what they meant by time, when you asked what time is, nobody knew. All these centuries on, we are still in a very similar situation. We use the word in ordinary speech with a meaning we all seem to agree on,

but we do not grasp the nature of the thing. The question of time is also central to K's understanding of the human condition. He tends to distinguish between chronological and psychological time. He accepts that chronological time is an objective and indispensable aspect of existence, as in moving from one place to another or learning a subject, but he considers that psychological time is an illusion. This illusory nature of psychological time is for him of the greatest danger and what turns time into the enemy of man. In his dialogues with Bohm in the series of *The Ending of Time*, K seems to consider that adopting time as the ground of being was the fundamental wrong turn of mankind – its original sin, as it were. That is why, from his perspective, the ending of psychological time is the key to the transformation of consciousness and the liberation and wholeness of humanity.

K felt that the wholeness of humanity implies the working together of the religious spirit and the scientific mind. This wholeness being so intimately bound with the question of time, it is therefore natural to consider what science has to say about it. K simply accepts the reality of what he calls physical or chronological time. ('Chronos' means time, so this is a bit of a tautology, but it stands for the kind of time that can be measured.) He was rather a stickler for punctuality, and he kept his wristwatch perfectly synchronized with the world clock. He did not deny that kind of time. What he denied was the anchoring of consciousness, thought and self in memory, in tradition, in the past, which limited the mind and reduced it to a series of habitual and reflex patterns of conditioning. While he accepted the absolute importance of knowledge as indispensable in all manner of functional applications, it was this 'psychological knowledge' – the experiences, assumptions, ideas and beliefs that go into building a separate psychological entity – that he found deeply problematic and fundamentally antithetical to human wholeness.

However, as science probes ever deeper and wider into the nature of reality, it finds that the concept of time as a factor of understanding has its own problems. In Relativity, for example, time cannot be separated from space and space-time becomes the fourth dimension of reality. Space and time are no longer absolutes. In Quantum Mechanics, the notion of causal-

ity becomes more defused, and time is no longer seen as fundamental. As an examination of the scientific and religious notions of time would make for an interesting study, we started playing with the idea of exploring it in these pages. Sometime ago there were a number of exchanges about it, but the discussion became rather complicated, and it did not lend itself to a coherent narrative summary. The subject, however, did not go away – how could it? – and we now take the opportunity to share a first attempt by our old friend Hanns-Peter Trautvetter, a retired experimental physicist, to inquire into this question of time and to see whether there is a bridge between the scientific and spiritual views of it. Can time be separated into chronological and psychological? Are they not intimately bound in human consciousness as inherent to survival? And is not memory, which is considered the very substance of consciousness, the result of a material process? He raises these and other significant questions in his article ***Shaping the World:***

## Shaping the World

*H. P. Trautvetter*

Science is a wonderful tool for predicting outcomes for finite fields with precise initial conditions. It can give us a glimpse of the immensity of the universe, the extreme diversity of matter and life, and the complex web that connects everything. We are right in the middle and therefore part of everything and by no means separate. Science, however, often fails in complex situations where the initial conditions are poorly defined. The nature of scientific knowledge is taken to be completely independent of ethical considerations. It is certainly not responsible for its applications. A similar statement could be made for psychological findings. What is good or bad is relative to a certain subset. What is good for one species may be bad for another and vice versa. Who could ever judge what would be good or bad for the universe as a whole?

If we define spirituality as a unifying process in contrast to the limitations of scientific knowledge, then the best results could be achieved by

a combination of both and not through opposition between them. All cultural areas of humanity would be included in such a consideration. Such a prospect can be, and so it is to me, overwhelming. While attending the summer gatherings in Mürren, one evening, with a brilliant view of the night sky, one of the participants asked me whether I could still see the splendor and feel the wonder after having studied all the workings of the stars. My answer then was and still is that I do even more so! And I know that we can learn infinitely more about them without losing the sense of wonder.

During the 2017–2019 gatherings we embarked on an inquiry about our universe. Many scientists, theologians, philosophers, spiritualists, artists and writers have contributed to what we may call the form or shape of the world. The words that follow can never provide a complete and satisfactory picture of the universe, of which, in any case, we know and understand at most 5%. Rather, these are the humble views of an average scientist who happens to have spent his professional life trying to find out more about the origin of the chemical elements that make up the universe and, hence, our own bodies. If we look into the atoms and elementary particles, we see an entire universe under our skin. On the smallest scale, we must give up our notions of space, time, continuity and certainty. Looking at the realm of stars and galaxies, the Newtonian concepts of space and time that we use in our daily lives have also undergone a dramatic change. Since Einstein, the ‘now’ has lost its meaning and is only approximately relevant for small regions under modest conditions. It completely collapses inside black holes.

For millions of years, people have been confronted with their environment and have asked themselves questions arising from our nature as separate beings. The separation begins at birth. This is the moment when our personal universe begins to exist. A few years later we learn to communicate through language with other beings who are similar but separate from us. The first notions of an order in the overwhelming myriad of events begin to shape our sense of the world and our urge to survive. But what is this, the world?

We are born with curiosity, and we use our senses to register what is happening and then try to understand and act accordingly in order to survive. We have this in common with all living beings in the world. What differentiates us is the respective abilities of the senses and the way of interpreting the information received. An important observation is that some events or processes repeat themselves and give us the opportunity to discover structures. This is of the utmost importance to reduce the amount of information and therefore the energy consumption to a minimum. However, this comes at a price: the simplification process is consequently never exact, leading to errors in predicting events in the future, which in turn is essential for survival. This is where the notion of what we call ‘time’ comes into play.

First, we notice the regular occurrence of sunrise and sunset. Then the changes in nature which we have divided into four seasons. After a long, cold winter, comes the spring. But it was not until Galileo discovered the regularity of pendular motion, while observing a swinging chandelier at Pisa’s cathedral, that the clock was invented. Carlo Rovelli tells the story in his book, *Reality Is Not What It Seems*<sup>8</sup>: “The scientist was observing the oscillation during a religious service in which he was evidently not particularly absorbed, and he was measuring the duration of each oscillation of the chandelier by counting the beats of his own pulse. With mounting excitement, he discovered that the number of beats was the same for each oscillation: it did not change when the chandelier slowed and oscillated with diminished amplitude. The oscillations all had the same duration. It’s a fine story but, on reflection, it leaves us perplexed – and this perplexity goes to the heart of the problem of time. How could Galileo know that his own individual pulse-beats all lasted for the same amount of time? Not many years after Galileo, doctors began to measure their patients’ pulses by using a watch – which is nothing, after all, but a pendulum. So we use the beats to assure ourselves that the

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8 Carlo Rovelli, *Reality Is Not What It Seems: The Journey to Quantum Gravity*, Penguin Books, 2017, pp. 155–156.

pendulum is regular, and then the pendulum to ascertain the regularity of the pulse-beats. Is this not somewhat circular? What does it mean? It means that we, in reality, never measure time itself.”

