

NOTES FROM: *Discover the Immeasurable*, by Jiddu Krishnamurti

SUMMARY: *Discover the Immeasurable* contains a series of six lectures given by Krishnamurti in the fall of 1956, where he speaks about the inherently evil nature of authority, the constant flow of existence, and how the structure of our current society and even our own minds perpetuates needless conflict, misery, and tragedy.

What may strike you as you lean into the thoughts and "teachings" (he would reject that word, obviously) of Krishnamurti is that he usually asks questions more often than he gives answers. He never tells you what to think, but only hints at the way forward and encourages you to make the trip yourself. He asks you to develop an idea of what *you* think, not what he or anyone else tries to *tell* you to think.

His central idea here is that the "immeasurable," i.e. truth, reality, God, the universe, and the human mind, can never exist or function according to a fixed pattern. The universe is always changing and evolving, and truth is never stagnant. A mind burdened with the "known," as he would say, can never move beyond the strictures of society and discover truth, or reality.

It's about experiencing directly what is immeasurable, since "*only direct experience has validity*." We can't live according to theories but must flow with everything else that is going on in the universe and inside our own minds, which essentially amounts to the same thing.

It's not about going off into a cave by ourselves and working out some complex theory, but about realizing that the truth is revealed in every moment and in every relationship we have with everyone and everything else that exists.

"No human problem can be understood or resolved through a special way of thinking or through any dogma or belief. Though I happen to come from India, we have essentially the same problems there as you have here."

"Our minds have been conditioned from childhood to think in a certain way; we are educated, brought up in a fixed pattern of thought. We are tradition bound. We have special values, certain opinions, and unquestioned beliefs, and according to this pattern we live – or at least we try to live. And I think therein lies the calamity. Because, life is in constant movement, is it not? It is a living thing, with extraordinary changes; it is never the same. And our problems also are never the same; they are ever changing. But we approach life with a mind that is fixed, opinionated; we have definite ideas and predetermined evaluations. So, for most of us, life becomes a series of complex and apparently insoluble problems, and invariably we turn to someone else to guide us, to help us, to show us the right path. Here, I think, it would be right for me to point out that I am not doing anything of that kind. What we are going to do, if you are willing, is to think out the problem together. After all, it is your life, and to understand it, surely, you must understand yourself. The understanding of yourself does not depend on the sanctions of another."

“The individual problem is the world problem. It is what we are as individuals that create society, society being the relationship between ourselves and others. I am speaking – and please believe it – as one individual to another, so that together we may understand the many problems that confront us. I am not establishing myself as an authority to tell you what to do because I do not believe in authority in spiritual matters. All authority is evil, and all sense of authority must cease, especially if we would find out what is God, what is truth, whether there is something beyond the mere measure of the mind. That is why it is very important for the individual to understand himself.”

“So long as there is nationalism, so long as you are a German or a Russian or an American, clinging to sovereignty, to an exclusive nationality, you are sure to have war. So long as you are a Christian and I am a Hindu, or you are a Muslim and I am a Buddhist, there is bound to be war. So long as you are ambitious, wanting to reach the top of your society, seeking achievement and worshiping success, you will be a cause of war. But we are brought up on all this. We are trained to compete, to succeed, to be ambitious, to serve a particular government, to belong to a particular country or religion. Our whole education cultivates the competitive spirit and guides the mind towards war. And can we, as individual human beings, change all this? Can you and I individually cease to be ambitious, cease to regard ourselves as Germans or Indians, cease to belong to any particular religion, to any particular group or ideology – communist, socialist, or any other – and be concerned only with human welfare? So long as we remain attached to a group or to an ideology, so long as we are ambitious, seeking success, we are bound to create war. It may not be a war of outward destruction, but we will have conflict between each other and within ourselves, which is actually a form of war. I do not think we see this, and even if we do, we are not serious about it. We want some miraculous event to take place to stop war, while we continue to live as we are in the present social structure, making money, seeking position, power, prestige, trying to become famous, and all the rest of it. That is our pattern, and so long as that pattern exists in our minds and hearts, we are bound to produce war.”

