

ON AN

# ETERNAL VOYAGE

An inward journey to freedom  
including dialogues with

J.Krishnamurti

Vimala Thakar

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## FOREWORD

Vimal Parivar, Bombay, is indeed privileged to print this eight edition of Vimalaji's classic book "On An Eternal Voyage" with very valuable epilogue entitled "Thirty Year After" so graciously contributed by Vimalaji at our request. This book contains momentous dialogues between Shri J. Krishnamurti and Vimalaji which were important milestones in her inward journey to freedom which ultimately culminated into her Eternal Home Coming as she has so beautifully put it in her epilogue.

The Publication of this edition has been made possible due to the whole-hearted co-operation from many friends to whom we express our thanks. We are specially grateful to Shri Ashwin Mehta, the internationally known photographer, for allowing us to use his beautiful photographs for the cover page. We were able to come in touch with Shri Ashwin Mehta through the courtesy of our mutual friend Shri Krishnakant .H. Parekh. Shri Sudarshan Dheer, the famous graphic designer, has again lovingly prepared the art work for the jacket of the book. He has also arranged for the process work which was voluntarily carried out without any charge by Jasra Graphics. We would like to express our appreciation for all the assistance so willingly given by Shri Sudarshan Dheer. We are also thankful to Shri Kishorbhai Gohil for correcting the printing and the typographical errors in the previous edition of the book and making the excellent suggestion for requesting Vimalaji to contribute an epilogue. We also express our sincere thanks to Prof. Abhijit Padte, Miss Samita Parab and Miss Trupti Worlikar for computer processing of this new edition.

We urge the reader to undertake his own inward journey to freedom so that Vimalaji's benediction becomes a reality, "May the home coming occur in the lives of those who happen to read the book."

15th August, 1994

Vimal Parivar, Bombay.

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## Introduction

Since childhood the Unknown has haunted me. The known world has absolutely no attraction for me. The visible and the known were nothing more than the shadow of the invisible; the shadow of the Unknown. Some years ago my romance with the Unknown came to an end. This book contains the story of its abrupt end. The abrupt end has meant the beginning of a new life. This life seems to have no purpose; no direction whatsoever; it has not indicated any pattern yet. The only thing I can say is - it is overwhelmingly fresh; it is unbelievably new; the freshness and the newness keep one ever alert, ever keen and ever insecure. Though the journey has come to an end, I have not arrived. Perhaps there is nowhere to arrive. Perhaps there is no static destination. It seems to me that life is its own purpose; life is its own direction. Life is dynamic and those who live are on an eternal voyage.

Vimala

## At Rajghat

It was in January 1956 that I found myself at Rajghat, Kashi. I was touring United Provinces of India in connection with the Bhoodan Movement. (The Land-gift Movement of Vinoba Bhave)

I was staying with Mr. A. He was working with the 'Foundation for New Education.' I did not know anything about the foundation; nor did I know anything about J.Krishnamurti, who founded that institution.

Mr. A. asked me whether I would like to see Krishnamurti, who happened to be at Rajghat then. He was giving discourses as usual. I had no desire for a personal interview with Krishnamurti. I was happy however, to get an opportunity of attending his talks. Next morning I attended the first talk. For the first time in my life I saw Krishnamurti. The morning was bright. The cool winter breeze was soaked in sunshine. There were students with their youthful eagerness; there were teachers with their cultivated restraint, and there were elderly men and women sitting serenely. The big hall was full of silent life!

At 8.30 Krishnamurti entered the hall. A gentle slim figure walked briskly and sat cross-legged on the specially designed platform. He had remarkable eyes - deep, expressive and eloquent. His clothes were simple and elegant. He had such peace about him that suddenly the hall was filled with it.

He spoke for forty minutes. The voice was rich and strong. His words were simple and direct. His pronunciation was unusually distinct. His language was charmingly chaste. The style was conversational. He spoke in poetic prose.

I understood him to have said that the basic human problems were everywhere the same. Scientific and technological advance had not changed the content of the fundamental challenge. The challenge consisted in creating a new mind, a new human being. Unless one could break the shackles of organized belief, religion and thought, it was not possible to have a new mind. One could not arrive at Truth, without being completely free to do so. Life without Truth was meaningless.

No one could lead you to Truth. You have to work hard and get there by yourself. No Guru, no guide could help you to get free. If you free yourself from the memory of the past and the dreams of the future, you might come face to face with living present. The Truth hidden in it might unfold itself, if you would but allow it to operate.

Krishnamurti left the hall as quietly as he had entered it. I woke up to my normal consciousness. Dragging myself out of the land of peace, I went back to my cottage.

Next morning, I went out for a long walk. I was alone with myself. I had an interesting dialogue with myself. I asked myself, 'Why was I not free yet? Had I any responsibility which

was holding me back? Responsibility towards the family? Towards any organization?' 'None whatsoever' came the reply. 'Did I want money? Power of any kind? Fame?' 'No! No! No!', came the emphatic reply. 'Did I want security, material or spiritual?' 'Not in the least' , was the prompt reply.

Then why was I not free? Why was there not humility? Why was there not silence within? Why was there discontent about everything around me as well as about me? Where would this deep discontent lead me ?

Krishnamurti's talk had stirred me to the very depths of my being. It became clear to me that the 'Ego' was at the root of the whole trouble.

In the evening R. said to me, 'Vimalaji, may I ask you a question? You have cancelled your program in order to attend Krishnamurti's talks. But when A. asked you to see Krishnamurti personally you refused to do so! I do not understand your psychology.'

I said, 'There is nothing to understand. I have no questions to ask him. I have no problems to consult him about. Why should I waste his time? I feel shy to see any great man without any compulsive need to do so. What will I say to Krishnamurti?'

R. How should one believe that you feel shy? - You who go round the country giving lectures and discourses...

V. I do not feel nervous when I address a gathering, but I do feel extremely nervous when I have to see any celebrity.

A. I can't swallow this...

R. Please do see him once. You will understand him far better in personal interview. You know, Vimala, the personal factor does count. Krishnamurti has got his own song to sing. He has something to tell the people. You have been seeking the Unknown. You should see him once.

I slipped out with a rather sheepish smile. There was something strange about my attitude. My reluctance to have a personal interview with Krishnamurti. It was not easy to understand. But for me it was very simple.

After reading 'First and Last Freedom' and some talks by Krishnamurti I saw that he was a liberated person. I felt an urge to see him and attend his talks. I was, however, completely satisfied after listening to the first talk. I could experience what he was trying to communicate through words.

Naturally I did not feel any necessity of having a personal interview after that talk. I had met him, in a way, through listening to his talk. But I could not explain it to anyone. How could I explain or even describe the experience of living communion through which I had gone?

Next morning, I attended the second talk. Krishnamurti spoke about education. He said, 'Education today helps only to cultivate memory. We are turning human beings into memory machines. We are turning out mediocres who can retain facts and opinions and draw on them when need arises. We are turning out men whose minds are conditioned by traditions, beliefs, religions, etc.'

It seems to me that real education begins when you get beyond all such conditioning factors; when you understand the process of thinking.

Society is not going to help you in your efforts to get beyond the conditioning factors. Society wants to breed mediocres in order to maintain its traditions. You will have to revolt against such society.'

He also dealt with the problem of knowledge.

'Knowledge' he said, 'conditions your experience. If you want to experience reality directly you must strip your mind of all the knowledge.' 'You cannot learn about reality or Truth. You can only have direct perception, direct experience of Truth now -immediately.'

The 'how' of this cannot be taught by any person to any other person. Teaching needs a method. Method introduces the time factor. Time is memory. Memory means tradition. All these together condition the mind. Such a mind cannot be alert and sharp. If you watch these factors, they drop away by themselves. The conditioning is then over. The cessation of the conditioning process is the beginning of awareness.'

The talk had made me happy beyond words. I had watched Krishnamurti's efforts to communicate something which was beyond words. All enlightened ones have been trying their hands at this impossible task. The urge to express and communicate, the urge to share and commune is the spring from which all art and sculpture, all poetry and music flow out. The spontaneous outflow of Krishnamurti's experience had carried me to its fountainhead. It was not easy to keep pace with him. At the end of this talk I was absolutely exhausted.

It was not listening to a speech. It was experiencing that abundant energy, which was struggling to express itself through words!

I went back to my room. I spent the whole day in silence. I was so full of the astounding experience! Experience of getting energy out of exhaustion.

Next day R. told me that I was to see Krishnamurti at 12.30 p.m. I had no time to think about it as I had to attend the third talk.

He spoke about the role of parents and teachers.

‘What is the role of a teacher? It is to help the student find out what he loves to do. Men are not free, because they do not know what they love to do. Freedom is never in relation to anyone or anything.

‘Freedom is not in opposition to something. Real freedom flows out of love. Only love can create freedom. Only free persons can co-operate with one another.

Co-operation is not adjustment. It is not working together for some ideal. It is not working together due to the compulsion of socio-economic forces. Co - operation implies two free individuals expressing their love for each other.

Parents and teachers have to help children become free.’

