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WHAT IS THE ESSENCE OF INTELLIGENCE?

J. Krishnamurti, Q&A 1, Brockwood Park, England, 1980

What is the essence of intelligence?

"So what is one's attitude going to be? The speaker has been saying constantly: freedom is absolutely necessary.

Psychological freedom first, not the physical freedom which you have in the democratic, if not in the totalitarian, countries. Inward freedom can only come about when one understands one's conditioning, the conditioning which is both social and cultural, religious, economic and physical.

Can one be free of that — of the psychological conditioning?

So what does it all indicate?

We have the intelligence to solve technological problems: the problem-solving mind. We all have that, but it is not intelligence. The capacity to think clearly, objectively, and to be aware of the limitation of thinking, that is the beginning of

intelligence. We worship thinking; the more cleverly we can think, the greater we see ourselves as being. Whereas if we could observe our own confusion, our own individual narrow way of looking at life, if we could be aware of all that, we would see how thought is perpetually creating problems. Thought creates the image and that image divides – to see that requires intelligence. To see psychological dangers is intelligence. But apparently we do not see those things. That means somebody has to goad you all the time, push you, drive you, ask you, persuade you, beg you to make you aware of yourself; and then to move from there, not just stay there. And I am afraid nobody is going to do that for you, not even the most enlightened human being, because then you become his slave.

Vitality, physical and psychological energy, is, as you are now, being dissipated in conflict, in worry, in chattering, in endless gossip not only with others but with oneself. This endless chattering! It all dissipates the psychological energy that is needed to observe ourselves in the mirror of relationship —

we are all related to somebody or other – and so discover our illusions, images, absurdities and idiocies. Then out of that, freedom comes, intelligence, which will show the way of life."

POST COMMENT

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What is the essence of intelligence?

Krishnamurti invites us to explore this question, urging us to look beyond the conventional understanding of intelligence as mere problem-solving prowess. He posits that true intelligence is not just the capacity to think clearly or solve technological challenges but also the awareness of our psychological conditioning. This conditioning—deeply rooted in social, cultural, religious, economic, and physical contexts—shapes our perceptions and actions. Krishnamurti suggests that intelligence begins with recognizing and understanding these internal constraints, leading to psychological freedom.

Can we attain this form of intelligence that Krishnamurti describes? He highlights that our psychological energy is often wasted on conflicts, worries, and incessant internal chatter. This dissipation of energy may prevent us from observing ourselves and our relationships clearly, thereby hindering true self-awareness and the emergence of intelligence. Krishnamurti challenges us to see the limitations and dangers of thought, which creates divisive images and problems. Intelligence may require individual effort and introspection, as no external force or enlightened being can compel us to achieve this state of clarity and freedom. How do we, in our daily lives, begin to observe and transcend our conditioned selves to realize this deeper intelligence?