

What Future Does Man Have? by David Bohm and J. Krishnamurti

Questioning Krishnamurti: J. Krishnamurti in dialogue

First Conversation With David Bohm at Brockwood Park, 11 June 1983

J.Krishnamurti: I thought we were going to talk about the future of man.

Dr .David Bohm: Yes.

JK: I mean, really, when we talk about man, we’re talking about humanity.

DB: The whole of mankind.

JK: Whole of mankind, not the British or the French or the Russian or the American, but the whole of human beings.

DB: The future is all inter linked anyway.

JK: As things are, apart from what one observes the world has become tremendously dangerous.

DB: Yes.

JK: Terrorists, wars, and the national divisions and racial divisions, some dictators who want to destroy the world and so on and so on. And also religiously there is tremendous separation.

DB: Yes, and I think there is the economic crisis and the ecological crisis which are...

JK: Yes, ecological and economic problems - problems seem to be multiplying more and more. So, what’s the future of man? What’s the future of not only the present generation, but the coming generations?

DB: Yes, well, the future looks very grim.

JK: Very grim. If you were quite young and I was quite young, what would we do knowing all this. What would be our reaction, what would be our life, our way of earning a livelihood and so on?

DB: Yes, well, I’ve often thought of that. For example, I’ve asked myself, would I go into science again.

JK: Yes.

DB: And, I'm not at all certain now because science does not seem to be relevant to this crisis.

JK: No, no, on the contrary, they are helping...

DB: ...to make it worse. Science might help but in fact it isn't...

JK: So what would you do? I think I would stick to what I'm doing.

DB: Well, that would be easy for you.

JK: For me it would be easy.

DB: But there are several problems, of course, I don't know if you want to discuss them. If a person is just starting out he has to make a living - right?

JK: Of course.

DB: There are very few opportunities now, and most of these are in jobs, which are very limited.

JK: Limited and unemployment right throughout the world. I wonder what he would do, knowing that the future is grim, very depressing, dangerous and so uncertain. Where would you begin?

DB: Yes, well I think one would have to stand back from all these particular problems of my own needs and the needs of the people around me.

JK: Are you saying one should really forget oneself for the time being?

DB: Yes.

JK: Even if I did forget myself and when I look at this world in which I am going to live, and have some kind of career or a profession, and the unemployment, what would I do? This is a problem that I think most young people are facing.

DB: Yes. That's clear. Well, have you something that you would suggest?

JK: Eh?

DB: Is there something you could suggest?

JK: You see, I don't think in terms of evolution.

DB: Yes, I understand that. That's the point that I was expecting we would discuss...

JK: Yes. I don't think there is psychological evolution at all.

DB: Yes. Now, we have discussed this quite often so I think I understand to some extent what you mean. But I think the people who are new to this, who are viewing this tape, are not going to understand.

JK: Yes, we will discuss it. But I want to discuss this whole question, if you will: why are we concerned about the future? The whole future is now.

DB: Yes, in some sense the whole future is now but we have to make that clear. This goes very much against the whole traditional way of thinking.

JK: Yes, I know. Mankind thinks in terms of evolution, continuance and so on.

DB: Maybe we could approach it in another way. That is, evolution seems in the present era to be the most natural way to think. So I would like to ask you what objections do you have to thinking in terms of evolution. Could I explain a point: that that has many meanings, this word.

JK: Of course. We are talking psychologically.

DB: Yes, now the first point is -- let's dispose of physical evolution.

JK: I mean an acorn will grow into an oak.

DB: Yes. Well, also the species have evolved; for example from plants to animals and to man.

JK: Yes, we have taken a million years to be what we are.

DB: You have no question that that has happened?

JK: No, that has happened.

DB: It may continue to happen.

JK: That is evolution.

DB: That is a valid process.

JK: Of course. That is a valid, natural process.

DB: It takes place in time. And therefore in that region the past, present and future are important - right?

JK: Yes, obviously. I don't know a certain language and I need time to learn it.

DB: Well, also it takes time to improve the brain. You see, the brain started out small, and then it got bigger and bigger, that took a million years.

JK: Yes, and becomes much more complex and so on. All that needs time. All that is movement in space and time.

DB: Yes. So you admit physical time and neurophysiological time.

JK: Neurophysiological time, absolutely. Of course. Any sane man would.

DB: Yes. Now most people also admit psychological time, what they call mental time.

JK: Yes, that is what we are talking about. Whether there is such a thing as psychological tomorrow, psychological evolution.

DB: Or yesterday. Yes, now at first sight, I am afraid this will sound strange. You see, it seems I can remember yesterday, and there is tomorrow, I can anticipate. And it has happened many times, you know days have succeeded each other. So I do have the experience of time, you see, from yesterday to today to tomorrow - right?

JK: Of course. That is simple enough.

DB: That is simple enough. Now what is it you are denying?

JK: I deny that I will be something, become better.