Such circularities always occur in self-referential systems. You cannot explain a thing by the thing itself. Likewise, statements about oneself can be contradictory, as when a Cretan says that all Cretans are liars. So, when people try to understand the universe by observing it with their brain and sense organs, they are trying to understand it as part of the universe, which I think is a circular argument. How can we know that our senses are showing us the true reality? There are many accounts of illusions, paradoxes, hallucinations, distortions and optical illusions in the literature (neuroscientist Neil Seth et al; psychiatrist Iain McGilchrist, and many others).

Following Isaac Newton, it was discovered that all movements of physical objects obeyed laws in which time and space were the background stage for these events. Time and space were fundamentally and immutably posited as absolutes. Objects in space and time followed the laws of motion and given their initial conditions, their future location at any given moment in time could be predicted. That was the revolution and the starting point of our technology, which still shapes our worldview. An important feature of these laws was that they could run backwards or forwards in time.

However, there are processes that are not symmetrical in time. Hot water cools down in colder surroundings. It will never go any other way. A wine glass that falls to the ground shatters and doesn't return to its original state. Such an event is not impossible, but it would require determining the position of all parts, their speed and direction, and making them move backwards. Such a constellation is very unlikely, with the result that the probability of its occurrence is almost zero. We call these processes irreversible. They are actually the most important thing for life as we know it. Without them there would be no way to keep records of what is happening in the world. When a tiger walks

over soft ground, it leaves tracks. The probability that the soft ground will return to its original surface is almost zero. This helps detect the tiger's movements and improves our chances of survival. Another process imperative for such an observation is memory. Without memory it would not be possible to recognize anything. We can recognize words and music. The music can only be appreciated by placing the perceived sound in the context of all other played sounds, an impossible task without memory.

The events as registered by our senses creates a record that only makes sense in their correct order on the arrow of time. For memory to exist, irreversible processes are necessary, and their resulting traces must be stable. Newtonian processes alone could not form memory. Memory changes over time, albeit slightly. It's the same as with the footprints in the sand. They are present for some time and disappear over time, but never return to their original form. Special conditions might preserve such traces, as they do in the field of archeology.

A consequence of having a memory is a fixed point of view, which is the "I". There is an inbuilt drive that the "I" should be preserved under all circumstances. Hence memory, correct or modified, is the origin of the self. If the ego wants to find out where it comes from, it can only enter a self-referential system, since all processes are interpreted with a fixed point of view. So here we are again in the middle of self-referentiality. To avoid this dilemma, people first invented many gods and finally only one god who created us and the universe.

Science, with its reductionist ways, takes a different path. Starting with complex objects, the goal is to find the most basic parts, which evolve to form these objects from the initial Big Bang. This account does not include consciousness. Many scientists assume that it is an emerging phenomenon that can ultimately be explained by our physical laws. Other researchers start from the point of view that everything is mental – Plato, the idealists and, today, Bernardo Kastrup –, or that it is basically psychic, as with the panpsychists. An interesting case is the state-



ment of the British philosopher George Berkely (1685–1753) who said: “You know that to be is to be perceived or to be a perceiver”, which is comparable to K’s statement “The observer is the observed”.

A basic ingredient for all worldviews is time. Today’s physics suggests that time is not fundamental. We invented time as an ordering system based on recurring events such as for the motion of a pendulum. As such, it serves a practical purpose. The arrow of time arises from the fact of irreducible phenomena such as traces and memory.<sup>9</sup> Memory can come in at least two forms, factual and psychological. From this, K would assert that there is factual time and psychological time. My question would be to find out how it really works. Can time actually be differentiated in this way? Everything we experience is a mixture of both, as it concerns our survival. We can’t avoid it. It is only when the fear stops that there is no psychological time and thus the meaning of factual time loses its footing. What remains is change, timeless change, as K would put it. Is there a way, a method to achieve this goal? All our attempts and considerations would lead to a self-referential situation and are therefore in vain. However, there could be an alternative process, a transition without a trace, like a quantum leap, that is not describable with our usual thoughts and common logic. (The signature of a quantum leap is its pathlessness, i.e., an electron is either in state 1 or 2; the transition from state 1 to 2 has no trace, hence it is pathless). The only thing we can do with our current tools is to find out what isn’t working and let it go. And that’s what K always suggested to us.

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9 Julian Barbour offers a new take on the world-time problem in *The Janus Point*. Starting from the argument that time is not fundamental in physics, he claims that time arises solely from structural changes. The variety of structures increases indefinitely, which is commonly observed via the expansion of the universe. In the traditional version of physics, where the second law of thermodynamics states that entropy always increases, a solid-walled subsystem was assumed to be the initial starting condition. However, there are no solid walls for the universe, so the traditional arguments for the arrow of time do not necessarily hold water. See his book for more details.

It is also evident that nobody could teach us about these matters and serve as guru, priest or teacher. Everyone has to get to the “I-don’t-know point” first. Only then could a shift, a transition, take place. However, there is no guarantee that a transition will take place. Reaching the “I-don’t-know point” is identical with losing the “I”, the position of self-reference.

One might get the impression that the writer is speaking from personal experience. This is definitely not the case. The author only followed the rules of logical thinking as trained, not from inner insight. It may also be that he is getting tired of getting old, to still end up at the point of not knowing. From childhood, he was taught to gather as much knowledge as possible, only to find it useless for understanding the whole universe. As an experimental physicist, however, I have learned to doubt, never stop exploring, and never be absolutely certain. Of course, there is always the possibility that the above arguments might be wrong. Every theory needs basic assumptions which cannot be reduced further. One assumption is that the universe as a whole could be described with our usual thoughts and common logic. The strength of science is to acknowledge mistakes when necessary and start anew.

*Hanns-Peter Trautvetter*



Rishi Valley, India

photo by Vijendra Ramola

## K: Self-knowledge and intelligence

The skill of intelligence is to put knowledge in its right place. Without knowledge it's not possible to live in this technological and almost mechanical civilization but it will not transform the human being and his society. Knowledge is not the excellence of intelligence; intelligence can and does use knowledge and thus transforms man and his society. Intelligence is not the mere cultivation of the intellect and its integrity. It comes out of the understanding of the whole consciousness of man, yourself and not a part, a separate segment, of yourself. The study and the understanding of the movement of your own mind and heart give birth to this intelligence. You are the content of your consciousness; in knowing yourself you will know the universe. This knowing is beyond the word for the word is not the thing. The freedom from the known, every minute, is the essence of intelligence. It's this intelligence that is in operation in the universe if you leave it alone. You are destroying this sacredness of order through the ignorance of yourself. This ignorance is not banished by the studies others have made about you or themselves. You yourself have to study the content of your own consciousness. The studies others have made of themselves, and so of yourself, are the descriptions but not the described. The word is not the thing.

