

## **The First and Last Freedom Questions and Answers Question 9**

*'On relationship'*

Question: You have often talked of relationship. What does it mean to you?

Krishnamurti: First of all, there is no such thing as being isolated. To be is to be related and without relationship there is no existence. What do we mean by relationship? It is an interconnected challenge and response between two people, between you and me, the challenge which you throw out and which I accept or to which I respond; also the challenge I throw out to you. The relationship of two people creates society; society is not independent of you and me; the mass is not by itself a separate entity but you and I in our relationship to each other create the mass, the group, the society. Relationship is the awareness of interconnection between two people. What is that relationship generally based on? Is it not based on so-called interdependence, mutual assistance? At least, we say it is mutual help, mutual aid and so on, but actually, apart from words, apart from the emotional screen which we throw up against each other, what is it based upon? On mutual gratification, is it not? If I do not please you, you get rid of me; if I please you, you accept me either as your wife or as your neighbour or as your friend. That is the fact.

What is it that you call the family? Obviously it is a relationship of intimacy, of communion. In your family, in your relationship with your wife, with your husband, is there communion? Surely that is what we mean by relationship, do we not? Relationship means communion without fear, freedom to understand each other, to communicate directly. Obviously relationship means that - to be in communion with another. Are you? Are you in communion with your wife? Perhaps you are physically but that is not relationship. You and your wife live on opposite sides of a wall of isolation, do you not? You have your own pursuits, your ambitions, and she has hers. You live behind the wall and occasionally look over the top - and that you call relationship. That is a fact, is it not? You may enlarge it, soften it, introduce a new set of words to describe it. but that is the fact - that you and another live in isolation, and that life in isolation you call relationship.

If there is real relationship between two people, which means there is communion between them, then the implications are enormous. Then there is no isolation; there is love and not responsibility or duty. It is the people who are isolated behind their walls who talk about duty and responsibility. A man who loves does not talk about responsibility - he loves. Therefore he shares with another his joy, his sorrow, his money. Are your families such? Is there direct communion with your wife, with your children? Obviously not. Therefore the family is merely an excuse to continue your name or tradition, to give you what you want, sexually or psychologically, so the family becomes a means of self-perpetuation, of carrying on your name. That is one kind of immortality, one kind of permanency. The family is also used as a means of gratification. I exploit others ruthlessly in the business world, in the political or social world outside, and at home I try to be kind and generous. How absurd! Or the world is too much for me, I want peace and I go home. I suffer in the world and I go home and try to find comfort. So I use relationship as a means of gratification, which means I do not want to be disturbed by my relationship.

Thus relationship is sought where there is mutual satisfaction, gratification; when you do not find that satisfaction you change relationship; either you divorce or you remain together but seek gratification elsewhere or else you move from one relationship to another till you find what you seek - which is satisfaction, gratification, and a sense of self-protection and comfort. After all, that is our relationship in the world, and it is thus in fact. Relationship is sought where there can be security, where you as an individual can live in a state of security, in a state of gratification, in a state of ignorance - all of which always creates conflict, does it not? If you do not satisfy me and I am seeking satisfaction, naturally there must be conflict, because we are both seeking security in each other; when that security becomes uncertain you become jealous, you become violent, you become possessive and so on. So relationship invariably results in possession in condemnation, in self-assertive demands for security, for comfort and for gratification, and in that there is naturally no love.

We talk about love, we talk about responsibility, duty, but there is really no love; relationship is based on gratification, the effect of which we see in the present civilization. The way we treat our wives, children, neighbours, friends is an indication that in our relationship there is really no love at all. It is merely a mutual search for gratification. As this is so, what then is the purpose of relationship? What is its ultimate significance? If you observe yourself in relationship with others, do you not find that relationship is a process of self-revelation? Does not my contact with you reveal my own state of being if I am aware, if I am alert enough to be conscious of my own reaction in relationship? Relationship is really a process of self-revelation, which is a process of self-knowledge; in that revelation there are many unpleasant things, disquieting, uncomfortable thoughts, activities. Since I do not like what I discover, I run away from a relationship which is not pleasant to a relationship which is pleasant. Therefore, relationship has very little significance when we are merely seeking mutual gratification but becomes extraordinarily significant when it is a means of self-revelation and self-knowledge.

After all, there is no relationship in love, is there? It is only when you love something and expect a return of your love that there is a relationship. When you love, that is when you give yourself over to something entirely, wholly, then there is no relationship.

If you do love, if there is such a love, then it is a marvellous thing. In such love there is no friction, there is not the one and the other, there is complete unity. It is a state of integration, a complete being. There are such moments, such rare, happy, joyous moments, when there is complete love, complete communion. What generally happens is that love is not what is important but the other, the object of love becomes important; the one to whom love is given becomes important and not love itself. Then the object of love, for various reasons, either biological, verbal or because of a desire for gratification, for comfort and so on, becomes important and love recedes. Then possession, jealousy and demands create conflict and love recedes further and further; the further it recedes, the more the problem of relationship loses its significance, its worth and its meaning. Therefore, love is one of the most difficult things to comprehend. It cannot come through an intellectual urgency, it cannot be manufactured by various methods and means and

disciplines. It is a state of being when the activities of the self have ceased; but they will not cease if you merely suppress them, shun them or discipline them. You must understand the activities of the self in all the different layers of consciousness. We have moments when we do love, when there is no thought, no motive, but those moments are very rare. Because they are rare we cling to them in memory and thus create a barrier between living reality and the action of our daily existence.

In order to understand relationship it is important to understand first of all what is, what is actually taking place in our lives, in all the different subtle forms; and also what relationship actually means. Relationship is self-revelation. It is because we do not want to be revealed to ourselves that we hide in comfort, and then relationship loses its extraordinary depth, significance and beauty. There can be true relationship only when there is love but love is not the search for gratification. Love exists only when there is self-forgetfulness, when there is complete communion, not between one or two, but communion with the highest; and that can only take place when the self is forgotten.