DB: That I can change and be... But now there are two ways of looking at that. One way is: will I intentionally become better because I am trying? Or, secondly some people feel that evolution is a kind of natural, inevitable process, in which we are being swept along, like in a current, and we are perhaps becoming better, worse, or something else is happening to us.

JK: Psychologically.

DB: Psychologically, yes, which takes time, which may not be the result of my trying to become better. It may or may not be. Some people may think one way, some another. But are you denying also that there is a sort of natural psychological evolution, as there was a natural biological evolution?

JK: I am denying that, yes.

DB: Yes. Now, why do you deny it?

JK: Because first of all, what is the psyche?

DB: Yes.

JK: The 'me', the ego, and so on, what is it?

DB: Yes, now the word psyche has many meanings. It may mean the mind for example. Do you mean that the ego is the same thing?

JK: The ego. I am talking of the ego, the 'me'.

DB: Yes. Now some people who are thinking of evolution are thinking there will be an evolution in which the 'me' is transcended. That it will rise to a higher level.

JK: Does the transition need time?

DB: So there are two questions: one is: will the 'me' ever improve? That is one argument. And another argument, is even if we suppose we want to get beyond the 'me', can that be done in time?

JK: That cannot be done in time.

DB: Yes, now we have to make it clear why not.

JK: Yes. I will. We will go into it. What is the 'me'? If the psyche has such different meanings, the 'me' is the whole movement which thought has brought about.

DB: Why do you say that?

JK: The 'me' is the consciousness, my consciousness, the 'me' is my name, form, and all the various experiences that I have had, remembrances and so on. The whole structure of the 'me' is put together by thought.

DB: Yes, well that again would be something, which some people might find hard to accept.

JK: Of course. We are discussing it.

DB: Let us try to bring it out. Now, the first experience, the first feeling I have about the 'me' is that the 'me' is there independently and that the 'me' is thinking.

JK: Is the 'me' independent of my thinking?

DB: Well my own first feeling is the 'me' is there independent of my thinking, and it is the 'me' that is thinking, you see.

JK: Yes.

DB: Like I am here and I could move my arm or head. I could think.

JK: Yes.

DB: Now, is that an illusion?

JK: No.

DB: Why?

JK: Because the 'me' - when I move my arm there is the intention to grasp something, to take something, to put something, which is also, first, it is the movement of thought, and that makes the arm move and so on. My contention is - and I am ready to accept it as false or true - that thought is the basis of all this.

DB: Yes. Your contention is that the whole sense of the 'me' and what it is doing is coming out of thought. Now what you mean by thought, though, is not merely intellectual thought?

JK: No, no, of course not. Thought is the whole movement of experience, knowledge and memory.

DB: That sounds to me as if you mean the consciousness as a whole.

JK: As a whole, that's right.

DB: And you are saying that that movement is the 'me' - right?

JK: The whole content of that consciousness is the 'me'. That 'me' is not different from my consciousness.

DB: Yes. Well someone might feel - well, I think one could say that I am my consciousness, for if I am not conscious, I am not here.

JK: Of course.

DB: Now, is consciousness nothing but what you have just described, which includes thought, feeling, intention...

JK: ...intention, aspirations...

DB: ...memories...

JK: ...memories, beliefs, dogmas, the rituals that are performed, the whole, like a computer that has been programmed.

DB: Yes. Now that certainly is in consciousness. Everybody would agree but some people would feel, or many people would feel that there is more to it than that. That consciousness may go beyond that.

JK: Let's go into it. Let's go into it.

DB: Yes.

JK: The content of our consciousness makes up the consciousness, the content.

DB: Yes, I think that requires some understanding. The ordinary use of the word content is quite different. If you say that the content of a glass is water, the glass is one thing and the water is another. The glass contains the water; otherwise the word content would suggest that something contains it - right?

JK: All right. Consciousness is made up of all that is remembered: beliefs, dogmas, rituals, the nationalities, fears, pleasures, sorrow.

DB: Now, if all that were absent, would there be no consciousness?

JK: Not as we know it.

DB: But there would still be a kind of consciousness?

JK: A totally different kind.

DB: Well, then, I think you really mean to say that consciousness, as we know it, is made up...

JK: ...is the result of multiple activities of thought. Thought has put all this together, which is my consciousness - the reactions, the responses, the memories, the remembrances, extraordinary complex intricacies, subtleties, all that is, makes up consciousness as we

know it. The question is: does consciousness has a future?

DB: Yes. Does it have a past?

JK: Of course. Remembrance.

DB: Remembrance, yes. Why do you say it has no future then?

JK: If it has a future, it will be exactly the same kind of thing, moving. The same activities, same thoughts, modified, but the pattern will be repeated over and over again.

DB: Yes. Are you saying that thought can only repeat?

JK: Yes.

DB: But there is a feeling that thought can develop new ideas for example.

JK: But thought being limited, because knowledge is limited, if you admit that knowledge will always be limited.

DB: Yes, well, that again might require some discussion.

JK: Of course, we must discuss it.