Only in relationship can you know yourself, not in abstraction and certainly not in isolation. Even in a monastery you are related to the society which has made the monastery as an escape, or closed the doors to freedom. The movement of behaviour is the sure guide to yourself; it's the mirror of your consciousness; this mirror will reveal its content, the images, the attachments, the fears, the loneliness, the joy and the sorrow. Poverty lies in running away from this, either in its sublimations or in its identities. Negating without resist-

ance this content of consciousness is the beauty and compassion of intelligence.

Entry for April 2, 1975

*Krishnamurti's Journal*, pp. 81–82

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In the 2020 Newsletter we included a section titled Infinite Potential. In it we featured an article by Paul Howard, the director of the then recently released documentary on Bohm, 'Infinite Potential: The Life and Ideas of David Bohm', based on the biography written by Bohm's friend and collaborator David Peat,<sup>10</sup> with whom Howard worked very closely. The biography and the documentary lay emphasis on Bohm's scientific work and the wholeness it is imbued with. Some of us who had known Bohm not as a leading theoretical physicist but as a brilliant explorer of consciousness and as the author of a creative dialogue proposal, could not help missing a proper treatment of this aspect of his life's work. The director promised that he would see about complementing the existing documentary with an additional chapter on Bohmian dialogue and his approach to consciousness. Some of us look very much forward to seeing it.

As a philosopher in the full sense of the word, Bohm was interested in both the understanding of matter and mind. For him that division was essentially untenable. He had taken to physics not just because he had a talent for it but because, as he saw it, science was the only field in which truth was still to be found. But a scientist is first and foremost a human being before becoming a man of knowledge. The understanding of society and the forces at work in it, and the understanding of himself as part of the larger network of relationships that make up the world, could not escape his natural and penetrating intelligence. His study of Hegel and Marx seemed to open a doorway to a larger comprehension of mind and matter as the two com-

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10 F. David Peat, *Infinite Potential: The Life and Times of David Bohm*, Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1997.

plementary sides of reality. His youthful idealism, however, was severely undermined by the bleak political realities of history. But Bohm neither gave up his search for understanding nor did he become a cynic. He had a profound faith in the human ability to face facts and gather the needful energy to precipitate insight. His encounter with K was crucial in giving his inquiry a new and deeper impetus. The dialogues between them are some of the deepest and most encompassing explorations of human consciousness and the ultimate meaning of existence ever held.

While K maintained that knowledge was indispensable in the conduct of life, he felt that it would not transform human beings. For him knowledge was not intelligence, which alone could use knowledge to effect such a transformation. It was not the product of thought, of the intellect, which is the response of knowledge. Intelligence came out of the understanding of the whole movement of the mind-heart, of the whole of human consciousness. In fact, its essence was freedom from the known every moment. He saw this intelligence as operating in the universe if we left it alone. It is through self-ignorance that we destroy this universal intelligence. So he lay emphasis on self-knowledge, which he felt was only possible through the mirror of relationship, which is the reflection of consciousness in action. The content of consciousness is the known and the emptying of this content was for him the beauty and compassion of intelligence.

K attributed the basic source of human disorder to our misunderstanding of the nature and operation of thought. Bohm basically agreed with this diagnosis and made his own insightful contribution to its understanding. The essence of it is the inherent fragmentation of thought on account of its abstract nature as well as its lack of proprioception or self-awareness. Thought proceeds on the basis of a number of false assumptions, such as the division between intellect and emotion, and it is seriously confused about its own nature and structure. Based on memory and experience, it enters perception unawares. This makes for incoherence, division and conflict both inwardly and outwardly. It is important therefore to clear up this confusion, to have an insight into these false assumptions of thought about itself, if there is to be wholeness.

David Moody, who worked closely with both K and Bohm, wrote an extensive article entitled 'Bohmian Psychology: The Undiscovered Continent of David Bohm's Worldview' in which he explored the salient aspects of Bohm's understanding of the nature of consciousness. As the original article was too large for this publication, we asked him if he would shorten it, which he kindly agreed to do. What follows is the abridged version of the much longer article originally published in *Pari Perspectives*, a quarterly publication of the Pari Center in Italy. The Pari Center was founded by David Peat. The complete article can be found at the author's website, [DavidEdmundMoody.com](http://DavidEdmundMoody.com).

## Bohmian Psychology: The Undiscovered Continent of David Bohm's Worldview

*D. E. Moody*

David Bohm is known primarily as a theoretical physicist who made important contributions to both quantum mechanics and cosmology. His insights into quantum theory were revolutionary and have garnered increasing attention every decade since they were first introduced in 1951. So profound and influential were his contributions that they have entirely overshadowed his equally significant insights into psychology, consciousness and human behavior. Bohmian psychology represents an undiscovered continent of David Bohm's worldview: a highly original and comprehensive set of ideas that was extremely important to him but remains almost wholly unknown even among those most interested in his work.

The general tenor and principal themes of Bohmian psychology represent a profound contrast with the point of view inherent in his physics and cosmology. Many observers have noted Bohm's emphasis on wholeness and interconnectedness in his understanding of our physical environment, and they have often extrapolated those qualities to the psychological field. Articles and talks have been devoted to topics such

as “quantum consciousness.” Because Bohm observed wholeness in the physical universe, many commentators have assumed he would find wholeness in the human realm as well. In fact, such idealistic assumptions are largely unfounded.

The portrait of human consciousness that emerges from Bohmian psychology is one in which conflict and disorder are the primary characteristics. Most of his attention in the psychological field is devoted to a diagnosis of the sources of this disorder and the possibility of finding some remedy. Bohm appears to hold out hope that some degree of wholeness can ultimately be restored to humanity, but the path to such a result is difficult at best. Wholeness in the human realm will never be achieved, according to Bohm, unless and until we give our total attention to understanding the present reality of conflict and disorder.

A similar discrepancy exists with respect to the image and the reality of Bohm dialogue. The prevailing image of Bohm dialogue is one of harmony and cooperation, a forum in which the participants cultivate a spirit of cooperation without rancor or antagonism. The reality of what Bohm proposed is entirely different. He explicitly cautioned against participants engaging in a “cozy adjustment” with one another. He advocated for a minimum of twenty members of a dialogue group precisely in order to ensure that conflict and discord would inevitably emerge. He repeatedly likened the process to the challenge of climbing Mt. Everest: a very difficult endeavor that demands intense and sustained dedication.

One final issue deserves consideration in our effort to understand why Bohmian psychology remains an undiscovered continent of David Bohm’s worldview. Much of Bohmian psychology coincides with, and was developed in coordination with, the philosophy of J. Krishnamurti. As described in my book, *An Uncommon Collaboration*, the two men worked together for twenty-five years and engaged in dozens of recorded dialogues. But their relationship was controversial and misunderstood by many of Bohm’s peers in the scientific community. They





At Brockwood Park

wrongly perceived Krishnamurti to be representative of Eastern spiritual or mystical traditions, and they recoiled from Bohm's association with that.