Exactly at 12.30 in the afternoon I entered Krishnamurti’s room. He was standing in the doorway. He smiled and welcomed me. We settled down on a carpet spread on the floor. I was feeling shy and nervous and did not know how to start the conversation. Two minutes passed in complete silence. I then ventured to say :

V.I have been trying to listen to you, Sir, for the last three days. I enjoyed your talks immensely. But I have been experiencing one difficulty while trying to listen to you. I find that the ‘I’ stealthily creeps in. With it comes the memory of certain incidents, of certain thoughts, of certain experiences. That prevents me from directly experiencing what you are saying. I hope I am making myself clear.

K. Yes!

V. May I request you, Sir, to help me in finding out how this ‘I’ is built up and why it creeps in, when I want to listen to you or when I want to do certain other work?

K. Perhaps your interest in my talks is temporary. Perhaps you have got some other interest, which have gone deeper, not only in your conscious mind; but deeper still, down to the unconscious and the subconscious mind.

V. Please excuse me, sir, I am sure I have no such interests, nor is my interest in your talks temporary. That interest is related to my sole interest in Life i.e. Liberation!

K. No ambition?

V. No, Sir!

K. Are you married?

V. No

K. Why did you not get married?

V. It is quite simple, sir, because I did not feel the necessity.

K. Will you not marry?

V. I do not know.

K. Supposing you get a man of your choice?

V. I do not know, Sir.

K. Is there any vow not to marry?

V. No!

K. No suppression? Sure?

V. There is no suppression of any kind.

K. What is your father?

V. An advocate.

K. Where is he?

V. He is at Akola.

K. Where is Akola?

V. In Central Province.

K. What are you doing at present?

V. Working in the Bhoodan Movement.

K. Why are you working?

V. Because through it I can express myself, my love for human beings.

K. Not to help them?

V. Who am I to help others, Sir?

K. Quite so, quite so! Dear lady, why did you come to hear me ?

V. Because I felt like coming.

K. Very interesting and how did you find the talks?

V. Well...Sir!

K. Now come. Come lady, no hesitation. Please!

V. I had to exert a lot to keep pace with you. By the end of the talks I used to feel rather exhausted.

K. (Smiling) I am glad it was so. If you do not mind. Are you happy?

V. I don't follow the question, Sir!

K. Are you happy with yourself?

V. In a way I am happy and in a way I am not.

K. Well!

V. Please let me explain, Sir. In as much as I am not liberated I am not happy. And in as much as to be liberated has been my only interest in life, I am happy.

K. What is liberation according to you?

V. Liberation is that state which you call awareness!

K. That will need a very sharp intelligence. Everyone can have that sharp intelligence. Be simple. Perceive directly. Don't try to experience through Shankara, Krishna, Gandhi or Krishnamurti.

V. Is it so simple as all that ?

K. Of course, it is! you are leaving today?

V. Yes, Sir!

K. Why? May I ask?

V. To attend an important meeting of...

K. Where is that?

V. At Bezwada

K. Are you coming back for the talks ?

V. Not now, but I hope to be in Bombay in March for the talks.

K. So we shall meet in Bombay!

V. Yes, surely; provided I am in Bombay. Let me thank you, sir...!

K. That is not necessary.

V. Well, it has been a privilege for me - this interview, I mean.

K. Namaste!

V. Namaste!

Thus, I met Krishnamurti. His eyes were eloquent with love and peace. He had a gentle way of dealing with his visitors. The clarity and simplicity of expression was enchanting.

But I failed to understand why he had asked me a number of questions about my personal life. I could not see any relation between the questions I had asked him and the questions he had asked me in return.

I had to leave Benaras the same day.

At Vasant-Vihar

The tour in South India brought me to Madras in the first week of february 1956. I was staying with Mrs. A. Within three hours of my arrival A. asked me whether I would care to attend Krishnamurti's talk that evening. It was an agreeable surprise to me. By 5 p.m. we were at Vasant Vihar.

About 300 persons were sitting on the beautiful lawns. The place was surrounded by tall trees. It was surprisingly quiet. A cool pleasant breeze added to the silence of the place.

Krishnamurti spoke about Religious Revolution. His words were charged with tremendous intensity. He started with the following words:

‘It is very difficult to see Reality in its totality. The mind sees it in pieces and tries to put those pieces together. By putting the pieces together, the mind hopes to capture Reality. But it can never experience Truth this way.

The mind cannot perceive Truth in its totality, because it is conditioned by the process of thinking. Thinking and the thought are different entities for the mind. In reality they are not so.

As soon as the mind realizes the thinking is not the medium for experiencing Reality, it becomes free. The awareness of the incapacity works a miracle. Of course, you must let that awareness operate.

Generally we do not let the Truth operate upon the mind. We are eager to operate on everything.

Let the Awareness function. Then the mind becomes quiet. Motives disappear; tranquility pervades the whole being. In that state alone does the perception of Truth come. And it comes naturally. It is there. It is revealed in a gentle manner.

This is real revolution. This is the religious revolution, which man needs today. Let man see the totality of things. Then he will not try to pull the world to pieces, in the form of nations, races, religions, ‘isms’, dogmas etc.

Reality is one indivisible whole. We are it. To sever oneself from that whole and imagine having a separate entity is the real mischief.’

I enjoyed the talk immensely. The words and the intensity throbbing in them had opened the doors to the unknown. I was not aware of anything but of the irresistible presence of the eternal.

We went back to our place. Nothing could penetrate the silence in which I was enveloped that evening. My hosts were a bit apprehensive to see me in a deep silence for the rest of the evening. They thought that I was under the impact of the words! A kind of hypnotic spell. They wanted to discuss the issue.

I told them that there was no issue to discuss. There was no hypnosis, nor was there any impact! Rather it was taking the journey together with the speaker- with Krishnamurti. When two minds experience the same state, simultaneously, they go through a strange state of communion. No words can describe it. Naturally I could say nothing more than stating the fact that there was no issue, which could be discussed.

I was to leave for Madurai next morning. I postponed the visit by two days. In the evening, I accompanied my hosts to Vasant - Vihar. We attended the talk.

Krishnamurti started his talk by saying:

‘The problems of today are created by the conditioned mind. As long as the mind is conditioned, no human problems can be solved.

Turn inward and find out how the mind works. What the total process of consciousness is; from where do the acquisitive and separative tendencies spring.

Let the mind be liberated by the very process of discovering how it works. Let the mind be stripped of all the known recognizable notions. Then perhaps the mind will discover for itself what Reality is, what the Truth is, what God is.

Immediately the question “how to do this” arises in your minds. Because you are accustomed to function in the grooves of methods and techniques. You must be given a channel to work in. You must be given a system.

I say why do you bring the “How” ? Why do you bring the time factor? As soon as time comes in, memory follows it. Memory prevents further thinking. The response of memory is not thought. In order to think you must die to every experience.

Unless you die to every experience you cannot live. Every experience becomes a hindrance. It stands between your mind and Reality.

So let the mind be free. He is truly religious, whose mind is free. He lives. He is truly revolutionary. He has brought about real revolution in the world. The world is just an extension and projection of the individual.

So we have to lay all the emphasis on this inner revolution. We have got to start with ourselves. When this revolution takes place there is tranquility and peace.

It cannot be described. That which can be described is already known. That which is known is not real.’

I saw that Krishnamurti was a person whose words were the very breath of his life. They were like ripples of a living water. They were the fragrance of a living mind. They had the perfume of life! I was extremely happy and went back in great silence.

Next morning I went to see Krishnamurti. This time I had questions in my mind. I did not need anyone to persuade me to see him. I would have loved to spend a few minutes with him, even if I had nothing to ask him or consult him about.

I entered his room feeling a bit nervous. This nervousness which is due to the inherent shyness of my nature has not disappeared even today. He greeted me with a gentle smile. We settled down for our session. Without any preliminaries, I directly entered into a discussion:

V. Last time when I met you, I had asked you a question. Instead of answering my question, you had put a number of questions to me. I could not understand the relation between my question and your questions.

K. You did not think that I was inquisitive!

V. Certainly not!

K. Why did you not ask me then and there?

V. It did not strike me while I was with you. As soon as I stepped out of the room, it struck me.

K. Why were you disturbed by my questions?

V. I was not at all disturbed. I wanted to find out the relation between the two.

K. It is simple. Let me explain. I wanted to know the background before I could answer your question. Do you see?

V. Yes, Sir.

K. What is your reaction to yesterday's talk?

V. I feel I have understood it.

K. This morning's talk?

V. Well, as for this morning's talk, I think that thinking involves time. Thinking does involve memory. As soon as you free the mind from memory it is no more 'Mind'. Nor do we need to 'Think' in that state. We perceive Truth. We experience Truth. We are one with it.

K. Well, call it perception if you like but it is real thinking. Real thinking does not involve time. It is seeing. You may need time to communicate it - to express it. But thought is not conditioned by time. Thinking is not adding and subtracting. It is not accepting and rejecting. It is not judging and condemning. It is seeing the Totality of Reality - mind you, not seeing reality piece by piece and then joining these pieces together and calling it -Truth.

V. Are there any pieces in Reality? Perceiving means seeing the whole. How can we perceive it piece by piece? It is not logic- inductive or deductive. Reality is an indivisible Whole and experience means realizing one's identity with that Whole.