DB: Now, why do you say knowledge is always limited?

JK: Because you as a scientist, you are experimenting, adding, searching, so you are adding, and after you some other person will add more. So knowledge, which is born of experience, is limited.

DB: Yes, well some people have said it is and they would hope to obtain perfect knowledge, or absolute knowledge of the laws of nature.

JK: The laws of nature are not the laws of human being.

DB: Well, do you want to restrict the discussion then to knowledge about the human being?

JK: Of course, that's all we can talk about.

DB: All right. So we are saying that man cannot obtain unlimited knowledge of the psyche?

JK: Yes, that's right.

DB: There is always more that is unknown.

JK: There is always more and more that is unknown. So, once we admit that knowledge is limited then thought is limited.

DB: Thought depends on knowledge and the knowledge does not cover everything.

JK: That's right.

DB: Therefore thought will not be able to handle everything that happens.

JK: That's right. That is what the politicians and all the other people are doing. They think thought can solve every problem.

DB: Yes. You can see in the case of politicians that knowledge is very limited, in fact it is almost non-existent! (laughter) But, therefore when you lack the adequate knowledge of what you are dealing with, you create confusion.

JK: Yes. So then as thought is limited, our consciousness, which has been put together by thought, is limited.

DB: Yes. That means we can only repeat; stay in the same circle.

JK: The same circle.

DB: You see one of the ideas might be, if you compare with science, that people might think though my knowledge is limited, I am constantly discovering.

JK: But what you discover is added to, but is still limited.

DB: It is still limited. That's the point. I think one of the ideas behind a scientific approach is that though knowledge is limited, I can discover and keep up with the actuality.

JK: But that is also limited.

DB: My discoveries are limited. And there is always the unknown, which I have not discovered.

JK: That is why I am saying the unknown, the limitless, cannot be captured by thought.

DB: Yes.

JK: Because thought in itself is limited. If you and I agree to that - not only agree, but it is a fact.

DB: Yes, well perhaps we should bring it out still more. That is, thought is limited even though there is a very strong predisposition, feeling, tendency, to feel that thought can do anything.

JK: Anything. It can't. See what it has done in the world!

DB: Well, I agree that it has done some terrible things, but that doesn't prove that it is always wrong. You see maybe you could always blame it on the people who have used it wrongly, you see. (Both laugh)

JK: I know, that is a good old trick! But thought in itself is limited, therefore whatever it does, is limited.

DB: Yes, and it is limited in a very serious way is what you are saying.

JK: That's right. Of course, in a very, very serious way.

DB: Well, could we bring that out, say what that way is, I mean?

JK: That way is what is happening in the world. The totalitarian ideals are the invention of thought.

DB: We could say that the very word totalitarian, means they wanted to cover the totality but they couldn't and the thing collapsed.

JK: It is collapsing.

DB: Collapsing. But, there are those who say they are not totalitarians.

JK: But the republicans, the democrats, the idealists and so on -- all their thinking is limited.

DB: Yes, it is limited in a way that is...

JK: ...very destructive.

DB: ...that is very serious and destructive. Now in what way - could we bring that out? You see I could say, 'OK my thought is limited but it may not be all that serious'. Why is it so important?

JK: That is fairly simple: because whatever action is born of limited thought must breed conflict, inevitably. Dividing humanity geographically into nationalities, and dividing religiously, has created havoc in the world.

DB: Yes, now let's connect that with the limitation of thought. My knowledge is limited - right? How does that lead me to divide the world?

JK: Aren't we seeking security?

DB: Yes.

JK: And we thought there was security in the family, security in the tribe, security in nationalism. So we thought there is security in division.

DB: Yes. Take the tribe, for example: One may feel insecure because one then says, 'With the tribe, I am secure.' That is a conclusion. And I think I know enough to be sure that is so, but I don't. Other things happen that I don't know about, which makes me very insecure. Other tribes come along.

JK: The very division creates insecurity.

DB: Yes, it helps to create it, but I am trying to say that I don't know enough to know that -- right? I don't see that.

JK: One doesn't see it, because one has not looked at the world as a whole.

DB: Well, the thought that aims at security attempts to know everything that is important. As soon as it knows everything important it says, 'This will bring security' -

yet, not only are there a lot of things it doesn't know, but also one thing it doesn't know is that this very thought itself is divisive.

JK: If I say I am an individual, it is limited.

DB: Yes.

JK: I am concerned with myself; that is very limited.

DB: Yes, we have to get this clear. If I say this is a table, which is limited, it creates no conflict - right?

JK: No, there is no conflict there.

DB: Now, when I say this is 'me', that creates conflict.

JK: The 'me' is a divisive entity.

DB: Let's see more clearly why.

JK: Because it is separative: it is concerned with itself. The 'me' identifying with the greater, the nation is still divisive.

DB: Yes, well, I define myself in the interest of security, so that I know what I am as opposed to what you are and I protect myself - right? Now this creates a division between me and you.