The false understanding of Krishnamurti is epitomized by the erroneous label often attached to him: "Indian philosopher." While Krishnamurti was in fact a kind of philosopher, the qualifier "Indian" represents a severe distortion. It implies that he identified himself with the nation of India and that he was an exponent of Indian philosophy. It pigeon-holes him in a category that most Westerners associate with gurus, mystics, and cults of personality.

Bohm came to Ojai for several weeks every year from 1975 until 1985, the year before Krishnamurti died. After that, at first it seemed he would not be coming any more, since the main purpose of his visits was to visit and talk with Krishnamurti. For many of us in Ojai, the prospect of Bohm not coming was very regrettable. So a few of us formed a committee and developed a proposal to see if we could get Bohm to come

back to Ojai. Our idea was to arrange for him to conduct a weekend seminar. We would sell tickets for people to attend, and in this way we would raise enough money to pay the air fare for Bohm and Saral to travel from England. When we presented this proposal to Bohm, he agreed to give it a try.

These seminars were carefully recorded on high quality equipment. We had each seminar transcribed, lightly edited, and then reviewed and edited by Bohm. We created copies of the transcripts, and made them available for sale at the seminar the following year. The transcripts of those seminars represent the primary legacy we have and the only complete expression of Bohm's views in the psychological field. Bohm conducted these seminars in 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, and 1990. The seminar in 1990 was submitted to his publisher, Routledge, and published as a book, *Thought as a System*. But the seminars in the previous years go into many additional topics that don't appear in *Thought as a System*.

Bohmian psychology is very much influenced by Krishnamurti's philosophy, but it includes some additional elements, all expressed in his own language, with his colorful metaphors and examples. Bohm's contribution was to distill some of the essential elements of Krishnamurti's philosophy and fine tune it in certain respects. Perhaps sixty percent of Bohmian psychology overlaps with Krishnamurti, and the rest comes from his background in science, his study of Hegel, and from various others, including Piaget, Freud, and Korzybski, as well as his own unique and original insights.

The point of departure for Bohmian psychology is the total global human disorder, including war, environmental degradation, climate change, racial and religious hatred, extreme economic inequality, and discrimination and exploitation of women. Bohmian psychology poses the question, what is the source of this global human disorder?

Bohm proposes that the source of the disorder lies fundamentally in our collective failure to understand the nature and function of thought. He



In the magnificent Grove, Brockwood Park

acknowledges the great contributions of thought to the development of art, science, technology, and civilization. He recognizes that thought is the tool we employ universally to solve all our problems. So to attribute the human disorder to thought seems very strange at first. It's somewhat like saying that going to the doctor is what is making you sick.

But Bohm maintains there is a great deal about thought that is not well understood. We normally give our attention to the content of thought – our knowledge, beliefs, ideas, objectives, opinions, fears and desires. But we give little attention to the process of thought, the manner in which it works. And there are some flaws or weaknesses in the process of thought which occur no matter what is the content or subject matter. These flaws then feed back into the content in unpredictable and often dangerous ways.

One of the characteristics of thought is that it usually proceeds on the basis of assumptions. Assumptions are part of thought, but they are often implicit, so we don't pay them too much attention. For the most part, that is a good thing. In the language of computer software, not being aware of our assumptions is a feature, not a bug. Bohm gives the example that if I want to walk across the room, I have the assumption that the floor will be solid and support me, and I won't fall through it anywhere. And normally that is a good and useful assumption. Part of its value is precisely that we don't have to think about it. Because we don't usually think about our assumptions, we often don't even realize that we have them. But when people disagree about issues that are important to them, very often the root of their disagreements lies in their different assumptions.

Bohm used a metaphor to describe how we should hold onto our assumptions. He said, think of a blind man who is holding a stick to tap the ground ahead of him as he walks. If he grips the stick very tightly, he can't really use it to tap and sense the ground. But if he holds the stick too loosely, it is also useless and he is liable to drop it. So the blind man needs to hold the stick with a reasonable amount of firmness, but not too much. And that is how we should hold onto our assumptions – firmly enough to make use of them, but not so tightly that they are counter-productive.

Another important attribute of the process of thought involves the issue of fragmentation. Bohm considers fragmentation to be one of the primary characteristics of the global human disorder. He sees fragmentation taking place both outwardly in society as well as inwardly within the individual. One important place we can see fragmentation is in the relationships among nations. In reality, all the nations of the world are extremely dependent upon one another, and the actions of any one inevitably affect many others. Yet each nation regards itself as essentially sovereign, entirely independent of the others. It is a kind of division that falsifies reality and leads to conflict and ultimately to war.

An example of inward fragmentation consists of the separation of thought from emotion. We generally consider that our thoughts belong in one domain of reality, and our feelings are something separate. But Bohm shows that thoughts and emotions are closely interconnected, to such an extent that they should be regarded as a single, inseparable system. He demonstrates this in terms of the structure of the brain, and the neurophysiology of the nervous system, and he gives various examples from daily life.

### **K: The joyful discovery of the ways of the self**

Only in discovery can there be joy – the discovery from moment to moment of the ways of the self. The self, at whatever level it is placed, is still of the mind. Whatever the mind can think about is of the mind. The mind cannot think about something which is not of itself; it cannot think of the unknown. The self at any level is the known; and though there may be layers of the self of which the superficial mind is not aware, they are still within the field of the known. The movements of the self are revealed in the action of relationship; and when relationship is not confined within a pattern, it gives an opportunity for self-revelation. Relationship is the action of the self, and to understand this action there must be awareness without choice; for to choose is to emphasize one interest against another. This awareness is the experiencing of the action of the self, and in this experiencing there is neither the experiencer nor the experienced. Thus the mind is emptied of its accumulations; there is no longer the ‘me’, the gatherer. The accumulations, the stored-up memories are the ‘me’; the ‘me’ is not an entity apart from the accumulations. The ‘me’ separates itself from its characteristics as the observer, the watcher, the controller, in order to safeguard itself, to give itself continuity amidst impermanency. The experiencing of the integral, unitary process frees the mind from its dualism. Thus the total process of the mind, the open as well as the hidden, is experienced and understood – not piece by piece, activity

by activity, but in its entirety. Then dreams and everyday activities are ever an emptying process.

‘Meditation’

*Commentaries on Living, First Series*, pp. 68–69

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So the idea that thought and emotion are separate and independent spheres is false. Thinking that way is a form of fragmentation, and it leads to confusion and incoherence in the way we function in daily life. For example, if thought and feeling are two separate domains, then we can try to control our feelings with our thoughts, as we often do. But if they are one inseparable system, then the effort to control one with the other makes no sense. It leads to inward conflict and incoherence.