K. Yes, My dear lady! But not so fast please! Let us go slow! That is the difference between the minds of great men, seers, artists and the common man. It is only the great who see the

Whole. All their actions spring from that centre of identity, and that needs complete abandonment. It needs simplicity and austerity.

V. What do you mean by austerity?

K. Not the traditional notion of austerity.

V. That I can see. But I would like to know the positive meaning of austerity.

K. To be simple is to be austere. To be aware of one's limitations is austerity. Knowledge is austere, is it not? So please let us realize, that simplicity, austerity and complete abandonment help one to see the Reality.

V. And you say, Sir, there is no 'How to this'; no method; no system.

K. Yes, You have just to observe; to watch.

V. But the mind does not stop at mere watching. It wants to analyze; to distinguish; to classify...

K. No, the mind does not stop, if it is not committed to anything. Let it only be aware and the rest will follow.

## I Listen to Krishnamurti

After my encounter with Krishnamurti in Madras, I decided to study his 'teachings', if I am allowed that expression. I knew that he had not evolved a system of thought. He had no philosophy of his own. Still I tried to find out what he had to say about total human life.

I could get some of his books. 'The First and Last Freedom' was indeed a very thought-provoking book. 'Education and its Significance for Life' as well as a small booklet - 'On Learning' helped me a lot to understand his mind.

I also came across some interesting books on Krishnamurti. Books like 'Living Zen' and 'World without Frontiers' gave me an idea of where Krishnamurti stood in relation to Vedanta and Zen Buddhism. Books like 'Candles in the Sun' and 'To be young' gave me some idea of his early life.

I had not known anything about his childhood and youth. When I met him first in 1956, he must have been on the wrong side of sixty. He was an old man, though he looked full of vigor and energy. Lines of old age were not only visible but nearly set around the eyes and the mouth. The body was lean and thin.

After reading a number of books about his life and personality, I could feel the tortures which that sensitive and noble person must have gone through while he had to play the role of the Messiah.

I was all admiration for the sublime courage which enabled him to dissolve the 'Star of the East' and sever all connections with the Theosophical society.

I had no opportunity of seeing him again or attending his talks till March 1957. I was busy touring India and lecturing about the philosophy of Land- gift mission with which I was associated.

I had never been a member of any organization, though I had been associated with various cultural, educational and spiritual activities in the country.

In March 1957, I happened to be in Bombay while Krishnamurti was giving talks and holding discussions. I adjusted my program in such a way that I could attend some of his talks. Even then I could hardly attend three talks before my work snatched me away from Bombay.

I was scheduled to go to Assam. At Mugalsarai, I happened to receive my mail which contained a number of a Marathi weekly - 'SADHANA'. That number contained an article on Krishnamurti by a leading thinker.

He had compared Krishnamurti and his renunciation of the 'Messiah - Ship' to Lord Buddha's renunciation of his kingdom. He had claimed that Krishnamurti was the latest exponent of the Vedic and Upanishadic Truth; that he was the modern most expression of the Buddhist as well as the Vedantic philosophy. He had, furthermore, claimed that Krishnamurti had the scientific terminology suited for the twentieth century, in which he was presenting the cosmic truth.

I read and re-read the article. I knew the writer personally. I had great respect and affection for him. I was sorry to see that he had missed the basic truth of Krishnamurti's 'teachings,' if one may use that word.

The train moved on. I could not restrain myself from writing an open letter to the writer of the article.

The green fields of wheat and maize were looking fresh and alive. The countryside of Bihar has always fascinated me. The soft earth; the green or golden fields; the mischievous currents of its many rivers-big and small; the brown healthy figures of men and women; the mango grooves- It is simply marvelous! It was wonderful to look at those familiar sights as village after village was passing by. I took out pen and paper. When completed the letter read as follows:

"May I point out with all the humility at my command, that the notions like 'gratification' and 'renunciation' have no place in Krishnamurti's life? Lord Buddha renounced everything with a consciousness that he was renouncing it for the sake of 'enlightenment'. But Krishnamurti did not dissolve the 'Star of the East' as a means to an end. It was a complete action in itself. It was a spontaneous action without any motive whatsoever.

Did not Krishnamurti say at Omen in 1929:

"I do not want followers. I mean this. One newspaper reporter who interviewed me considered it a magnificent act to dissolve an organization in which there were thousands and thousands

of members. He said, “what will you do afterwards, how will you live? You will have no following, people will no longer listen to you.”

If there are only five people who will listen, who will live, who have their faces turned towards eternity, it will be sufficient. Of what use it is to have thousands who do not understand, who are fully embalmed in prejudice, who do not want the new, but would rather translate the new to suit their own sterile selves?

Because I am free, unconditioned whole, not the part, not the relative, but the whole truth that is eternal, I desire that those who seek to understand me, to be free: not to follow me, not to make out of me a cage, which will become a religion, a sect. Rather they should be free from all fears; from the fear of religion; from the fear of salvation; from the fear of spirituality; from the fear of love; from the fear of death; from the fear of life itself.”(Candles in the sun, Page 178)

Moreover it is entirely unwarranted to say that Krishnamurti has a specific terminology. He has to use some words to express himself. He has to use them for those who do not understand the language, which is beyond words. For him however, the medium of words is secondary and unimportant.

The truth indicated by his words, seems to be so different from the truth indicated by all the traditionally accepted spiritual concepts and symbols, that those words cannot possibly be called the expression of any philosophy whatsoever.

You cannot compare Krishnamurti’s life with anything known. He may be giving us a glimpse of the whole man of tomorrow. The whole human being, in whose personality science and spirituality are beautifully integrated. His life vibrates with the deep music of unlabeled reality. His eyes shine with the glow of transparent humility and compassion.

His words do not depend for their authenticity, on sanctions derived from anything non-human and non- material. The sanction is derived from love and reason, which are the necessary ingredients of every human personality.’

I finished the letter. As soon as the train arrived to Calcutta I mailed it.

Thus I kept on reading books about Krishnamurti and talks by Krishnamurti. With my constant travels and heavy schedules of meetings and conferences, I had not much energy to spend quiet days and relax.

The year 1958 passed without anything significant happening to my consciousness. I could not attend Krishnamurti’s talks. I could not meet him anywhere either at Benaras, Bombay or Madras.

The inner journey that my consciousness was taking was leading me very fast towards a crisis. I had started doubting the propriety of my being associated with any organized revolutionary

movement. If revolution was entirely a voyage into the Unknown, if it was concerned with creating a new mind, how could I continue to represent an organized thought? How could I preach and ideology?

I will not dwell on these points at length. The year 1956 was very significant. After spending six months in Europe in connection with the Land - gift movement I returned to India. In November I was suddenly taken ill. The left ear started bleeding. Severe headaches, fever and dull pain in the ear forced me to enter an ENT clinic in Poona. Within three months of being admitted to the clinic I underwent an operation for the ear trouble.

It was April 1960 that the operation took place. In May I was re-moved to a hill-station near Poona. My general health was improving but by the beginning of June the ear trouble had returned with an unimaginable violence. Doctors could not help me any more.

I was taken to Almora, a Himalayan hill station and I spent some months there.

The rainy season brought me back to the plains in August 1960. My friends had begun to feel greatly concerned about my ear-trouble. Frequent attacks of the pain were followed by unconsciousness.

Gradually fever and bleeding of the ear also came in the wake of the ear-trouble.

I was taken to Calcutta to consult one of India's most eminent leading doctors and surgeons. After spending a week and going through various tests we arrived at the conclusion that my case should be referred to the ear specialists in England.

Thus my trip to England was fixed up. The next few months kept me busy preparing for the trip abroad.

There was suspense and tension. The possibility of another operation on the ear and the brain was the only alternative and the only hope left for my parents and friends.

The year 1960 had come to an end. It was a depressing year on the whole. I, however, was completely resigned. I was prepared for death. Strangely enough I was deeply, impenetrably, calm within.

## Krishnamurti Helps

In December Krishnamurti came to Benaras. It was his routine to pay a yearly visit to the Rajghat school. It was the 20th December 1960. We went to see him at about 9.30 a.m. The morning was cool and pleasant.

We were sitting in the balcony facing east. Bright sunlight had filled the whole place. Two friends who had accompanied me, were discussing several problems with Krishnaji. I was listening, I was learning.

At the end of the discussion Krishnaji turned to me and asked me how the ear-trouble was. I told him the whole story and told him about my visit to England. He listened very attentively. Suddenly he said : “Can I help you ?”

I uttered rather foolishly: “How can you help me? You are not a doctor!”

K. Don’t be silly, I mean it. Can I help you?

V. I do not know.

K. Look! When I was a boy my mother used to say that these hands ( spreading his hands in front of me) have healing power. So, shall I try? We may succeed; we may not succeed. But there is no harm in trying, if you feel equal to it.

V. But I do not regard you as my spiritual master. How could that power operate on me?

K. Goodness me ! I am nobody’s master. But it has nothing to do with your faith. It is my job.

V. Thank you so much, Sir! I will think it over.

K. You should feel no delicacy. You are not asking me to help. I am asking you.

I was overwhelmed by Krishnaji’s kind offer. I was not prepared to receive it though. It came so unexpectedly, so suddenly, that it nearly shocked me.

