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## **DISCUSSION WITH BUDDHISTS**

—J. Krishnamurti, 7 November 1985

**THE FUTURE IS NOW**, KRISHNAMURTI'S LAST TALKS IN INDIA, VICTOR GOLLANCZ, 1988

First Participant\* (P1): **So far as I have understood, you say that life has no purpose or aim and therefore there is no path to tread.** Therefore each person is faced with every moment by itself. If the moment is to be understood, then the same moment is the moment of action, knowledge and desire. Is this understanding correct?

KRISHNAMURTI (K): If I may point out, **we are not discussing what is correct or not correct. Sir, this is a subject that requires a great deal of inquiry.**

P1: If you say that this is not a question of correctness or otherwise, you are creating a problem for the people who want to understand.

K: No. On the contrary, I am saying that Panditji\* and all of us, including myself, are going to investigate. I don't say, 'That is right, this is wrong', but together we are going to go into it.

P1: How can there be a human being who does not decide what is correct or incorrect, what is good or not good?

K: We will come to that. I don't say there is no goodness. Goodness may be entirely different from your goodness and

my goodness. So **let us find out which is really the good — not yours or mine, but that which is good ...**

\* The chief participant in these discussions with Buddhists (P1) is Pandit Jagannath Upadhyaya.

P2: ... in itself.

K: Yes.

P1: You are introducing an uncertainty into one's way of looking at things or one's philosophical outlook.

K: Yes, but **if you start with certainty, you end up with uncertainty.**

P1: This also sounds very paradoxical — that you start with certainty and end up with uncertainty.

K: Of course. This is daily life. So, sir, because you raised a question which implies time, thought, action, could we begin by first going into the question of what is time? Not according to the Buddha, or to some scripture, but what is time? He will interpret it one way, the scientists will say that it is a series of small actions, thoughts and so on. Or you might say, well, time is death, time is living, or thought is time. Right? So, could we, for the time being, put aside what other people have said, including the Buddha, including what I have said or haven't said — wipe all that out — and say, 'Now, what is time?'

Is this the only problem we have in life — time — not only a series of events, but being born, growing, dying, time as the past,

future and present? We live in time. The moment we hope, it is time — I hope to be, I hope to become, I hope to become enlightened; all that implies time. Acquiring knowledge implies time, and the whole of living from birth to death is a problem of time. Right, sir? Am I making myself clear? So what is it that we call time?

P1: You have spoken about this many times, but I want to say that the moment which is knowledge, action, as well as desire, is a moment in which there is no time.

K: Wait, wait. Can you divide this instant from the rest?

P1: In the instant of attention or observation, there is no time.

K: What do you mean, observation and attention? Sorry to be so analytical. But if we are to understand each other we must be clear about the meaning of these two words — attention and observation. What takes place actually when you observe? — not theoretically. When you observe that tree, that bird, that woman, that man, what takes place?

P2: In that moment of observation, if it is real observation...

K: Is it? I am asking. When he uses the word observation, what does he mean by that? I may mean one thing, he may mean another, she may mean yet another thing.

P2: But you are asking Panditji what *he* means by observation.

K: And what he means by attention... Sir, may I ask a question? Could we start to discuss, to have a dialogue, a conversation on a word, which is really very, very good deliberation? You know the meaning of that word deliberate? The word comes from *libra* which in Greek means balance, weigh. You have the same thing in the Zodiac - Libra. And from *libra* comes the word liberate. And also it comes from the word *deliberare* which in Italian means 'to sit down, talk over, take counsel with each other, weigh together'. It is not you offering an opinion and I offering another opinion, but both of us taking counsel together, both of us weighing because we want to find the truth of it. Not I will find it and then tell you — that does not exist in that word deliberate. Sir, when the Pope is elected in Rome, in the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican, they deliberate - the doors are locked, nobody can get out, they have their own places for toilet, restaurant, food; everything is arranged for a fortnight or for some days. Within those set days they must settle. That is called deliberation. So could we start, both of us, as though we know nothing?

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P3: It is difficult for Panditji.

K: It is not difficult. I know nothing; our knowledge is merely memory. What's the point of it? **I am saying, knowledge may be the greatest danger in the world; it may be the greatest hindrance.** To further knowledge we are adding, the scientists are adding. That which is added to is always limited.

P2: Of course. If it is complete, you cannot add to it.

K: Yes. Therefore your knowledge is always limited, and if you discuss from that limitation, you end up in limitation.

P2: And the so-called certainty is that limitation.

K: Yes, limitation.

P1: We have heard quite a bit from you and understood certain things; but if the understanding has to be at a deeper level, then someone like you has the responsibility of making that known, since we are at different levels.

K: All right, all right. But the man says, K says, leave your moorings, let us float together.

P1: How can we counsel together when we are at two different levels?

K: I don't admit that. **I don't admit that we are at two levels.**

P1: We have a complaint against you that ...

K: ...that I am a poor surgeon!

P1: Physician, yes. Because there are all the difficulties and conflicts outside. People like me who have the privilege of coming to you receive some light, but the physician is not able to say how to cope with those things which are outside and solve the difficulties there.

## WORDS

1. **panditji**: scholar + sir. ← pangita: learned individual
2. **deliberation**: ← deliberate: engage in careful discussion
3. **mooring**: place where boats are fastened (chained; fixed)

## POINTS

1. So far as I have understood, you say that life has no purpose or aim and therefore there is no path to tread.
2. (W)e are not discussing what is correct or not correct. Sir, this is a subject that requires a great deal of inquiry.
3. (L)et us find out which is really the good — not yours or mine, but that which is good.
4. (I)f you start with certainty, you end up with uncertainty.
5. I am saying, knowledge may be the greatest danger in the world; it may be the greatest hindrance.
6. I don't admit that we are at two levels.