A third important characteristic of thought is that it consists of a process of abstraction. “To abstract” means “to take out.” It has a meaning similar to “extract.” So a thought abstracts or takes out from the very complex world of concrete reality the parts that are most salient or relevant and leaves behind what we consider to be less important. As a result, every thought is more or less incomplete. Bohm liked to quote the linguistic philosopher Korzybski, who said, “Whatever we say anything is, it isn’t.” And it is fine for thought to be incomplete in many cases and situations. That is part of what makes it useful. But it also leads to difficulties if we lose track of that incompleteness. We tend to believe that our thoughts are giving us a literal or perfect picture, and we overlook the fact that they are merely abstractions, an approximation of whatever they represent.

We have seen that the process of thought includes making assumptions, and using definitions and limits for words and concepts, and making abstractions from the information provided by our senses. The effect of this process is that thought makes representations of the world, which we use to communicate with one another and for almost everything we do.





Bohm says that when we are consciously thinking of some thought or representation, that is explicit thought. After we are finished, we believe that the thought just goes away. Thought seems to be insubstantial and ephemeral, but Bohm says that is not correct. He says every thought leaves a trace in our memory, and it remains as implicit thought. And implicit thought, he maintains, has very powerful effects of which we are not aware.

To understand the effects of implicit thought, we have to consider the relationship between memory and ordinary perception. Our eyes and ears and physical sensations and mental perceptions altogether produce what Bohm calls a “presentation” in consciousness. This presentation is the immediate input of our perception, our senses, and awareness in consciousness. Thought is a form of knowledge or memory that is a representation, or re-presentation. Once the representation gets stored in memory as implicit thought, it is then ready to move into percep-

tion and shape our awareness of the world. According to Bohm, this is a very crucial move because it happens without our being aware of it. Implicit thought acts very quickly, almost immediately, in such a way that we don't distinguish between the perception and the representation. We take the representation as if it were part of reality, instead of as a memory introduced into awareness by thought.

In many respects, this is a good and useful process. It helps us navigate the world and everything we do during the course of daily life. The difficulty arises when the representation enters into perception in a way that is false or no longer accurate.

Bohm describes this problem by saying that *thought is not aware of its own movement*. When the representation moves out of memory and into the presentation, as if it were part of perception, we don't see that movement. Bohm contrasts this with what happens when we move our body. If I move my arm, the nervous system is arranged so that I get an immediate sensory feedback that tells me that it has moved as a result of my own intention. Bohm calls this kind of self-awareness *proprioception*. We have it in our physical body, but we have no sensory feedback that tells us that thought is operating, that the representation from memory enters into our perception and fuses with it.

Now we will look at another way in which assumptions, defining limits, and forming abstractions, combine to create a serious set of difficulties. To understand this, we need to recall that thought creates representations of everything it encounters. That raises the question, how does thought implicitly define itself? What does thought consist of, and what is not thought? This is one place where Bohm says that our implicit ideas go severely awry. We consider thought to consist primarily of whatever is going through our minds at any given moment. We feel that it is ephemeral and confined within the space of our minds.

We also consider thought to be distinct and separate from the emotions. As we have already pointed out, Bohm maintains that thoughts and



emotions are intimately intertwined with one another, as we can see in neurophysiology, and in all kinds of direct, personal experiences. In addition, as we have discussed, the representations in implicit thought act in such a way as to move into our present perception of the world. They fuse with our perception in such a way that the thoughts get perceived as objective reality.

Moreover, our thoughts are constantly flowing between people and among people, so that your thoughts become my thoughts, and vice versa, all throughout society. And now, with social media, the pace of exchange of thoughts is greatly accelerated. All these thoughts form a kind of network, a vast, interconnected set of ideas, beliefs, opinions, assumptions and information that collectively forms a huge, unified system. So thought is not just an ephemeral, insubstantial phenomenon confined to our individual minds. According to Bohm, thought is a system, an all-pervasive network that flows through each individual as well as throughout society. This idea is so fundamental to Bohmian psychology that the one book he has in this field is titled *Thought as a System*.

Now we come to the place where we find the most confusion in the process of thought, and the primary source of disorder. For this, we have to come back to our implicit thoughts about thought itself. We have to ask: What do we regard as the source, or origin of our thoughts?

Most or all of us feel or believe that inwardly we have a self, what we call “I” or “me,” and when we are thinking, we feel like I am thinking. We feel that inwardly there is a psychological entity, or what we can refer to as the thinker. And we believe, or thought believes, that the thinker is the source or origin of our thoughts.

According to Bohmian psychology, this point of view is fundamentally false. He says the thinker is just a representation created by thought that has no substance underlying it. It is a show, an appearance, that does not correspond to anything that actually exists. In other words, it is illusory. It has the same degree of reality as a rainbow. When we see a rainbow,

there is nothing in the sky that corresponds to what we see. By way of contrast, if you see a mountain in the distance, it is real. You can travel toward it and get closer to it and eventually arrive at the mountain. But you cannot do that with a rainbow. You can't move closer to it because there is nothing there to move closer to. A rainbow is just the appearance of something created by light reflecting off of water droplets in the sky.

In the same way, the thinker – the I, the self, the ego – is just an appearance, a representation created by thought. In other words, it is thought which produces the thinker, rather than the thinker which is producing thought. This is a very deep and fundamental mistake, one which has profound consequences for daily life and for the global human disorder. The reason this illusion has such important and dangerous consequences is that we consider the health and well-being of the psychological entity to be as important as the health and well-being of the physical organism. As a result, we will do anything necessary to defend it.

Our failure to understand the process of thought therefore produces conflict and incoherence both inwardly and outwardly. Thought creates fragmentation and division that leads to conflict. It is based on assumptions that we defend and refuse to question because we are identified with them. We fail to see and acknowledge the pervasive extent and power of thought. And above all, we have an illusory concept of the source of thought, the thinker, the psychological self. We attach ultimate significance to an illusory being whose value overwhelms truth and cooperation and all other considerations.

This is a very brief outline of how the process of thought becomes deeply involved in illusion and incoherence and disorder. But the undiscovered continent of Bohmian psychology is very much richer, more subtle, more complex, and more detailed than what I have presented here. This is merely a brief introduction, and an invitation to study this fertile territory at greater length.

*David Edmund Moody*



Precious water in Rishi Valley, India

photo by V. Santharam

# CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

## K: The universe within

And where there is that love which has never touched jealousy, dependence, attachment, all that, then there is that love and compassion which is intelligence. The mind then can go beyond all measure. Scientists are exploring the universe; astrophysicists are trying, through the telescope, through the various things going into space, through thought, through measurement, through constant observation of the stars, to find the origin of all this, the universe. That is, they go outward, into vast space and so on. But man has very rarely gone inward. And there he can find an immense immeasurable universe, which is this universe. For that there must be vast space in your mind.

All that is meditation: putting the house in order first, complete order, so that there is no conflict, no measure. And there, in that house, there is love. Then the content of the mind, which is its consciousness, can be emptied totally of the 'I', the 'me', the 'you'. Then if you have gone that far, the mind then becomes – it doesn't become, there is no becoming: becoming is still measure – the mind then is totally, absolutely quiet. Not for some period or for a length of time, but its state is to be quiet. And out of that quietness it can respond to thought and utilise thought, but it is always in a state of total quietness, empty of all its content. And if you have gone that far, then you will know. Then there is that which is eternal, nameless.