JK: We and they, and so on.

DB: We and they. Now that comes from my limited thought because I don't understand that we are really closely related and connected.

JK: That's it. We are human beings.

DB: Yes, we are all human beings.

JK: All human beings have more or less the same problems.

DB: No, I haven't understood that. My thought, my knowledge is limited, I think that we can make a distinction and protect ourselves and me and not the others.

JK: Yes, that's right.

DB: But in the very act of doing that I create instability.

JK: That's right. You create...

DB: ...insecurity.

JK: Insecurity. So if we see that, not merely intellectually or verbally, but actually feel it, that we are the rest of humanity, then the responsibility becomes immense.

DB: Yes, well, how can you do anything about that responsibility?

JK: Then, I either contribute to the whole mess, or keep out of it. That is: to be at peace, to have order in oneself...

DB: Well, I think we have touched on an important point. We say the whole of humanity, of mankind, is one, and therefore to create division there, is...

JK: ...is dangerous.

DB: Yes. Whereas, to create division between the table and me, is not dangerous because in some sense we are not one. That is, only in some very general sense, we are one. Now, mankind doesn't realise that it is all one.

JK: Why? Why?

DB: Well, let's go into that. This is a crucial point. It is clear it doesn't because there are so many divisions and not only nations and religions but from one person to another.

JK: I know. Why is there this division?

DB: Well, the first is, the feeling, at least in the modern era, that every human being is an individual. This may not have been so strong in the past.

JK: That is what I question. I question altogether whether we are individuals.

DB: Yes, well that is a big question because...

JK: Of course. We said just now the consciousness which is 'me' is similar to the rest of mankind. They all suffer; they all have fears; they are all insecure; they have their own particular gods and rituals, all put together by thought.

DB: Yes, well I think this calls for some - you know, it is - there are two questions here. One is, not everybody feels that he is similar - most people feel they have some unique distinction...

JK: What do you mean 'unique distinction'? Distinction in doing something?

DB: Well, there may be many things. For example one nation may feel that it is able to do certain things better than another, one person has some special quality, or...

JK: Of course. You are more intellectual than I am. Somebody else is better in this or that.

DB: He may take pride in his own special abilities, or advantages.

JK: But, when you put that away, basically we are the same.

DB: We have to say what does it mean - you are saying that these things which you have just described are...

JK: ...superficial.

DB: Yes. Well now the things that are basic are what?

JK: Fear, sorrow, pain, anxiety, loneliness, and all the human travails.

DB: Well, many people might feel that the basic things are the highest achievements of mankind.

JK: What has he achieved?

DB: For one thing people may feel proud of the achievement of man in science, art, culture and technology.

JK: We have achieved in all those directions, certainly we have. Vast technology, communication, travel, medicines, surgery have advanced tremendously.

DB: Yes, I mean it is really remarkable in many ways.

JK: There is no question about it. But what have we achieved psychologically?

DB: Yes, I mean one point is to say that none of this has affected us psychologically.

JK: Yes, that's right.

DB: And the psychological question is more important than any of the others because if the psychological question is not cleared up, the rest is dangerous.

JK: Yes. Quite right. That's just it. If we psychologically are limited, then whatever we do will be limited, and the technology will then be used by our limited psyche...

DB: Yes, the master is this limited psyche and not the rational structure of technology. And in fact technology then becomes a dangerous instrument. Now, so that is one point: that the psyche is at the core of it all, and if the psyche is not in order, then the rest is useless.

JK: If the house is in order...

DB: Then the second question is: although we are saying that there are certain basic disorders in the psyche, or lack of order which is common to us all, we may all have a potential for something else, but are we all one really? That is, even though we are all similar, that doesn't say that we are all the same, we are all one.

JK: We said that in our consciousness, basically, we all stand on the same ground.

DB: Yes, but from the fact that the human body is similar, doesn't prove they are all the same.

JK: Of course not. Your body is different from mine.

DB: Yes we are in different places, different entities and so on. But I think you are trying to say that the consciousness is not an individual entity...

JK: That's right.

DB: ...the body is an entity, which has a certain individuality.

JK: That's right. That all seems so clear.

DB: It may be clear. But I think...

JK: Your body is different from mine. I have a different name from you.

DB: Yes, well we are so different - though similar material, it is different. We can't exchange bodies because the proteins in one body may not agree with those in the other. Now many people feel that way about the mind, saying that there is a chemistry between people, which may agree or disagree.

JK: Yes, but actually if you go deeper into the question, consciousness is shared by all human beings. That's my whole...

DB: Yes. Now the feeling is that the consciousness is individual and that it is communicated, as it were, that it is...

JK: I think that is an illusion because we are sticking to something that is not so.

DB: Yes, well do you want to say that there is one consciousness of mankind?

JK: It is all one.

DB: It is all one. That is important because whether it is many or one is a crucial question.

JK: Yes, yes.

DB: Now it could be many, which are then communicating and building up the larger unit. Or you think from the very beginning it is all one?