“The mind which is burdened with the known can never find what is unknowable.

“After all, I can understand violence only when, with my whole mind, I give complete attention to the problem. And the moment I am wholly concerned with violence and the understanding of violence, what significance has the ideal of nonviolence? It seems to me that the pursuit of the ideal is an evasion, a postponement. If I am to understand violence, I must give my whole mind to it and not allow myself to be distracted by the ideal of nonviolence.”

“To understand the totality of this extraordinary thing called life, one must obviously not be too definite about these things. One cannot be definite with something which is so immense, which is not measurable by words. We cannot understand the immeasurable so long as we approach it through time.”

“To understand the immeasurable, the mind must be extraordinarily quiet, still; but if I think I am going to achieve stillness at some future date, I have destroyed the possibility of stillness. It is now or never. That is a very difficult thing to understand because we are all thinking of heaven in terms of time.”

“So long as we have choice, surely there is no freedom. Please follow this; do not merely reject or accept it, but let us think it out together. The mind that is capable of choosing is not free because in choice there is always conflict, conscious or unconscious, and a mind that is in conflict is never free. Our life is full of conflict; we are always choosing between this and that; you know this very well. We are always comparing, judging, evaluating, accepting, rejecting – that is the process of our life, which is a constant struggle, and a mind that is struggling is never free.”

“Your life is shaped, controlled by the society which you have created. You have created the wars, the leaders; you have created the organized religions of which you are now slaves. So your life is predetermined. And to be free, you must first be aware that your life is predetermined, that it is conditioned, that all your responses are more or less the same as those of everybody else throughout the world. Superficially, your responses may be different; you may respond one way here, another way in India or in China, and so on, but fundamentally you are held in the framework of your particular conditioning, and you are never an individual. Therefore it is absurd to talk about freedom and self-determination. You can choose between blue cloth and red cloth, and that is about all; your freedom is on that level. If you go into it very deeply, you will find that you are not an individual at all. But by going into it very deeply, you will also find that you can be free from all this conditioning – as a German, as a Hindu, as a believer or a nonbeliever. You can be free from it all. Then you will know what it is to have an innocent mind, and it is only such a mind that can find out what is truth.”

“We live in the field of the known, do we not? The known is that with which I have identified myself – my family, my country, my experiences, my job, my friends, the virtues, the qualities, the knowledge I have gathered, all the things I have known. So the mind is the result of the past; the mind is the past. The mind is burdened with the known. And can the mind free itself from the known? That is, can I die to all that I have accumulated – not when I am a doddering old man, but now? While I am still full of vitality, clarity, and understanding, can I die to everything that I have been, that I am going to be, or think that I should be? That is, can I die to the known, die to every moment?”

“I do not think we sufficiently realize the necessity of being free of this compulsion to follow authority, inward or outward. And I think it is very important psychologically to understand this compulsion; otherwise, we shall go on blindly struggling in this world in which we live and have our being, and we shall never find that other thing which is so infinitely greater. We must surely break away from this world of imitation and conformity if we are to find a totally different world. This means a really fundamental change in our lives – in the way of our action, in the way of our thought, in the way of our feeling. But most of us are not concerned with that; we are not concerned with understanding our thoughts, our feelings, our activities. We are only concerned with what to believe or not to believe, with whom to follow or not to follow, with which is the right society or political party, and all the rest of that nonsense.”

“So I must realize my own conditioning and do absolutely nothing. This is very difficult. But I must know for myself that my mind is small, petty, confused, conditioned, and see that any effort to change it is still within the field of that confusion; therefore, any such effort only breeds further confusion.”

“There is no freedom of thought because all thought is conditioned.”

“There is no ‘good’ conditioning or ‘bad’ conditioning – there is only freedom from all conditioning.”