‘4. Magnitude of the Mind’

*Magnitude of the Mind – Talks in Sri Lanka 1980*, pp. 108–109

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Last year we introduced this section, Consciousness in the Digital Age, to look into some of the issues arising from the current obsession of society with digital technology and its possible deleterious effects. The Internet, which is a great tool for communication and offers the possibility of creating a global network for the spread of knowledge and culture, has become a hub for all sorts of tactics intended to manipulate people economically, socially, politically and in almost every way. The amount of trash, misinformation and deliberate lies being poured into the system is staggering. So instead of contributing to generating a global sense of shared meaning and universal brotherhood, it is facilitating the spread of calculated deceptions, antagonistic stances and massive fraud. Perhaps it was idealistic to think that it could have been otherwise. The Enlightenment thinkers must have felt the same when they came up with the idea of the Encyclopedia, namely that, by making knowledge widely available, they were not only eradicating ignorance but providing mankind with the tool to bring about an egalitarian society free from the bane of power. That did not happen then, and it does not seem to be happening now. Our tools do not change our minds. On the contrary, our minds make the tools and then use them to serve our old mischievous ends. That's why the faith in technology as a factor of change is profoundly misguided since it will place ever more sophisticated instruments at the service of our age-old egocentric conditioning and its pernicious aims. Humanity is psychologically stuck and without an inner revolution there won't be much significant outward change.

However, as researchers are demonstrating, the use of digital technology can adversely affect our attention spans, our cognitive functions and emotional lives. As it is all mediated through our digital devices, our dependence on the artificial stimulation of their streaming content reduces our capacity for direct sensory experience and narrows our attention, with the consequent limitations to our thinking, feeling and behavior. Such a virtual world lends itself to a massive escape from reality and the authenticity of our own being. In other words, it can become a source of alienation rather than a tool of empowerment and integration.

In his latest book, *Toward a Holistic Intelligence: Life on the Other Side of the Digital Barrier*,<sup>11</sup> Lyn Lesch, whose earlier book on this subject we referenced in this same section last year, revisits the adverse effects of the use of digital technologies and examines the possible remedies. Since digital technologies are now woven into the fabric of our lives, the two standard answers are either to minimize their use or to become more aware of the inherent dangers. Lyn, however, proposes that the way to counter the deleterious effects of this technology is the awakening of an intelligence whose encompassing and holistic nature will serve to put technology, memory and thought in their proper place and our senses, hearts and minds out of harm's way. A daring and provocative proposition not currently being contemplated in the field.

## Toward a Holistic Intelligence

*L. Lesch*

In 2021 I published *Intelligence in the Digital Age: How the Search for Something Larger May Be Imperiled*; a book that examined how our current Internet age and people's increasing use of digital devices may be affecting both their mental capacities and emotive lives in ways that make it increasingly difficult for those of us who are interested in doing so to explore the possibility of a larger, more expansive consciousness.

That is, because the natural stream of our thoughts, our attention spans, our working memories, and the depth of our emotive lives are being potentially abrogated by people's addictive use of their smart phones and PCs, these same personal dynamics which are so necessary for an examination of the limits of our thinking minds in search of a larger

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<sup>11</sup> Lyn Lesch, *Toward a Holistic Intelligence: Life on the Other Side of the Digital Barrier*, Rowman & Littlefield, London 2022.

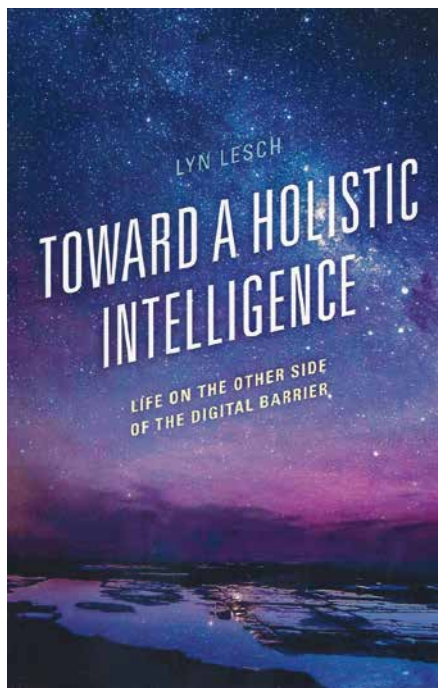
awareness, simply because they are now being stifled, are inevitably going to make that exploration of a larger consciousness significantly more difficult.

As the increasing number of those who have studied the matter thoroughly are most likely already aware, the appearance of the Internet and people's continuous use of digital devices, has had profound effects on both their mental and emotive lives. Yet to date, this discussion has seemingly only involved ways in which we might somehow either alter

our use of digital technologies or else change our apprehension of them so that those negative dynamics don't continue to occur.

Yet it would appear, with all due respect to those who have studied the effects of our habitual devices upon all of us, that so far the discussion seems to have centered upon how we might either limit our use of such devices in a manner which might minimize their potential deleterious effects upon all of us, or simply make people, particularly those young people who have never known a world which didn't include the Internet, more aware of exactly what those negative effects are and how they might occur.

In other words, how our current digital age may be adversely affecting our cognitive lives, memories, and emotive lives has not yet involved a discussion of how we might overcome these potentially adverse effects



by seeking a larger intelligence which in fact exists on the other side of thought and memory; one which is anchored in an enriched sensorial and emotive life that our continuous use of digital technologies won't be able to substantially affect. In addition, such a larger intelligence might likewise lead toward a more expansive consciousness that could substantially enrich our inner lives, as well as sharpen our awareness.

To this end, this book should serve as an exploratory jumping off point for a consideration of what that larger intelligence might specifically entail, and how we might begin to facilitate it within ourselves. Although it is by no means a final definitive statement concerning the potential exploration of a holistic, integrated intelligence which might exist beyond our rational thoughts and working memories, and so should be taken in that spirit, still it will hopefully provoke discussion of the issue, both in terms of the potentially negative effects on us of our current Internet age, and likewise in terms of a more expansive view of the meaning of intelligence.

No doubt, there will be scientists, philosophers, educators, and others who may take issue with some of the statements here which they believe to be unprovable, at least in the present moment. However, what those experts may do well to consider is that many of the ideas explored here, because they exist in a world that is often beyond the bounds of thought, memory, and previous knowledge, should be considered as part of a larger, more expansive vision that does not yet fully exist in the modern world.

Yet at the same time it seems relatively certain that both the Internet and how we are using our digital devices are affecting us profoundly. Consequently, if the effects on our thinking minds, attention spans, working memories, and emotive lives are indeed as adverse as they might appear to be, there would seem to be two approaches we might take in endeavoring to counteract this potential development.