JK: From the very beginning it is all one.

DB: And the sense of separateness is an illusion -- right?

JK: That is what I am saying over and over again. That seems so logical, sane. The other is insanity.

DB: Yes, now people don't feel, at least one doesn't immediately feel that the notion of separate existence is insane because one extrapolates from the body to the mind, one says it is quite sensible to say my body is separate from yours, and inside my body is my mind. Now are you saying the mind is not inside the body?

JK: That is quite a different question. Now, just a minute. Let's finish with the other, first. If each one of us thinks that we are separate individuals psychically, what we have done in the world is a colossal mess.

DB: Well if we think we are separate when we are not separate, then it will clearly be a colossal mess.

JK: That is what is happening. Each one thinks he has to do what he wants to do -- fulfill himself. So he is struggling in his separateness to achieve peace and security, a security and peace which is totally denied by that...

DB: Well the reason it is denied is because there is no separation. You see, if there were really separation, it would be a rational thing to try to do. But if we are trying to separate what is inseparable, the result will be chaos.

JK: That's right. That's right.

DB: Now that is clear, but I think that it will not be clear to people immediately that the consciousness of mankind is one inseparable whole.

JK: Yes sir, inseparable whole - absolutely right.

DB: Many questions will arise if you even consider the notion, but I don't know if we have gone far enough into this yet. One question is: why do we think we are separate?

JK: Why? Why do I think I am separate? That is my conditioning.

DB: Yes, but, how did we ever adopt such a foolish conditioning?

JK: From childhood it is mine - my toy, not yours.

DB: Yes, but the first feeling you get is, I say it is mine because I feel I am separate, you see. Now it isn't clear how the mind, which was one, came to this illusion that it is all broken up into many pieces.

JK: I think it is again the activity of thought. Thought in its very nature, thought is divisive, fragmentary and therefore I am a fragment.

DB: Thought will create a sense of fragments. You could see, for example, that once we decide to set up a nation, then we will be separate, think we are separate from the other nation and all sorts of things, consequences follow which make the whole thing seem independently real. You have all sorts of separate languages, separate laws and you set up a boundary. And, after a while you see so much evidence of separation that you forget how it started and you say that was there always and we are merely proceeding from what was there always.

JK: Of course. That's why, Sir, I feel if once we grasp the nature of thought, the structure of thought, how thought operates; what is the source of thought, and therefore it is always limited, if we really see that, then...

DB: Now the source of thought is what? Is it memory?

JK: Memory. Memory is the remembrance of things past, which is knowledge and knowledge is the outcome of experience and experience is always limited.

DB: Yes, well, thought includes, of course, also the attempt to go forward, to use logic, to take into account discoveries and insights, you know.

JK: As we were saying some time ago, thought is time.

DB: Yes. All right. Thought is time. Now, that requires more discussion too, because you see the first experience is to say time is there first, and thought is taking place in time.

JK: Ah, no.

DB: For example if we say that movement is taking place, the body is moving, and this requires time.

JK: To go from here to there needs time.

DB: Yes, yes.

JK: To learn a language needs time.

DB: Yes. To grow a plant needs time.

JK: You know, the whole thing. To paint a picture takes time.

DB: We also say to think takes time.

JK: So we think in terms of time.

DB: Yes. You see the first point that one would tend to look at is to say just as everything takes time, to think takes time -- right? Now you are saying something else, which is thought is time.

JK: Thought is time.

DB: That is psychically speaking, psychologically speaking.

JK: Psychologically, of course, of course.

DB: Now how do we understand that?

JK: How do we understand what?

DB: Thought is time. You see it is not obvious.

JK: Oh yes. Would you say thought is movement and time is movement.

DB: That's movement. Now these are... you see time is a mysterious thing, people have argued about it. We could say that time requires movement. I could understand that we cannot have time without movement.

JK: Time is movement.

DB: Time is movement. Now...

JK: Time is not separate from movement.

DB: Now I don't say it is separate from movement, but you see to say time is movement, you see if we said time and movement are one.

JK: Yes I'm saying that.

DB: Yes. They cannot be separated - right?

JK: No.

DB: Because that seems fairly clear. Now there is physical movement which means physical time - right?

JK: Physical time, hot and cold, and also dark and light, sunset and sunrise. All that.

DB: Yes. Now then we have the movement of thought. Now that brings in the question of the nature of thought. You see is thought nothing but a movement in the nervous system, in the brain? Would you say that?

JK: Yes, yes.

DB: Some people have said it includes the movement of the nervous system but there might be something beyond.

JK: What is time, sir, actually? Actually, what is time? Time is hope.

DB: Psychologically.

JK: Psychologically. I am talking entirely psychologically for the moment. Becoming is time. Achieving is time. Now take the question of becoming: I want to become something, psychologically. I want to become non-violent - take that, for example. That is altogether a fallacy.

DB: Yes, well, we understand it is a fallacy but the reason it is a fallacy is that there is no time of that kind, is that it?