Why does Krishnamurti offer to help me ? What will he do? How can laying hands on the head cure the wound in the ear? Should I agree? If he succeeds - then - what? I will feel indebted to him forever. I possibly could not do anything to express my gratitude then. Or could I?

At the end of three days I arrived at the conclusion that I was not ready for it. There was reluctance. There was resistance in the heart. It was no use accepting a tremendously generous offer with reservations.

So I went to Krishaji on the fourth day. I told him very plainly what turmoil was taking place within me. He smiled gently. Then he said :

“You are mistaken in presuming that I am going to do something to you. In fact I am not going to do a thing to you. It is the healing power, which is going to operate, if it operates at all. I do not know what that power is. I do not know how it works. So there is no reason to feel obliged to me. If healing takes place, it means healing has happened. Come to me when you are willing.”

I came away with a feeling of deep gratitude. My mind was clear. There were no questions. But still I was not ready. For the last four years my mind has been full of spontaneous affection and reverence for that great teacher. I did not want to do anything that might mar the purity of that friendship.

As long as there was a sense of obligation, it was no use going to Krishnaji. ‘Love knows no Gratitude’ I said to my self. My petty little mind!

How could it measure the depth of affection that Krishnaji had! My wretched ego! How could it understand the beauty of compassion? Compassion which knows no Subject-object relationship! Love which knows not either ‘Mine’ and ‘Thine’! I came face to face with the ‘Ego’ and its vanity. The moment I looked straight at the ego I experienced a strange relaxation. I felt light; I felt free.

Next week I went to see Krishnaji. I told him that I was ready. He smiled. He washed his hands. He walked gently. He stood behind my chair. He laid his right palm on my head; and his left palm over my left ear.

I was alert. I saw that very strong and forceful current of vibrations passed through the head and went through the whole body. The body became wonderfully relaxed. My eyes closed of their own accord. Krishnaji removed his hands. I tried to open my eyes. I could not focus them properly. It was like coming back from a land of peace and light. In a minute or two I realized that I was feeling thirsty. I asked Krishnaji for a glass of water. He swiftly went over to the next room and brought me a glass of water. After a few minutes I went home.

I felt sleepy. I slept soundly for two hours. Throughout the day there was no bleeding of the ear.

I spent that day by myself. Next morning again I went to Krishnaji. We had the second sitting. I went through the same experience but the intensity was much more than the previous day.

After the sitting I told Krishnaji that for the previous 24 hours the body was free from fever. and that there had been no bleeding of the ear.

He smiled. He held out his hand. 'Come tomorrow morning' he said softly. We parted. I went home and slept.

Spent a quiet day. No bleedings; no fever. After nearly fourteen months I was having some precious hours of relaxed physical condition. You can well imagine the joy of a person who experiences physical well - being after such a long period of pain and suffering. Next morning we went through the third sitting and decided to wait for a month to see the effect of the sittings.

Krishnaji went to Delhi. I was at Benaras. Throughout the whole of January and February I had no attack of vomiting and giddiness. I was free from fever. There was no bleeding of the ear. I was feeling really well.

In march 1961, I went back to Bombay for getting different visas and foreign exchange. I learnt that Krishanji was in Bombay. I went to see him. I told him that but for the watery discharge through the ear every night, there was no trouble. Of course the hearing power of the ear had been damaged. But I was not much worried about the deafness.

Krishanji decided to give me three more sittings. Next morning we went through the first sitting. I need not go into details. Suffice it to note - that except for deeper intensity- the experience was nearly the same as previous occasions.

After the second sitting I realized that I could hear loud voices in the room. It made me happy. I did not mention it, however, to anyone. Not even did I tell it to Krishnaji when we went through the third sitting next day. To my great joy, I discovered that I could hear any and every sound after the third sitting.

On the fourth day I told Krishnaji that I had recovered my hearing.

K. Are you imagining it?

V. I am willing to go through auditory tests, sir. I may imagine things but the machine wont imagine it.

K. I am glad Vimalaji. It has worked! Do go to your surgeon the ear specialist and go through the necessary tests. Let me know the report. I am greatly interested in this phenomenon.

Both of us were happy. On the 12th March I wrote him a short note. It ran as follows:

' My dear Krishnaji - About the ear trouble let me tell you that except the nightly watery discharge through the ear there is no complaint. The hearing is normal. I have no words to express my thankfulness to you. I have no words even to tell you how profoundly happy I am feeling.

Happy not only because of the cure, but because of the unique experience through which I am passing.

Experience of complete relaxation. Relaxation of the body, the mind and reason. I wonder if it is freedom.'

I had an interview with Krishnaji on the 14th. Here are the notes of that interview.

K. Any change regarding the pus?

V.No.

K. Why does the pus not stop? You have no tension; no pressure; no suppression - sexual or any other?

V. None that I know of.

K. Not worried about what to do in life?

V. No sir, Not in the least.

K. Have you made up your mind where to go for a holiday?

V. No. I shall decide after I undergo the tests in the ear clinic and after I see my father.

K. Have your friends to arrange it for you ?

V. My father happens to be my best friend?

K. But he or your friends won't trouble you and bother you about the meetings and lectures?

V. They never do. They are very kind. They understand things, you know.

K. Do you like mountain-air?

V. I like it. It suits me.

K. Then I need not think about it. I can arrange if you want me to. I am not suggesting - do you understand?

V. Yes, Perfectly.

K. Now, I am not a doctor. But I feel you should try ice pack around the neck and the ear. Do it gently. Experiment for a few minutes. If you feel better, just repeat it. Do you think you could do it?

V. Surely, I will try it this afternoon.

K. Do you know any Asanas?

V. Yes, a number of them- Halasana, Shalabhasana, Dhanurasana, Sarvangasana etc etc

K. Sheershasana?

V. I know. But since the ear trouble, I can't manage it.

K. Any breathing exercise?

V. Yes, quite a few.

K. How many miles can you walk without feeling tired?

V. Five miles at a stretch.

K. What about those sounds in the ear?

V. Seven of them have disappeared. One still persists.

K. What is that?

V. That of the flute.

K. Are you translating the sound or just recognize it?

V. What is translating, Sir?

K. Ah! Leave it. If the seven have gone the remaining one will also find its way. Does it impair your hearing?

V. I don't think it does.

K. Come tomorrow morning at 9 a.m.

15th March 1961

K. Have you made up your mind where to go?

V. Not yet.

K. You are sure you don't want me to arrange it myself?

V. Thank you ever so much Sir. But I think I can manage it.

K. You do look better. You can hear well. Can't you? You are not imagining?

V. I shall send you the report of the auditory test.

K. (smiling) I am surprised. It has worked. Don't think that Krishnamurti has done something to cure you. It is something which both of us have worked together. I really do not know what I have done. Do you understand?

V. I think, I do.

I experimented with the ice pack. It proved very helpful. By the end of March I was feeling quite fit and fresh. I went to Benaras to discuss things with Jai Prakash Narayan and my father. I told them frankly that the trip abroad was not necessary on medical grounds at all. They agreed that I was looking very well.

But they insisted that I should go to London and get myself examined by a ear-specialist in London. I showed them the report of the auditory test. They were pleased to note that the ear had recovered hearing power. And at the end of the week we decided that the visit abroad was necessary, for enabling me to take complete rest, if not for treatment.

I left Bombay for London on the 7th April 1961.

I arrived there on the 8th morning. The morning was bright and cool. It was refreshing after the sticky and sultry weather of Bombay.

Why Should Not I ?

Within a week of my arrival in London I was examined by a general physician and an ear expert of the Guy's hospital. I was told that the general condition needed a little toning - up. As regards the ear, there was a little watery discharge but it was not a serious matter. Persons living in the tropical countries suffer from such discharge after they undergo an operation on the middle-ear.

I was advised some injections and antibiotic powders for the ear. On the whole the doctors were convinced that there was nothing serious and that I did not need institutional treatment and that a few months in the dry and bracing climate of Switzerland would help me to recover completely.

I saw Krishnamurti in the beginning of May. He was giving talks at Wimbledon. I told him about the medical report and he seemed to be happy about it.

I attended four talks. It was a different experience to listen to him while he was addressing a western audience. Though the content was the same, the approach was altogether different. The overtones and undertones had a noticeable emphasis on science and psychology.

He was, as it were, fully aware of the full impact of the industrial civilization on the minds of his audience. Indeed he seemed to feel the stress and strain under which their whole nervous system was being crushed.

I went to Carlisle and thence to the Lake District to spend a fortnight with some friends.

After returning from the north I went to see Krishnaji again. I did not know any suitable place in Switzerland where I could go for rest and relaxation. He asked me whether I would care to go to Saanen where he would be giving a series of discourses.

He gave me all the necessary information and I wrote to the touring agent in Saanen asking him to make arrangements for my boarding and lodging. Within a fortnight the agent had informed me that he had fixed me up in Hotel Metropol. By the end of July I found myself in the beautiful summer resort of Gstaad.

While in London I had asked Krishnaji about the 'Healing business.' He had whispered with a smile on his lips: 'I am afraid you won't understand it.' This had set me thinking furiously.