Either we can somehow try to limit the extent to which we use the exciting but potentially hazardous devices which have in fact become our new reality, or we can seek to explore the possibility of the growth of an intelligence that is beyond the reach of the Internet and all its resulting technologies, one that is fundamentally anchored in our sensorial and emotive lives. The first, it would seem, might not be realistic simply because the digital world has now become so thoroughly embedded in all our lives.

The second, however, although being part of a serious exploration into the unknown, might potentially allow us to develop an expansive awareness that the Internet and digital age won't be able to negatively affect, while at the same time, that larger awareness might in fact lead toward the sort of holistic intelligence existing beyond the bounds of thought, memory, and even knowledge which philosophers, thinkers and others have sought for as long as people have raised serious questions about the nature and meaning of our existence in this world; a place which the digital technologies we have recently developed might not be able to reach.

*Lyn Lesch*

### K: There is no psychological survival

We cannot possibly survive if we are concerned only with our own survival. All human beings the world over are interrelated today. What happens in one country affects the others. Man has considered himself an individual separate from others, but psychologically a human being is inseparable from the whole of mankind.

There is no such thing as psychological survival. When there is the desire to survive or to fulfil, you are psychologically creating a situation which not only separates, but which is totally unreal. Psychologically, you cannot be separate from another. The desire to be separate psychologically is the very source of danger and destruction. Each person by asserting himself threatens his own existence. When the truth of this is seen and understood, man's responsibility undergoes a radical change, not only towards his immediate environment, but towards all living things. This total responsibility is compassion. This compassion acts through intelligence. This intelligence is not partial, individual, separate. Compassion is never partial. Compassion is for the sacredness of all living things.

Letter 29 – Human Survival, 1 November 1979  
*The Whole Movement of Life is Learning*, pp. 110–111  
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Our old friend Marcelo Fiorini, who has been deeply involved with the indigenous peoples of the Amazon and with conservationist ecological projects in the region, sent us an **update from Brazil**. The political and social situation in that country, aggravated by the pandemic and the widening economic crisis, is rather challenging. The Amazon, considered by the rest of the world as the lung of our blue planet, has been subjected to ever-

increasing encroachment and destruction. The current rightwing government, with its parochial nationalism and its ruthless view of progress, has shown a total disregard for the immense biodiversity of what is perhaps the last great tropical forest on Earth. No respect has been shown for the native people who live there and who are its ancestral custodians. No consideration has been given to the fact that humanity is now facing the global challenge of climate change for which we are all responsible. This callous disregard for life at this late hour of the day is nothing short of suicidal.

Dear Friedrich,

How are you? It has been some time since I wrote to you. Rafaela and I are always glad to accompany the discussions that issue from your posts, just as the Newsletter has always been a choice of inspiration. Pandemic times have been subsiding now in Brazil, people have gone back to their activities, although Covid is still lurking. We had great difficulties financially during the pandemic. We almost had to close our film production company (the whole audiovisual sector collapsed in Brazil), but we were saved, so to speak, by the spirits and peoples of the forest that we have so much tried to protect in our lives. We were invited in June 2020, just as the gongs of financial bankruptcy were about to sound, to create and coordinate projects in Brazil for [theroddickfoundation.org](https://theroddickfoundation.org) and [theboafoundation.org](https://theboafoundation.org), the two NGOs we have been working with, the latter of which we now head in Brazil, as you know.

We are heading to the Xingu in about two weeks to film a Kwarup, an end of mourning ritual in the most beautiful village in the region. Ulupuene is its poetic name. It belongs to the Waurá, a very traditional Aruak-speaking indigenous group. Their culture is the one that has the deepest ancestry in the Upper Xingu basin, in the southern Amazon forest of Mato Grosso.

I actually proposed to Brockwood to start an educational program to take students to this village for a cultural experience. The original idea

was for students to participate in the construction of a traditional longhouse. Antonio and I tried to organize a group last semester. That would have been a fantastic program: learning about the cosmos and one's own body (or temple, as K used to say), since longhouses are extensions of one's body (they have mouths, ribs, shoulders, faces, etc.), besides being tied to the environment (nature) and culturally to the whole universe. We also thought of a less practical, hands-on, but equally participatory experience: to have students attend this upcoming Kwarup (end of mourning) ritual, to celebrate the memory of a great indigenous storyteller who passed away in February from Covid. Unfortunately, the ritual begins during the first week of classes, so it can't be this time, but we will keep trying.

The Waura said they would allow me and Rafaela to bring a group of 10 to 20 students to their village. The costs would go to covering all the logistics in Brazil, including airport pickup and a crash course on Amazonian indigenous culture at our house in the mountains of São Paulo. We now have room to accommodate the group. The remainder of the costs would include a fee that would go to the indigenous group for their conservation projects and a fee for the NGO we are working with, so that we can receive all the funds in Brazil through a not-for-profit account. The latter fee for the NGO would be allocated to preserving the Amazon through its indigenous cultures.

Antonio has been asking students individually about their interest and the program has not taken off so far. Travel costs in Brazil have also increased considerably after the pandemic, so we would need a group large enough to share the costs for the logistics as well. Obviously, the bulk of the costs would be for traveling to an isolated indigenous village in the Amazon. Nonetheless, if a group of at least 5 students and one staff engaged with the idea, we would be able to apportion these costs evenly enough to offer a reasonable budget for such an incredible learning experience. We are looking forward to this opportunity. I see it as a way to give back to Brockwood a bit of what it has given me.

My apologies for the delay in responding to your email. We were deep in the Amazon when it came and afterwards we were involved with so many projects that we could not keep up with all the correspondence. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Marcelo Fiorini, 12 August 2022

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### K: The vital flame of intent

Our intent is far more important than to achieve a goal, an end; it is not just toward an intellectual and ideological conclusion, but is an active, living present. It is the wick that is burning in a bowl of oil. It cannot be extinguished; no breeze can blow it out; the wick is stout, and the oil is not fed by any external influence or source. It has no cause, and so the flame, the wick and the oil are ever enduring. Our vital flame of intent is to bring about a good, intelligent, extremely capable, free human being. This is my intent as a dedicated teacher, and it should be yours, too, as parents. It should be the intent of all humanity, for we are all concerned. You cannot escape from this intention. You may shy away from it, disregard it, neglect it, but you are as much responsible as I am.

Letter 47 – Intention, 15 December 1982

*The Whole Movement of Life is Learning*, pg. 167

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Michael Krohnen, our old friend and regular chronicler from Ojai, this time shared with us his *Ode to Krishnaji*. Michael has been deeply committed to K and his teachings ever since he first came across them. A native of Germany, he settled in Ojai, where he worked as a cook at Arya Vihara, and where he now mans the K Library, welcoming the visitors and giving introductions to K that have been highly appreciated. His book

*The Kitchen Chronicles: 1001 Lunches with J. Krishnamurti* is a beautifully written account of the memorable encounters he witnessed at the dining table and an expression of his abiding gratitude and love for K.