JK: No. No sir. Human beings are violent.

DB: Yes.

JK: And they have been talking a great deal, Tolstoy, and in India, of non-violence. The fact is we are violent.

DB: Yes, but...

JK: Just a minute, let me. And the non-violence is not real. But we want to become that.

DB: Yes but you see it is again an extension of the kind of thought that we have with regard to material things. You see if you see a desert, the desert is real and you say the garden is not real, but in your mind is the garden, which will come when you put the water there. So we say we can plan for the future when the desert will become fertile. Now we have to be careful, we say we are violent but we cannot by similar planning become non-violent.

JK: No.

DB: Now why is that?

JK: Why? Because the non-violent state cannot exist when there is violence.

DB: Yes.

JK: That's an ideal.

DB: Well one has to make it more clear because in the same sense the fertile state and the desert don't exist together either. You see I think that you are saying that in the case of the mind when you are violent it has no meaning.

JK: That is the only state.

DB: That is all there is.

JK: Yes, not the other.

DB: The movement towards the other is illusory.

JK: Illusory.

DB: Yes.

JK: So all ideals are illusory, psychologically. The ideal of building a marvelous bridge is not illusory.

DB: No that...

JK: You can plan it but to have psychological ideals...

DB: Yes, if you are violent and you continue to be violent while you are trying to be non-violent...

JK: ...it is so obvious...

DB: ...it has no meaning.

JK: No meaning and yet that has become such an important thing. So the becoming, which is either becoming 'what is'; or becoming away from 'what is';.

DB: 'What should be', yes.

JK: I question both.

DB: Yes, well if you say there can be no sense to becoming in the way of self-improvement, that's...

JK: (laughs) Self-improvement is something so utterly ugly. So we are saying, sir, that the source of all this is a movement of thought as time. When once we admit time psychologically all the other ideals, non-violence, achieving some super state and so on and so on become utterly illusory.

DB: Yes. Now when you talk of the movement of thought as time, it seems to me that to say that that movement of thought, that time which comes from the movement of thought is illusory, is it?

JK: Yes.

DB: We sense it as time but it is not a real kind of time.

JK: That is why we asked: what is time?

DB: Yes.

JK: I need time to go from here to there. I need - if I want to learn some engineering, I must study it, it takes time. That same movement is carried over into the psyche. We say I need time to be good. I need time to be enlightened.

DB: Yes, that will always create a conflict.

JK: Yes.

DB: One part of you and another. So that movement in which you say I need time also creates a division in the psyche.

JK: Yes, that's right.

DB: Say between the observer and the observed.

JK: Yes, that's right. We are saying the observer is the observed.

DB: And therefore there is no time.

JK: That's right.

DB: Psychologically.

JK: The experience, the thinker, is the thought. There is no thinker separate from thought.

DB: All that you are saying, you know, seems very reasonable, but I think that it goes so strongly against the tradition that we are used to...

JK: Of course, of course.

DB: ...that it will be extraordinarily hard for people to really, generally speaking, to...

JK: No, most people, sir, don't want - they want a comfortable way of living: 'Let me carry on as I am, for God's sake, leave me alone.'

DB: Yes, but that is the result of so much conflict...

JK: So much conflict.

DB: ...that people are worn out by it, I think.

JK: But in escaping from conflict, or not resolving conflict, conflict exists, whether you like it or not. So is it - that is the whole point - is it possible to live a life without conflict? Can we have peace on this earth?

DB: Yes, well, it seems clear from what has been said that the activity of thought cannot bring about peace; psychologically, it inherently brings about conflict.

JK: Yes, if we once really see or acknowledge that, our whole activity would be totally different.

DB: But are you saying there is an activity, which is not thought then?

JK: Which is not?

DB: Which is beyond thought?

JK: Yes.

DB: And which is not only beyond thought but which does not require the co-operation of thought?

JK: Certainly not.

DB: That it is possible for this to go on when thought is absent?

JK: That is the real point. We have often discussed this, whether there is anything beyond thought. Not something holy, sacred -- I am not talking of that. I am talking: is there an activity, which is not touched by thought? We are saying there is. And that activity is the highest form of intelligence.

DB: Yes, well, now we have brought in intelligence.

JK: I know, I purposely brought it in! So intelligence is not the activity of cunning thought. There is intelligence to build a table.

DB: Yes well intelligence can use thought, as you have often said.

JK: Intelligence can use thought.

DB: Yes, that is thought can be the action of intelligence - would you put it that way?

JK: Yes.

DB: Or it could be the action of memory?

JK: That's it. Either it is the action born of memory and therefore memory is limited, therefore thought is limited and it has its own activity, which then brings about conflict.

DB: Yes, I think this would connect up with what people are saying about computers. You see every computer must eventually depend on some kind of memory, on memory, which is put in, programmed. And that must be limited - right?

JK: Of course.

