

Krishnamurti and Psychology: The Golden Key

By Dr. I. Sanitea

The philosopher J Krishnamurti (1895-1986) had revolutionary insights into the human mind. These can be tremendously helpful for resolving psychological conflict and living a life of total freedom. His teachings offer a way to resolve our daily problems and live a life full of clarity and peace.

His approach can be best described as a “self psychotherapy” in which the participant is invited to inquire into the causes of psychological conflict. Any authority, or guide, who helps us understand ourselves, is seen as an impediment to this inquiry. Why? Any sort of escape from the facts of our mind, whether through relying on a guide, or even our own past experiences, prevents us from pure observation. Krishnamurti calls this “observing without the observer.”

Pure observation awakens a new type of intelligence which does not rely on intellect or memory. It is being in this state of observation that heals psychological hurt, and that leads to immediate insight and right action. However, many of our preconceived ideas about the mind, as well as our attachment to memory, prevent this pure observation and lead to endless sorrow.

Krishnamurti sees all psychological suffering as unnecessary. Why? It can be resolved through insight. Therefore, whoever continues to suffer has neglected to develop insight into their mind. What prevents insight? Normally, we think that to resolve a psychological problem, time is necessary. If I am violent today, give me time, and through various breathing exercises, disciplines, and readings, I will resolve the problem of violence. However, when we postpone any immediate psychological problem (be it violence, anger, greed, or attachment), we cease to be in a state of observation.

We create the mental opposite of the fact (non-violence), and thus move away from the fact itself. Krishnamurti’s way of self-psychotherapy therefore advocates no methods, and states that any method will lead us away from the truth of our mind, which only exists in observing here and now. Mindfulness, which is increasingly popular, is often taught as a method, and therefore it does not result in developing a transforming insight. It also often involves developing goals and pursuing ideals, which is the opposite of true insight. Any sort of escape from the fact, whether through method, ideal, or any type of effort, prevents pure observation, and prevents the awakening of intelligence which resolves psychological conflict.

Next: The Golden Key – immediate insight