But with all my efforts to understand, I failed to understand what it was. 'What was this healing power? What was its nature? Had it any rationale?' I saw something operating upon my body and mind, but I could not understand what it was.

As soon as I arrived at Gstaad, I wrote him a short letter requesting him to spare some time for me and allow me to go with him into the question of 'Healing.' I had further written: 'Please do not say "I am afraid, you won't understand it." Do you understand what it is? If you do, why should not I? You might say: "Then you find out for yourself." Well, I have tried, and I failed. Hence the need for your help. Won't you help me?'

On receiving my letter he rang me up and invited me for luncheon. Next day I went to the Charlet Tannegg where he was staying. I learnt that Mr. and Mrs. Aldous Huxley would join us for luncheon.

It made me a little nervous. I had read several books written by Aldous Huxley - his 'Ends and Means', 'The Perennial Philosophy' and his foreward to 'The First and Last Freedom', in particular.

When I went to the Chalet I saw Krishanji sitting quietly on a small bench under a tree. I sat next to him. We sat there silently for some time and then we went to his room. Here are the notes of the conversation that took place between Krishnaji and myself on the 5th August 1961.

V. Krishanji, you don't look well. What's wrong with you?

K. I am not well. I had a very bad attack of flu when I came here. It was very cold when I arrived. There was snow on those hills. Besides my trip to California caused a great deal of strain.

V. Why are you giving talks in such bad health? Have the doctors allowed you to....

K. I don't go near the doctors. But let us talk about your letter. Why do you want to know about the healing power? Do you want to have it?

V. No. Not in the least.

K. Are you afraid that it might be Hypnotism or Mesmerism?

V. Oh No sir. I would not associate those things with you. Moreover, I wonder if mesmerism or hypnotism would work at all in my case.

K. Then why do you want to know?

V. Because it has affected my body and mind both. As far as the body is concerned, bleeding of the ear has stopped. Hearing has been restored. General health has improved. In every way I feel better. I feel happy. As far as mind is concerned, this healing business has played havoc. Everything has gone topsy-turvy.

K. What do you mean? What has happened?

V. Well, formerly I used to feel homesick when abroad. Since April last, I feel as if I have no home. I belong nowhere. I feel I can't work in the movement, in which I have been working for the last seven years. It is fragmentary work. It does not touch the core human personality. Likes and dislikes, prejudices and preferences have vanished. Something within has been let loose. It can't stand any frontiers. I could go on trying to describe but I know the attempt is futile. I simply can't tell you what I have been passing through.

K. Please go ahead. I am deeply interested.

V. If I had arrived at this phase after reasoning it out with myself, it would not have baffled me. If the healing had affected only the body and stopped there, I would not have bothered you at all. But ...

K. Please, it is no botheration.

V. Since the first sitting, there has been something entirely new and strange, pulsating through every nerve. In the beginning I thought I was imagining things. So I kept quiet in Benaras and Bombay. The experience, however, continued in April and May. I was obliged to ask you about it in London. You said: 'You won't understand.'

K. Do the vibrations increase and decrease? Are they constant?

V. They are constant and have the same intensity.

K. Well - You know I have had this healing power, or whatever it is, since my childhood. I rarely exercise it. But this time there was an urge to help. Of course, Love has played the major part in this healing. You know what I mean - don't you ?

V. I think I do.

K. But we must sit down quietly and talk about it. Can you stay on till the 15th?

V. Yes, I can.

K. When are you going back to India?

V. I am not sure - either by the end of september or the middle of October. When are you going back?

K. In October, to Madras.

V. It will be hot in October. Must you go back in October?

K. (Shrugging his shoulders) Yes. I have to go through my circle - You know- Madras-Delhi-Benaras.

V. After the conversation Krishnaji offered to give me a sitting. I felt rather embarrassed because he looked ill and tired. So I said: 'We better postpone these sittings. We can do them in India.'

K. Why?

V. To be frank - you are not well and I feel rather...

K. I quite understand. But let me assure you it does not affect my health in any way. It is quite alright. Let us do them here.

So we went through one sitting. After attending Krishnaji's talk on the 7th, I went out for a long excursion. I went up 7,000 feet with the help of a ropeway and spent about four hours on a lonely peak.

Meditation always enlightens. It threw a flood of light upon my fallacious thinking. Returning in the evening I wrote a letter to Krishanji. It ran thus:

'Dear Krishnaji,

Please excuse me for writing again. This is to apologize for having bothered you about the problem of 'Healing'. While listening to you this morning I found out my folly.

I think I was trying to understand the experience through which I have been passing. For understanding it, I was trying, unawares, to analyze it in terms of previous experiences not only my own, but also those of my friends. That was wrong.

Furthermore, I was trying to understand it in order to be able to communicate it to my friends; in order to be able to explain why and how everything with which I was associated had dropped away. I was anxious to see that they did not misunderstand the 'Healing.' This also was wrong.

I was assuming too much responsibility- unwarranted responsibility at that. It is none of my concern to explain or to worry about their misunderstanding. Something within is released which can't stand barriers; somehow consciousness seems to have transcended all the known frontiers. And I can't help it. That is all.

When I became conscious of my folly I felt very much ashamed of having troubled you. I hope to be forgiven.'

On the 11th I had a brief talk with Krishanji. As regards the letter, he said: Thank you for your letter. You need not apologize to me. You were right in asking the question. I am glad you have solved it for yourself.'

## EXPLOSION

On the 14th August I had another interview with Krishnamurti. While I was waiting for him his hostess was kind enough to come and have a word with me.

‘Do you understand what Krishnaji says?’ She asked.

I said: ‘ I feel I do - If I may say so. But everyone can understand if one wants to, can’t one? There is nothing difficult what he says is so simple.’

Krishnaji came out in a little while and led me to a room where we settled down for a serious talk. Here are the notes of our conversation.

V. I am sharing with you my experience. I have decided after great hesitation to tell you about the present state of my mind because it concerns you in a way...

K. You need not hesitate at all. You can say anything to me - for or against. Do you understand?

V. I have told you about the invasion of a new awareness, irresistible and uncontrollable.

I have told you how it has swept away everything. Now - this has something to do with that healing. If it had come independently I would not have felt as I feel today. If the mind had come by it, say, while listening to you, I would not have felt what I feel today. Today I feel that the two are related. And I feel deeply indebted to you for both.

That feeling of indebtedness makes the mind heavy and uncomfortable. Your talks have helped me and I am deeply thankful to you for the talks.

But my love for you was never burdened with a sense of indebtedness before. Today it is.

K. Wait a bit. Who told you that the two are related?

V. No one. I feel it.

K. Your feeling may be wrong. Perhaps you are confusing the two. You don't owe me a damn thing in the world. Do you understand it? The healing has happened. It has taken two persons - you and me - for it to happen. Why not let it remain at that? It is very simple.

V. Are you sure that the two are not related?

K. Yes. Quite sure. You have been listening to the talks. You have a serious mind. The talks were sinking deep into your being. They are operating all the time. One day you realized the truth.

What have I done to it? Look here- you were walking in a forest. You came across another person.

He said: 'If you walk this way you might arrive earlier.' You walked. You arrived. You thanked the person. It is as simple as that.

Why should you feel you owe something to me? Why make an issue of it?

V. I can't tell you why. But I do feel obliged to you.

K. All right why do you feel disturbed over it?

V. Because my affection feels hurt by that. Obligation and indebtedness seem to have polluted love and friendship. Our very relationship seems to be changing.

K. Goodness me. Our relationship need not and should not change. It should be as free as it was before. I wonder if you are frightened...

V. Yes - Krishnaji. I feel a kind of awe, a kind of fear...

K. That's the crux. There is nothing to feel afraid of. I have not done anything to you. I don't know how the healing takes place. I know as much as you do. Do you understand? Shake this off. I shall be sorry if our relationship is affected by this. Vimalaji, the earth was ready to receive the rains. She has received with full abandon. No wonder there is new life.

V. So be it Krishnaji. Let me only confess that this sudden invasion does baffle me. It is not due to anything that I have done. As if it is not related to me as an effect is related to its cause. It

has descended with an irresistible force. The intensity and the depth of the force know neither increase nor decrease.

K. It happens. Why not watch it?

I prepared to leave. Krishnamurti knew that I was leaving Gstaad for Zurich the same evening. So he said:

‘I hope to find you in excellent health when we meet in India. Have a pleasant journey.’

While I was walking back to the hotel I met Mr.B. who was practicing as a psychiatrist in New York. He had come all the way to attend the talks. He was putting up in the same hotel and we had met several times during the fortnight.

B. Vimala, I have been shaken all over by Krishnamurti’s talks. We had learnt that the unconscious is indestructible. Krishnamurti says: ‘It can drop away.’ I had learned that it has taken a million years for the human mind and the brain to develop to its present state. Krishnamurti says : ‘You can jump out of this mind and brain.’ It is fantastic and incredible.

V. It is neither incredible nor fantastic. He is not presenting a theory or an idea which you could accept or reject. He communicates his experience. He is a challenge to your science of psychology.

Why should not a group of you take it up for scientific investigation? Why not make a research into whether the conscious and the unconscious can be done away with? Krishnamurti is no fool. He knows what he says and he says what he means.