DB: Because the - therefore when we operate from memory we are not very different from a computer; the other way around perhaps, the computer is not very different from us.

JK: I would say once a Hindu has been programmed for the last five thousand years to be a Hindu, or in this country you have been programmed as British, or as a Catholic or as a Protestant. So we are all programmed up to a certain extent.

DB: Yes, now then we could say there - you are bringing in the notion of an intelligence which is free of the programme, which is creative perhaps and...

JK: Yes, that's right. That intelligence has nothing to do with memory and knowledge.

DB: Yes. It may act in memory and knowledge but it has nothing to do with it...

JK: Yes it can act through memory, etc. That's right. I mean how do you find out whether it has any reality, not just imagination and romantic nonsense, how do you find out? To come to that one has to go into the whole question of suffering, whether there is an ending to suffering, and as long as suffering and fear and the pursuit of pleasure exists, there cannot be love.

DB: Yes, well there are many questions there. Now the first point is say suffering, or including pleasure, fear, suffering and I suppose we could include anger and violence and greed in that.

JK: Of course, otherwise...

DB: We could say first of all that all those are the response of memory.

JK: Yes.

DB: They are nothing to do with intelligence.

JK: That's right, sir, they are all part of thought and memory.

DB: And that as long as they are going on, it seems to me that intelligence cannot operate in thought.

JK: That's right.

DB: Through thought.

JK: So there must be freedom from suffering.

DB: Yes, well that is a very key point. Now...

JK: That is really a very serious and deep question. Whether it is possible to end suffering, which is the ending of me.

DB: Yes again, it may seem repetitious but the feeling is that I am there and I either suffer or don't suffer. I either enjoy things or suffer.

JK: Yes, I know that.

DB: Now, I think you are saying that suffering arises from thought, it is thought.

JK: Identified.

DB: Yes. And that...

JK: Attachment.

DB: So what is it that suffers? It seems to me, that memory may produce pleasure and then when it doesn't work and is frustrated, it produces pain and suffering.

JK: Not only that. Suffering is much more complex, isn't it?

DB: Yes.

JK: Suffering - what is suffering?

DB: Yes, well, that is...

JK: The meaning of the word is to have pain, to have grief, to feel utterly lost, lonely.

DB: Well it seems to me that it is not only pain, but a kind of a total pain, a very pervasive...

JK: But suffering is the loss of someone.

DB: Or the loss of something very important.

JK: Yes, of course. Loss of my wife, or loss of my son, brother, husband, or whatever it is, and the desperate sense of loneliness.

DB: Or else just simply the fact that the whole world is going into such a state.

JK: Of course, sir. I mean all the wars. And the wars have been going on for thousands of years. That is why I am saying we are carrying on with the same pattern of the last five thousands years or more, of wars.

DB: Yes now one can easily see that the violence and hatred in wars will interfere with intelligence.

JK: Obviously.

DB: Now it is not quite so obvious, I think, you see some people have felt that by going through suffering people become...

JK: ...intelligent?..

DB: ...purified, like going through the crucible, the metal is being purified in the crucible - right?

JK: I know. That through suffering, you learn. You are purified. This is, through suffering your ego is vanished, dissolved.

DB: Yes dissolved, refined.

JK: It doesn't. People have suffered immensely. How many wars, how many tears and the destructive nature of governments?

DB: Yes, they've suffered any number of things.

JK: One can multiply them - unemployment, ignorance...

DB: ...ignorance of disease, pain, everything. But you see what is suffering really? Why does it destroy intelligence, or interfere or prevent it? Why does suffering prevent intelligence? What is going on really?

JK: Suffering is a shock -- I suffer, I have pain, it is the essence of the 'me'.

DB: Yes, the difficulty with suffering is that it is the 'me' that is there that is suffering. And this 'me' is really being sorry for itself in some way.

JK: My suffering is different from your suffering.

DB: That isolates itself, yes.

JK: Yes.

DB: It creates an illusion of some kind.

JK: We don't see suffering is shared by all humanity.

DB: Yes, but suppose we see it is shared by all humanity?

JK: Then I begin to question what suffering is. It is not my suffering.

DB: Yes, well, that is important. In order to understand the nature of suffering, I have to get out of this idea that it is my suffering because as long as I believe it is my suffering, I have an illusory notion of the whole thing.

JK: And I can never end it.

DB: Well, not if you are dealing with an illusion - you can do nothing with it. You see why - we have to come back. Why is suffering the suffering of many? At first it seems that I feel pain in the tooth, or else I have a loss, or something has happened to me, and the other person seems perfectly happy.

JK: Happy, yes, that's right. But also he is suffering too, in his own way.

DB: Yes. At the moment he doesn't see it, but he has his problems too.

JK: So suffering is common to all humanity.

DB: Yes but the fact that it is common is not enough to make it all one.

JK: It is actual.

DB: Yes, but I want to say, are you saying that the suffering of mankind is all one, inseparable?

JK: Yes sir. That is what I have been saying.