Dear Friedrichji,

Thank you very much for your voicemail. Always a delight to hear your voice.

I'm working in the Library today, and will be working tomorrow, Sunday, and on Monday, since it's Labor Day, a public holiday in the U.S. It's been HOT!!!! Over 100 F. Yesterday it went up to 105 = 41°C! And at night it stays in the 70s = 20+°C. But that's so Cal.

I'm not sure if I've sent you this little piece dedicated to K. I named it *Ode to Krishnaji*. Let me know how you like it.

### **Ode to Krishnaji**

Sing through me, o Muse, the story of the man who for decades wandered the boundless earth and crossed great waters to teach truth to humanity.

Even as the world erupted in war and destruction many times, he abided in peace, love and compassion. Nothing swayed him from the path of right action: what he said, he did; what he taught, he lived. He lived 1080 moons. During that time, he travelled more than a million miles across the face of the planet which he loved and cared for.

He spoke but the truth: whether beneath the wide-branched tamarinds of Chennai or the live-oaks of Ojai; whether in the huge tent of Saanen by the rushing mountain stream, or the tent among the verdant meadows of Brockwood Park; whether in the halls of London, Paris, Rome, Amsterdam, New York or Santa Monica, in the Masonic Temple of San



Above Zermatt, Switzerland

Francisco, in churches, universities, schools and colleges of Puerto Rico, California, Mexico City and Rio de Janeiro, all over Europe, India and Australia – nothing but clear perception escaped his lips. And the multitudes gathered and listened in silence.

Thousands of times he engaged in profound enquiry and dialogue with the famous, the learned, the celebrated minds of the 20th Century. He discussed the profound questions of daily life with teachers, students and parents; he conversed with kings and princes, prime-ministers, presidents and senators, with artists and scientists: he touched the mighty and the low, he touched all of humanity without reservation. He transformed the essence and core of human consciousness on the globe. He founded seven schools on three continents, showing new and more creative ways of educating future generations. By being a light to himself, he was a bright light to those around him, and to all humankind. He did not seek power, fame and material wealth. Because he was free in an inmost way, he was able to divest himself of any tendency to dominate other human beings. There was no pretense or deception in him.

When during many decades thousands of people, one by one, came to see him with their problems, their sorrow and fear, he was a friend and a brother. He would not just say, “Be your brother’s keeper!” He was it most profoundly. He would hold your hand. And he was a mirror: clean, polished, crystal-clear and bright, without distortion, without holding back; and you could perceive yourself as never before.

He was without sentimentality about himself and the world. He did not make any claims – of being a savior, a Messiah, the Maitreya Buddha, even though at certain times he had been proclaimed as such. He did away with and denied all spiritual and religious authority, both for himself and others, and did not tolerate being proclaimed as an authority of any kind.

His world-wide public talks and dialogues were recorded, transcribed and published over sixty years, and translated into humanity’s many languages. He walked in silence. He lived in vibrant emptiness.



His long life resembled a fairy tale – it was full of magic, mystery and beauty; and it was not without challenges and difficulties. But like a lovely flower on the banks of a mighty stream, he blossomed and spread his perfume for all humanity to cherish. He was a mystery, as life is a mystery, as the cosmos is a mystery, as each human being ultimately is a mystery. He liked mysteries. And he clarified.

*(Nazaré, Portugal, September 1989/Ojai, California, June 2021)*

Alles Gute und Liebe,  
*Michael Krohnen, 4 September 2022*

## K: The stability of nothingness

In becoming there is uncertainty and instability. In nothingness there is absolute stability and so clarity. That which is wholly stable never dies; corruption is in becoming. The world is bent on becoming, achieving, gaining and so there is fear of losing and dying. The mind must go through that small hole which it has put together, the self, to come upon this vast nothingness whose stability thought cannot measure. Thought desires to capture it, cultivate it and put it on the market. It must be made acceptable and so respectable, to be worshipped. Thought cannot put it into any category and so it must be a delusion and a snare; or it must be for the few, for the select. And so thought goes about its own mischievous ways, frightened, cruel, vain and never stable, though its conceit asserts there is stability in its actions, in its exploration, in knowledge it has accumulated. The dream becomes a reality which it has nurtured. What thought has made real is not truth. Nothingness is not a reality but it is the truth. The small hole, the self, is the reality of thought, the skeleton on which it has built all its existence – the reality of its fragmentation, the pain, the sorrow and its love. The reality of its gods or its one god is the careful structure of thought, its prayer, its rituals, its romantic worship. In reality there is no stability or pure clarity. The knowledge of the self is time, length, width and volume; it can be accumulated, used as a ladder to become, to improve, to achieve. This knowledge will in no way free the mind of the burden of its own reality. You are the burden; the truth of it lies in the seeing of it and that freedom is not the reality of thought. The seeing is the doing. The doing comes from the stability, the clarity, of nothingness.

Malibu, 23 April 1975

*Krishnamurti's Journal*, pp. 97–98

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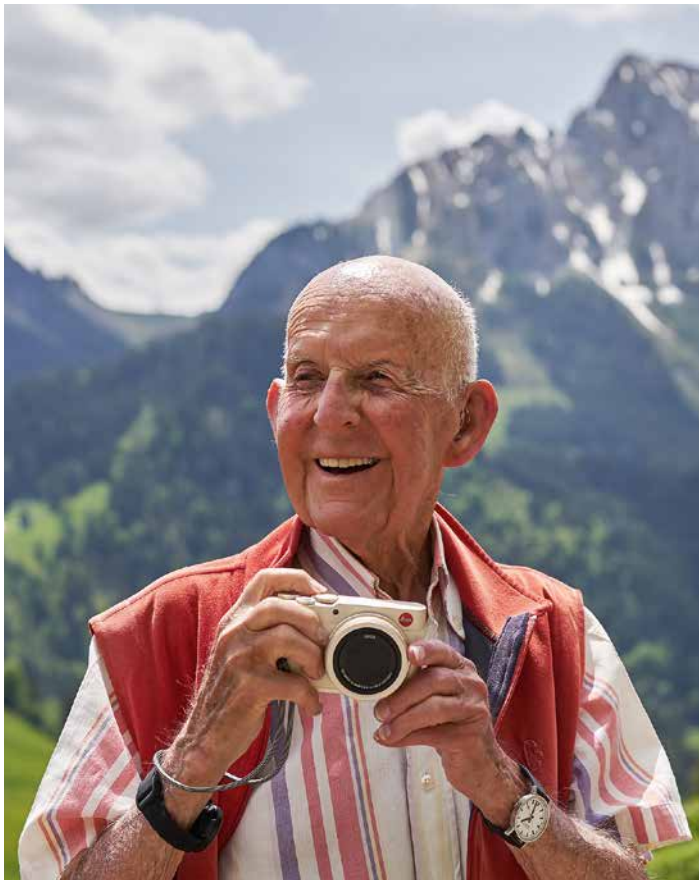


photo by Sara Fargas Prieto

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