B. Do you agree with Krishnamurti, that the unconscious can be destroyed completely?

V. I am not a student of psychology. And there is nothing to agree with. I see that what he says is true.

B. Excuse me for being personal. Have you destroyed it ?

V. You can’t destroy it, my dear. It gets destroyed. One sees that it has dropped. That is all.

I left Gstaad in the evening and by midnight I was in Zurich. Next day I wrote two letters. One to my father and one to Krishnamurti.

To my father I wrote:

‘Everything has dropped away. A tremendous tempest has swept away everything with one stroke. It is not ‘The cosmic evolution become conscious of itself.’ It is life anew. A journey wither I know not! Why, I know not! No excitement! No enthusiasm. But an intense flame of passion is consuming the whole being. I wish I could describe the strength of integrity which

makes me walk now fearlessly. I wish I could describe how I witnessed the ego being torn to pieces and being thrown to the winds. I wish I could communicate what this denudation is! Or may one call it ex-centration? The center of thinking getting dissolved into nothingness.

The words might sound familiar. Perhaps you would say Krishnamurti - type terms and phrases. But you are well aware that borrowed phrases cannot transmit life. Nor can they enable one to see the reality. They cannot give you the moral courage to knock down and pull down your house in which you have lived until now.

Only truth liberates. Only truth transmits fresh life. Truth breathes innocence into you. Destruction and creation mingle in that breath.'

To Krishnamurti I wrote:

'I am not making 'an issue' of the event. I am trying to understand it in relation to total life. You may tell me, 'It is simple.' My mind looks upon it as something strange. Is it simple to see the total mind being born anew? If one who has suddenly witnessed it happening, feels overwhelmed, would you call it an emotional disturbance?

Let me assure you that it is not the personal aspect (It's happening in my life) that overwhelms me. Life is neither yours nor mine. Life is life. This phenomenon comes as a challenge to the medical science and to psychology. Does it not ?

It is true that I have been listening to your talks for five years. I knew that they were sinking deep into the very being. But surely, that could not cause this sudden explosion. Understanding does not explode; nor does love explode. Or do they? Not that I am sorry for it. Not that I am excited about it? Far from it. I am watching everything with a passionate interest.

I do not think I shall attend anymore talks. I would love, however, to come and see you when you are in India. I would love to sit quietly with you, provided you do not mind sparing some time for a person who wants to see you without any purpose whatsoever.

Thank you very deeply indeed for everything I have received through you.'

After spending three weeks in Zurich I left for India by plane. I was in good cheer. I was relaxed and happy. There was intense alertness to understand every movement of life. Life had fanned a glowing flame of passionate interest.

One could call that state of deep attention an absolutely new experience of meditation. I am sorry it is not quite correct to call it an experience or a state. Both have a beginning and an end. In my case, however, I did not know how it came about; nor had I any idea whether it would continue forever whether it would discontinue the next moment.

## THE BURNING ASHES

I owed communication to my friends with whom I was working in the Sarvodaya movement. They had a right of love and friendship over me. I wrote an open letter which was published in the journals of the Sarva Seva Sangh. It read as follows:

I am writing this letter after a great hesitation. Hesitation because I wonder if I could succeed in putting into words what I really want to communicate to you. But write I must. The compulsive urge to share the utterly new experience obliges me to write.

You know my life history and the history of my inner voyage too well to need any mention. You know why I joined the movement. You are aware of my attitude towards the philosophy of Sarvodaya.

You know how and why I retired from the active field, the public meetings and the conferences etc. in 1957.

So without going into any of these, let me tell you that I have undergone tremendous upheavals, tempests and volcanic upsurges, inside me, within the last eight months.

No words could describe the intensity and depth of the experience through which I am passing. Everything is changed. I am born anew. This is neither wishful thinking nor is it a sentimental reaction to the healing. It is an astounding phenomenon.

One thing is certain - my association with the movement is over.

It strikes me, today, that the true problem is the problem of complete freedom. If we scatter our strength in such endeavors which will end in restricting our liberty through the creation of collective entities, those entities will smother the individual.

A new ethics will be created to protect the collective entity at the cost of freedom of its members. And individual freedom alone has real meaning.

After spending a few months in the West and studying books on science and philosophy, after contemplating on the problem of fundamental revolution, I have arrived at a conclusion that liberty is the criterion of evolution. The development of human personality consists in

liberating it from all bondages. Thus, for me, freedom is the only way of collaborating with this universal phenomenon of evolution.

No More peace and contentment. But a profound human revolution. A human revolution which consists in freeing oneself from every kind of personal, national racial and ideological pre-occupation. As the source of all evil is the very substance of our consciousness, we will have to deal with it.

Everything that has been transmitted to our mind through centuries will have to be completely discarded. We will have to deal with it in a total way. I have dealt with it. It has dropped away. I have discarded it.

Please do not misunderstand. I am not being conceited. This is simple statement of fact. I do not know what I am going to do. But let me say 'farewell' and 'goodbye' to my friends in the movement.

Our friendship does not come to an end. But the journey we were taking together is over. I have dropped out of it.

Instead of narrating what happened between October and December of 1961, let me reproduce my notes of the conversation with Krishnamurti on the 27th December, 1961.

He had arrived in Benaras on the 21st. I went to see him at 9a.m. on the 27th December. He was looking fresh and relaxed.

K. What have you been doing these days?

V. Nothing special. I went to Assam to see Vinobaji. I told him that I had dropped out of the movement. Vinoba was happy that an inward search had compelled me to discontinue the work.

After returning from Assam I was indisposed for some days, due to an acute attack of dysentery. The days on the whole have been spent in talking to friends who are interested in my life and movements.

K. That is quite natural. But why don't explode? Why don't you put bombs under all these old people who follow the wrong line? Why don't you go around India? Is anyone doing this? If there were half a dozen, I would not say a word to you. There is none.

And where are they leading this country? All these authoritarians, traditionalists, reformists, and, excuse me, all these phoney Gandhists?

India is disintegrating very fast, politically, morally, spiritually. It is very bad. There is so much to do. There is no time.

V. I have not got a medium to express what I want to...

K. Good heavens. No medium? What do you mean? Go shout from the house tops - “you are on the wrong track. This is no way to peace...”

V. You need a language to say all that.

K. Language? Hindi, English - whatever you please...

V. I am sorry I was not referring to language in that sense. Let me explain what I mean.

You were speaking before 1927 in one way. The words; the tone everything smelt of certain traditional concepts. After 1929 everything changed. You did not use any terminology after that. The whole language along with its tone and content has suddenly changed.

K. So- you are waiting for the words to come. They won't come by waiting. In the beginning you might make a mess; you might use wrong words and so on, but for Dickens sake don't wait. You have the fire within you. Let it not die out.

These old people who are at the helm of affairs in every sphere of life have no fire. They have words and ideas. If there is no fire, it is no use adding chips of words to it.

V. I understand your point. But today, the moment I open my mouth to speak, the word appears to be a repetition of Krishnamurti diction.

K. What is wrong if I have used those words or ten others have used them? Why don't you see, Vimalaji, that total destruction is imminent unless we turn down these old patterns of thinking. Go out and set them on fire. There is none who is doing this. Not even one.

V. I have turned the eye inwards to find out if the experience is merely conceptual; whether it is only emotional. I don't want anyone to feel that I am accepting Krishnamurti's authority and his version of truth.

K. But please - you are not. You see the truth. You see that Man is on the wrong track. You don't see it because I say it.

V. I know - I do not.

K. Then what are you waiting for? Not that I am out to convince you. I hope you understand. It is extremely disquieting, I mean the whole situation around us.

V. I see your point. I too feel a deep concern for what is going around. But how is one to set about it? What is one to do? Where does one begin?

I have been communicating in personal relationships all that we have been talking just now. They also write to me.

K. My dear - it won't suffice. The situation demands something more positive; more immediate. If you don't mind - are you afraid of your elders... Vinobhaji, Dadaji or...

V. Good heavens - no. Not in the least. The only consideration which is holding me back is that of a medium to express and, I may be wrong, but I do feel that with the blossoming of the experience, the words must come. With the content of the song, the words must spring forth.

K. And so they shall - If you but open your mouth. Well, you can come anytime and as many times as you please. The door is always open to you. Just knock and walk in.

This conversation stirred me very deeply. I was not satisfied, however, with what Krishnamurti had said about 'shouting from the house-tops,' 'burning down the houses' and 'putting bomb under' etc. Yes, one could do all this. But was it not incumbent upon such a person to point out the way to rebuild the house? To show them the right line of action?

Seeing what is false gives you sufficient courage to get free of the false. Rather it results in freedom.

It is bound also to get expressed in personal relationships. But how does it entitle one to go out and shout about it to the people at large?

I spent the whole day and night thinking about these questions. Next day dawned. These questions had overwhelmed me to such an extent that I spent the 24 hours in silence.

On the 29th of December I had a brief talk with Krishnamurti. We met in the afternoon at 4.30pm

K. I would like to understand what holds you back. Is it shyness? Is it lack of words? Is it lack of opportunity?

V. I do not know. But I should not think it is lack of opportunity?

K. Obviously not. You have captive audience right around you. Did you address them after you returned from abroad?

V. No. They had invited me but...

K. You deliberately abstained...

V. Yes I did.

K. Why? When you worked in the Bhoodan movement you went around the country. You addressed public gatherings. Why not now?