DB: As is the consciousness of mankind.

JK: Yes, that's right.

DB: That when anybody suffers the whole of mankind is suffering.

JK: If one country kills hundreds and thousands of human beings - no, the whole point is we have suffered, from the beginning of time we have suffered, and we haven't solved it.

DB: Now, that's clear that it hasn't been solved. We haven't solved it.

JK: We haven't ended suffering.

DB: But I think you have said something, and the thing you said is that the reason we haven't solved it because we are treating it as personal or as in a small group where it cannot - that is an illusion. Any attempt to deal with an illusion cannot solve anything.

JK: That is why - all the problems that humanity has now, psychologically as well as in other ways, is the result of thought. And we are pursuing the same pattern of thought, and thought will never solve any of these problems. So there is another kind of instrument, which is intelligence.

DB: Yes, well that opens up an entirely different subject.

JK: Yes, I know.

DB: And you also mentioned love as well.

JK: Yes.

DB: And compassion.

JK: Without love and compassion there is no intelligence. And you cannot be compassionate if you are attached to some religion, like an animal tied to a post.

DB: Yes well, as soon as your self is threatened then it all vanishes, you see.

JK: Of course. But you see, self hides behind...

DB: ...other things. I mean noble ideals.

JK: Yes, yes. It has immense capacity to hide itself. So what is the future of mankind? From what one observes it is leading to destruction.

DB: That is the way it seems to be going, yes.

JK: Very gloomy, grim, dangerous and if one has children what is their future? To enter into all this? And go through all the misery of it all? So education becomes extraordinarily important. But now, education is merely the accumulation of knowledge.

DB: Yes well every instrument that man has invented, discovered, or developed has been turned toward destruction.

JK: Yes sir. Absolutely. They are destroying nature, there are very few tigers now.

DB: They are destroying forests and agricultural land.

JK: Over population. Nobody seems to care.

DB: I think people - there are two things: one is people are immersed in their own problems - right?

JK: Immersed in their own little plans to save humanity!

DB: Well, some; most people are just immersed in their plans to save themselves.

K: Of course (laughs).

DB: But those others have plans to save humanity, but I think also there is a tendency toward despair implicit in what is happening now in that people don't think anything can be done.

JK: Yes. And if they think something can be done they form little groups and little theories.

DB: Yes, well there are those who are very confident in what they are doing and those who...

JK: Most Prime Ministers are very confident. They don't know what they are doing really.

DB: Yes but then most people haven't much confidence in what they are doing.

JK: I know, I know. If you have tremendous confidence, I accept your confidence and go with you. So what then is the future of man, mankind, the future of humanity? I wonder if anybody is concerned with it. Or each person, or each group is only concerned with its own survival?

DB: Well I think the first concern almost always has been with survival, of either the individual or the group. You see that has been the history of mankind.

JK: Therefore perpetual wars, perpetual insecurity.

DB: Yes, but this, as you said, is the result of thought which makes the mistake on the basis of being incomplete to identify the self, you know, with the group and so on.

JK: You happen to listen to all this. You agree to all this; you see the truth of all this. Those in power will not even listen to you.

DB: No.

JK: They are creating more and more misery, more and more - the world becoming dangerous, how do you then - what is the point of you and I agreeing, seeing something

true? This is what people are asking: what is the point of you and I seeing something to be true and what effect has it?

DB: Yes, well, it seems to me that if we think in terms of the effects, we are bringing in the very thing, which is behind the trouble -- time. That is, the first response would be we must quickly get in and do something to change the course of events.

JK: Therefore form a society, foundation, organisation and all the rest of it.

DB: But you see our mistake is to feel that we must think about something, and that thought is incomplete. We don't really know what is going on and people have made theories about it, but they don't know.

JK: No, but come down to it: if that is a wrong question, then as a human being, who is mankind, what is my responsibility?

DB: Well I think it is the same...

JK: Apart from effect and all the rest of it.

DB: Yes, we can't look toward effects. But it's the same as with A and B, that A sees, and B does not - right? Now suppose A sees something and most of the rest of mankind does not. Then it seems, one could say mankind is in some way dreaming, asleep, you know, it's dreaming.

JK: It is caught in illusion.

DB: Illusion. And the point is that, if somebody sees something, then his responsibility is to help awaken the others out of the illusion.

JK: That is just it. I mean this has been the problem. That is why the Buddhists have projected the idea of the Bodhisattva, who is compassionate and is the essence of all compassion, and he is waiting to save humanity. It sounds nice. It is a happy feeling that there is somebody doing this. But in actuality we won't do anything that is not comfortable, satisfying, secure, both psychologically and physically.

DB: Yes, well that is the source of the illusion, basically.

JK: How does one make another see all this? They haven't time, they haven't the energy, they haven't even the inclination. They want to be amused. How does one make X see this whole thing so clearly that he says, 'All right, I have got it, I will work. And I see I am responsible...' and all the rest of it. I think that is the tragedy of those who see and those who do not.