V. Then it was easy. It was to explain an ideology; to collect land donations and distribute them. There was a process of doing things and of getting things done. It was a mission different from and independent of your life. Now it is life itself. It is not a mission. You share life with those who come your way. You don't go out to shout about it...

K. But neither do you exclude the many. You don't restrict it to the few. look, when you are in love, you don't sit still. You struggle to express it in a thousand and one ways. If you are a poet you write about it. If you are an artist you paint it. Don't you ?

V. Yes. You do.

K. Then why sit in a corner ? Are you getting stuck up in a corner? Do you feel paralysed? Do you feel that it is something stupendous and you are not competent enough to do it?

V. Competence is irrelevant to life, Sir.

K. Then are you afraid to stand up alone?

V. No sir. I have been doing it all my life.

K. Then what is your problem? Why don't you tell people that they are doing wrong ?

V. Because I can't tell them what is 'right' for them. I know what is right for me but...

K. Are you not convinced they are on the wrong track?

V. I am.

K. Why not tell them straight away? Are you very anxious to say the right thing? Are you afraid of committing mistakes?

V. Perhaps - yes.

K. That's it.

V. Perhaps there is one more factor. I wonder if I am afraid that people might ask me questions about the 'healing'.

K. Good Gracious! Say yes and brush it aside.

I felt light and unburdened. The discussion had helped me to see two significant factors playing with my mind. I discovered that I had been the victim of a complex. A complex that I must have an independent language of my own. Secondly, I discovered that there was an unwarranted fear of committing mistakes. This realization took away all the tension and strain. The burning ashes became aflame.

## The flame ablaze

In the beginning of 1962 I went to Goa. I spent a fortnight there. Goa is a land of intoxicating beauty. The deep green rice fields, the tall coconut trees clustering into groves, the dark green mango trees, the orange colored earth and the enchanting blue sea bordered by clean sandy beaches! Temples and artistically built churches standing side by side.

It was my first visit to Goa and I noticed the impact of Christian culture on the land and the people. I gave four talks at different places.

By April I was in Assam. This time I went there at the instance of Vinobaji himself. I spent ten days with him. We had long talks and discussions on various topics and problems.

That I did not accept the sanction and authority of any scriptures perturbed Vinobaji to a considerable extent. He derived his sanctions from the scriptures, not only the Hindu scriptures but the Buddhist, the Islamic, and the Christian ones also. He told me very frankly that I was treading, rather dangerous grounds.

I submitted with humility that for me life was its own sanction.

Having worked in Assam for a number of years I have many friends in that state. I spent about three weeks there. It was in the beginning of June that I left Assam for Benaras.

Benaras is notorious for its bad summers. It was hot like an oven. It was a job to keep the room and the body cool.

By the 15th of June I was in Bombay preparing for my trip to Europe. I sailed by an Italian ship 'ROMA' on the 24th June 1962. It was not easy to spend 12 days in a tourist class eight berth cabin on the C deck i.e. the lowest one.

Thus my first journey by sea was not a pleasant one. When I arrived at Genoa, I was running a high temperature. I took a through train to Zurich and on the 9th of July I arrived there in the morning. I was a sick and tired person. I had to spend a week in bed.

A very strange thing happened to me while I was lying quietly in bed. It was on the 14th of July.

The day was bright and pleasant. From my bed I was watching the clear blue sky and the sun-bathed trees nodding gracefully! A gentle breeze was whispering some tunes unto the smiling leaves! Everything around was simply lovely ! Suddenly a string of words flashed across my consciousness.

Death is the kiss of life  
Death, not of the body - but of the mind.

I uttered the words loudly to myself. They sounded significant . They made me feel extremely fresh and energetic. I picked up a pencil and started noting them down. By the time the last word of each line was written the next line followed.

The mind that creates its own bondage  
The mind that invents its own freedom.

And lines went on following one another with an intense spontaneity. Within five minutes I had arrived at the last line.

In the soft ashes of death -  
Is the sweet perfume of life.

I read and re-read those lines. They were so pregnant; charged with such an intensity of feeling that I could not stand it. I felt completely exhausted and without knowing it I fell fast asleep. I woke up after an hour. Would that I could describe the sense of well being which I experienced at that time. I felt myself a new person.

Next day while I was sitting relaxedly I experienced a new flow of words gushing out of the heart. I had to pick up a pencil and paper and note down the lines as they came. And thus I wrote -

I have drunk deep  
At the fountain of life  
I am no more thirsty.

By the end of July I found that seven poems were written. The phenomenon was a staggering one. I wanted to share the experience with someone.

Soon after, at Saanen, I wrote a short letter to Krishnamurti. He was the only person with whom I could dare share the happening within me. The letter ran thus:

‘Here are some pieces which were written by me in the last few days. I am sending them, only to share with you the happenings in my life. I am not a poet: nor do I know anything about poetry. But these days something keeps on surging within. Line after line comes singing in my breast. I pick up a pencil and note those lines down.

I do not expect anything from you about them. It will give me a great satisfaction, though, if you would be kind enough to go through them.’

On the 4th August I had an interview with Krishnamurti. Here are my notes:

V. How are you? You look rather pale and exhausted.

K. I have been ill you know. The old kidney trouble. Except the talks I am practically in bed. I do feel worn out. Traveling, meeting people, change of climate, change in food. You know how it tires one out.

V. At the talks, however, you look fresh. You look quite a different person. The voice goes strong and clear. No one can feel that you are weak and exhausted.

K. Of course I am fresh then. Thank you for the letter and the poems. How long are you going to be in Europe?

V. Most probably till the end of December.

K. Oh! That long! Travelling a lot? Meetings?

V. Yes. I shall go to Germany, Holland and England. I will address group meetings in those countries. Up till now I was refusing to speak. You remember our talk in Benaras? Now I feel it is wrong to refuse. It is undesirable to withdraw and escape. Do you see my point, sir?

K. Yes. I am glad you are going to travel and speak. Do speak. Put ginger into people's minds. Put bombs under them. You feel strong and confident enough to do so? Do you not?

V. Yes. I do.

K. That is good. Go ahead. By the way, What are you going to do when you go back?

V. I do not know.

K. Where are your parents? How have they taken it?

V. They are disappointed - you know- they can't understand why I am disturbing my settled life; why I am giving up the leadership and prestige which I had in the movement. This jumping into uncertainty makes them feel a bit apprehensive.

K. That is quite natural. What about your brothers?

V. They have nearly given me up.

K. So you are alone! What about the financial side?

V. I have no money.

K. Oh! We are alike then. I too have no money. But then, how are you going to travel about? Are your friends going to manage everything? Can I help you in any way?

V. Thank you very much. Friends will manage everything. You need not worry at all.

K. I have been travelling and speaking for the last thirty years. I am glad that you are going to travel in Europe.

After the series of discourses was over, there were group discussions at the Chalet Tannegg. There were about thirty persons and the discussions were very intimate. I remember to have written a small note to Krishnamurti about the discussions. I used to hesitate to ask for personal

interviews. Most often I used to write posts or letters and post them. I had written to say that I was enjoying the group discussions immensely. That his words were charged with tremendous intensity and they took one into a life with entirely new dimensions.

I left Saanen in the last week of August. I was in London by the second week of September. I spent six weeks in England and gave six talks in all. I flew to Oslo in the third week of October where I gave three talks in one week and then left for Holland.

During a fortnight in Holland I delivered seven talks at different places. I went back to Switzerland in the first week of December, where I was scheduled to take rest.

While at Zurich I learnt that Krishnamurti was returning to Rome. During the previous three months I had heard from friends that he was ill and that he would not go to India on his usual round. So I decided to see him in Geneva. He arrived there on the 11th. I went to Geneva on the 12th. We met on the 13th.

I arrived at the hotel Metropol. Metropol looked a posh place. The gentleman at the reception counter rang up Krishnamurti. He came and led me to the lounge. I saw some people sitting there. We settled down in a corner. The people were smoking, it was stuffy. I wondered how one could relax and talk there.

I looked at Krishnamurti. He looked tired and sick. I was not prepared for that.

Here are some notes of our conversation:

V. I had hoped to find you in much better health. Has not the Gstaad stay done you any good ?

K. It has done me some good. But I have not been well. I have been travelling all my life. speaking and giving interviews all through life. That together with a change in climate, in food and so on, exhausts a person.

V. Oh yes, they certainly do.

K. There is nothing wrong with the kidneys or the lungs. But the general condition is weak. Nothing has helped the mucus membranes to get toned up. They have become sluggish and terribly worn out. My doctors told me that if I went to India I will become seriously ill. You know- confined to bed and all that. So I decided not to go. At present there is nothing serious. I am asked to take complete rest.

V. Does it mean you were not taking real rest at Gstaad?

K. I was working in a way. I was giving interviews also.

V. Goodness me! Why did you do that?

K. You have to do certain things. You cannot avoid them.

V. At the cost of your health?

K. Do not worry. I am going to take real rest in Italy. But let us talk about India. Is it not terribly sad? Indian Civilization is coming to an end.

V. Are you suggesting that there is no way out?

K. Of course not. India is caught up in her own trap of neutrality and non-alignment. If India had joined some military alliance or had she been with the West for the sake of preserving peace, China would not have dared to attack India. If India wanted peace and did not want to fight, she should have been on the side of peace!

But you can't have peace and war both! Either you fight or you do not fight. Either you are in favor of peace or you are in favor of war. Five years ago, I warned that India should be careful about China. I had told that moralizing about peace in Berlin and in Korea was easy. It would not do merely to moralize when your own country came to be involved. Then you would be forced to fight. Why not guard against such a possibility while there was time?

Now even Vinoba and the Gandhian movement lend their moral support to the Indian Government. Is not that terrible? How could they do it?

V. Because they see that they have failed singularly in developing the capacity for non violent resistance.

K. My lady, how can non violence be a force of attaining worldly aims? And who is non violent or who loves non violence in India? Don't tell me about Indians being better than Westerners. They are just the same. They love and hate as other people do. Now they are happy that they can nurse hatred in the name of the country. They love militarism and they can have it in the name of the country. Don't you see how they are singing the glories of militarism? Once the Indians take to jingoism they will be the worst jingoists.

The West has tasted the poison of nationalism. They know its limitations. They are growing out of it now. But the countries in the East have taken a fancy for that poison. They won't listen to the words of sanity.

Do you know what India needs today? Real Sannyasis! Real Brahmins! Who would think clearly, and act clearly! Who would keep away from the din of power and politics!

Even the Gandhian movement, its leaders, have been tempted to be always at the front, to be always in the limelight. Don't tell me they are not responsible for the whole mess!

It is Nehru, Vinoba and the whole lot together. They talked about peace. Peace does not come by talking about it. What have they done to prepare the people for peace ? Avoiding violence does not enable you to have peace - It needs a totally different approach.

As long as they think only of India, confine themselves only to the Indian way of thinking, they can't help at all. You are not isolated from the rest of the world.

Why don't they learn from what the West has gone through? What could the peace workers in the West do in the last two wars? Why are they labouring under the illusion that they can avoid war or they can stop men from fighting? Why do they close their eyes against reality? Oh! Why?

I could nearly weep for them. Weep for India. You know all this could have been avoided. The political leaders lacking vision! The Gandhians lacking vision!

Oh! What a mess! What confusion!

V. I have been going through the same agony all these months. One feels suffocated. One can't breathe.

K. What will you do if you go back?

V. I don't know.

K. In the last War I was in America. Do you know what I had to undergo? F.B.I. was keeping a watch on me. I spent five or six years very quietly. If you go to India, perhaps you will have to live quietly somewhere away from the hullabaloo.

V. But the fighting has stopped now, and China won't strike first. They are waiting for Indians to start it. Indians will have to strike because they want to throw the Chinese out of the Indian territory. So the Chinese will put all the blame on the Indians.

K. Don't you worry. The Chinese are preparing for a full invasion of India. They are going to start it alright. They won't wait for India.

V. Are you suggesting that India will have to go through the whole game of total war and destruction?

K. Yes. Of course, yes. It is the end of Indian Civilization. But you have heard me enough. Now tell me why are you going back?

V. Because there has been an unfortunate event. You know it was X who invited me to Europe and who has been financing me all these months.

Two months ago X wrote to me that I was Krishanmurti's innermost messenger; that I was carrying his message around and was interpreting his teachings, etc. etc.

I had to write back and tell X that it was not a fact. I was a humble person. But I had the right to live. It was my own understanding that I was trying to communicate. I did not claim any authority.

X wrote back to say that I was playing with words. X suggested that I was Krishnamurti's disciple. That was too much for me. I had to tell X in all humility that it was not so.

I don't go into details, but I do feel embarrassed to accept hospitality which is offered to me not for my own sake, but because of someone else's authority. I feel happy if someone kicks me out saying that I was not worth the friendship. But helping me on account of someone's authority is entirely different.

I have never tried to exploit my acquaintance with you and...

K. But that is irrelevant. I know the whole game. They have played it on me. They want authority. Is not the world sick? I was afraid that you would have to go through it. I was hoping that you wouldn't have to. So it has started.

It is not easy. I mean - it is not easy to stand up alone. It is extremely difficult. And yet the world needs such Sanyasis. True Brahmins who would stand up alone; who would stand up for Truth.

You know if I had the money I would give you. But I have none. I go everywhere as a guest. I have not even a place of my own.

V. (smiling) I did not come for that. If I come to see you- it is for the joy of seeing you. If I share the happenings of my life with you, it is because I regard you a close friend. Please don't worry on my account. I am flying back in the last week of January 1963.

## Life moves on

When I look back upon the events that have taken place since December 1962, I feel astounded at the terrific speed with which life has been moving.

From February 1963 to June 1964 I was in India. I had moved from Benaras to Mount Abu in 1963. A beautiful house, built on a rock, has been my Indian abode since then.

I returned to Europe in June 1964. In July I went to Saanen to attend Krishnamurti's conference. It is always a joy to listen to him. Every time one learns something new. His words are ever fresh.

There were about 1500 persons from 25 countries attending his talks. His talks used to be translated in French, German, Italian, Spanish, and even Arabic. The translations used to be carried on after the talks, in small group meetings.

I met Krishnamurti a couple of times. But the need to meet him had come to an end. You want to meet a person who is away from you. Since 1962 I have felt Krishnamurti's presence within me.

I travelled through Holland, England, France and Switzerland. The talks I gave in these countries were received with great interest. Meetings were organized by humble individuals in their homes and the average attendance used to be 50. The affection and friendship of young and old in those countries nearly overwhelmed me.

I went back to India in December 1964 and spent 10 months there. Between January 1965 and October 1965 I had travelled through Bihar, United Provinces, Kashmir, Rajasthan, Gujrat and Bombay. It was a strenuous job.

By October 1965, I was back in Holland. The talks given in Holland in 1964 were published in book-form. Between October and December 1965 I spoke at various places and institutions in Holland.

The four weeks of January 1966, I gave several talks in France, Paris and Nice. In the second half of February I spoke at Geneva, Zurich and Ascona. Two weeks of March were spent in Norway, speaking at various institutions.

Not that everything has been smooth. The publication of 'The Flame of Life' and 'The Eloquent Ecstasy' had been widely criticized. It was rightly said by some, that the verses were not satisfactory from the point of view of artistic composition. I was never under any illusion about the poetic value of those verses. I knew that I was not a poet. I did not aspire to be one.

But some accused me of repeating Krishnamurti's verses. The word 'plagiarism' was used later on in connection with the talks given in Holland in 1964. Publication of those talks under the title 'From Heart to Heart' seems to have disturbed many persons.

Some of those who knew my intimate association with J. Krishnamurti felt hurt that I never mentioned his contribution to my life in my talks. Some felt hurt that instead of propagating Krishnamurti's teachings, I dared give independent talks. Some felt annoyed that I dared print those talks.

This made my heart rather sad. In great agony I wrote to one of my friends on the 18th of February 1966:

'... As regards "competition", they do not know the worth of Krishnamurti. He is beyond competition. He is beyond imitation. Moreover they do not know that I owe my life as much to Krishnamurti, as I owe it to my parents...

I do not think anyone can ever excel the profundity, clarity and simplicity of Krishnamurti. Supposing, however, that someone drinks at the fountain of Life, pointed out by Krishnamurti, and says that his thirst is quenched, why should anyone feel irritated?

I have never claimed to be Krishnamurti's disciple. I am an insignificant human being - one of the billions living on this globe. But I have my life to live. I am contented in living it. I have no time for carrying on anybody else's mission.

And who says Krishnamurti has a mission independent of, and different from living? but that apart,

I would request my friends to be cautious and not give any cause to anyone to feel hurt. I would request my friends to help me move among people in a simple way...'

Thus life moves onward. Through the mist of suspicion life pushes onward. Through the clouds of indifference and humiliation, life forces a way onwards. Wither? I know not!

Not that I am anxious to know! To respond to every thing around me is fulfillment. To walk austere through pain and pleasure, beauty and ugliness, joy and sadness of life, is living in silence. The spontaneous movement of silence is meditation.

Thus the eternal voyage goes on.

This small book has no end. The last chapter of this book could be written only at the end of my sojourn in this world.

So till then adieu!

Hilversum, 31st March, 1966.

## EPILOGUE

### THIRTY YEARS AFTER

Friends ask me to write an Epilogue to the book 'Eternal Voyage.' An Epilogue is the concluding part!

I do not know if this is the concluding phase of my physical life. But the voyage found its consummation long ago. Perhaps twenty or thirty years ago. The voyage ended in home coming.

The state of Meditation - Samadhi is the Eternal Home. It is the abode of Divinity. There is majestic relaxed awareness. No strain and stress of thought movement. No push and pull of biological impulses.

A serene flow of effortless and sublime all-inclusive awareness seem to be the essence of life pulsating in the body. The blissful perfume of invincible peace and the glowing tenderness of love are the only content of living.

May the home coming occur in the lives of those who happen to read this book.

Vimala Thakar

25/07/1994